

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS  
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet  
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for  
Climate Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Our ref HID PO 89 2026

Andrew R T Davies MS  
Chair  
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

18 February 2026

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter of 5 January regarding the procurement of Farming Connect and the application of the Rural Support Dynamic Purchasing Framework (DPS).

A Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) is a procurement process used by public sector organisations that is compliant with UK procurement regulations. It is designed to be flexible and transparent. A DPS is like a live, open marketplace for pre-qualified suppliers. Unlike traditional frameworks, which close to new entrants after setup, a DPS remains open throughout its lifecycle. This means Suppliers can apply at any time if they meet the qualification criteria; and Buyers can run mini competitions among approved suppliers whenever they need to award a contract.

## Key Advantages of DPS

### 1. Continuous Supplier Access

Unlike traditional frameworks, a DPS remains open throughout its lifecycle, allowing new suppliers to join at any time. This ensures a constantly refreshed supplier base, and greater inclusivity for SMEs and niche providers who may have missed initial deadlines.

### 2. Enhanced Competition and Innovation

Because suppliers can join at any stage and compete in mini-tenders, competition remains strong. This drives better pricing and value for money and provides access to innovative solutions and emerging technologies.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

### **3. Flexibility and Agility**

DPS arrangements allow contracting authorities to adapt quickly to changing market conditions or policy priorities without re-tendering a full framework. This is particularly useful for dynamic markets (e.g. sustainability projects) and responding to urgent or evolving requirements.

### **4. Reduced Administrative Burden for Suppliers**

The process is fully electronic and streamlined. Qualification is simple, suppliers meeting criteria are admitted without scoring and mini competitions are faster than full tenders, reducing procurement timelines.

### **5. Transparency and Compliance**

DPS is compliant with Procurement Regulations and supports fair access for all qualified suppliers and provides ongoing visibility of opportunities, which aligns with social value and sustainability goals under the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act.

The Rural Support DPS commenced on 10 October 2024 following a fair and open competition to deliver a broad range of rural support services for the Welsh Government. It remains open for applications throughout its lifetime, enabling any suitably experienced supplier to join and participate in future competitions.

Once admitted, suppliers who have been successful in being awarded a place on the DPS are eligible for any call-off contracts issued via the DPS in the category or filter that they have been accepted for, such as the Farming Connect contract.

The Rural Affairs Directorate intends to use the DPS for all procured activities, and it is also available for use by colleagues in Climate Change and OCVO.

The DPS is particularly advantageous for the ongoing development of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS), enabling more efficient procurement and a coordinated approach. The DPS categories are as follows:

- **Category 1:** Rural Support Programme and Project Support Services (including grant support)
  - Filter 1.1: Programme/Project Support Services (including grant support)
- **Category 2:** Rural Support Advice and Technical Services
  - Filter 2.1: Advice Services
  - Filter 2.2: Rural Technical Services
  - Filter 2.3: Land Based Technical Services
  - Filter 2.4: Sustainability Technical Services
  - Filter 2.5: Supply Chains Technical Services
- **Category 3:** Rural Support Engagement Services
  - Filter 3.1: Rural Support Engagement

A notification was sent to all 116 suppliers registered on the DPS via eTender Wales on 16 September prior to the tender being published, to inform them all that the Farming Connect contract was being procured through the DPS and to highlight the categories that would be used for the invitations. This was intended to encourage new applications from suppliers who wanted to be part of the mini competition.

Categories 2 and 3 were used to procure the next Farming Connect contract. All suppliers on the Framework for these categories were invited to tender, and at the commencement of the procurement on 13 October, 40 suppliers were eligible to tender, including AHDB, HCC, Lantra, Mentera, AberInnovation, Prifysgol Aberystwyth, and Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers Ltd. Following a panel review of all tenders against the set specification, the Welsh Government Knowledge Transfer Programme (Farming Connect contract) was awarded to Mentera on 19 December 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Huw Irranca-Davies', written over a horizontal line.

**Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS**

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