On 7 October, the Welsh government signed a contract with British Telecommunications Plc to provide PSBA network services to public service organisations across Wales. This will replace the current contract with Logicalis. The attached press release from the Welsh Government announces this, and you may have already seen press reports. The announcement that BT was the shortlisted bidder was made in August, and this signature comes at the end of the due diligence process undertaken by the Welsh Government.

This investment demonstrates a commitment by the Welsh Government to support research and education across Wales, as well as furthering cross-sector collaboration, delivering best value for money and providing flexibility.

Jisc, through Janet, has worked with PSBA for many years to represent the growing needs of the Research and Education community in Wales. We were a founder member of PSBA and continue to support our Welsh customers through the PSBA’s management group and programme board, and in other ways. Janet staff have contributed to the procurement process, to ensure that present and future needs of the higher and further education sectors will be met. BT’s solution will continue to provide the capacity required to support the research needs of Welsh universities, whilst also providing the range and flexibility of connectivity services needed to support education across Wales. This, and improved connectivity between the PSBA and the Janet network, will enable you to exploit the opportunities of cost effective services such as Cloud based solutions.

We will continue to support these developments during the process of transition of supplier and beyond. The handover from Logicalis to BT has already started and is scheduled to be complete by the summer of 2015. Service continuity is of course a paramount requirement, and to ensure this BT will initially take over and operate the existing PSBA infrastructure. From this point on it will then implement a number of changes aimed at simplifying the infrastructure to improve reliability and to reduce cost by use of the next generation of connectivity products being rolled out across Wales.

We will be running a number of online briefings to keep you updated on our activities in Wales. For information on these and other activities, please join our community group: <https://community.ja.net/groups/janet-wales>