



**All-Party Parliamentary Group for Broadband and Digital Communication**  
**Meeting Minutes: AGM; election of officers, work proposal**  
**16/03/2022**

**Opening**

The meeting of the APPG for Broadband and Digital Communication was called to order at 15:00 on 16 March 2022 by Selaine Saxby MP. The AGM was quorate to proceed.

**Election of chair and officers**

- APPG members held a vote, and the Chair (Selaine Saxby MP) was re-elected, along with all existing officers. Three new officers were elected: Fay Jones (MP for Brecon and Radnorshire), Virginia Crosbie (MP for Ynys Môn) and David Duguid (MP for Banff and Buchan).
- The full list of Officers will be circulated in the next Register of All-Party Parliamentary Groups, which is published every 6 weeks or so.

**Work proposal:**

- Sophie James (Head of Telecoms and Spectrum Policy at techUK and APPG secretariat) presented a work proposal “Future networks and the UK as a science and tech superpower” for APPG activity through 2022-23.
- The government’s 2020 R&D roadmap determined that the UK is internationally recognised for our leadership in research, the excellence of our scientific institutions, and the innovation in our economy. This week this roadmap has been bolstered by confirmation from the Business Secretary of a budget of nearly £40 billion for 2022-25 to help deliver the Innovation Strategy through various agencies and bodies.
- There are many laudable benefits to innovation at a national level: boosting economic growth, increasing productivity, job creation, and building competitiveness.
- Technology is at the heart of this innovation—from AI to digital twins, to robotics and edge computing. But this innovation demands the UK has the future networks it needs to deliver the science and tech superpower agenda.
- In 2022, the APPG for Broadband and Digital Communication could examine the key topics set to determine the UK’s innovation journey through to the 2030s and beyond: how telecoms infrastructure can help deliver the Net Zero strategy, connectivity as a key enabler for new and emerging technologies and businesses and attract the best talent and investment the UK needs as a fully digital society.
- Kickstarting this conversation could be an event exploring the UK’s roadmap for 6G, what funding is required for R&D (the EU has recently confirmed €240 million in public funding for its 6G Research and Innovation Programme).
- Feedback:
  - Simon Baynes, as DCMS PPS, requested a copy of the presentation to share within the Department. Simon also offered help with sharing information, which was gratefully received.
  - Flick Drummond: it would be useful to have an industry session to help understand some of the communications technology and services available in



rural areas. **Action:** Secretariat to organise a “Connectivity Drop-In” in-person event in collaboration with Chair’s office.

- On rural connectivity, the “future networks and tech and science superpower” the rollout of gigabit networks in the UK ties into the issue of connectivity in areas with poor coverage, and how this can benefit businesses looking to digitally transform. There is an expected update on BDUK from DCMS shortly.
- Greg Smith: firstly, an issue that the APPG could focus on is the occurrence of outlying properties being cut off from rollout, very close to villages which have connections. There needs to be a solution to this problem across the UK’s rural areas. Utilising farmers to dig in, could be an option. Secondly, capacity of gigabit networks to serve the diverse needs of households with consumption of high bandwidth services (such as HD streaming or gaming). There needs to be some analysis into how lower-grade fibre connections will be able to meet increasing demand, and where this trend gets to.

Meeting was adjourned at 15:20 by Selaine Saxby MP.



**Attendees**

|                   |                                      |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Selaine Saxby     | MP for North Devon (Chair)           |
| Simon Baynes      | MP for Clwyd South                   |
| Greg Smith        | MP for Buckingham (Officer)          |
| David Simmonds    | MP for Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner |
| Jerome Mayhew     | MP for Broadland (Officer)           |
| Holly Mumby-Croft | MP for Scunthorpe                    |
| Flick Drummond    | MP for Meon Valley (Officer)         |
| Greg Smith        | MP for Buckingham (Officer)          |
| Sophie James      | techUK (Secretariat)                 |
| Aiden Ronson      | Selaine Saxby MP's Office            |