

All-Party Parliamentary Group for Broadband and Digital Communication
Meeting Minutes: 5G in the UK
16/03/2021

Opening

The meeting of the APPG for Broadband and Digital Communication was called to order at 14:00 on 16/03/2021 by Selaine Saxby MP. Selaine welcomed attendees and our speakers for today's event: 5G rollout in the UK.

Industry speakers

- Abel Mayal, Airspan: view from global 4G and 5G solution provider, with a large R&D presence in the UK, currently engaged with UK mobile network operators on Open RAN solutions (disaggregated networks), including the Port of Bristol 5G Testbeds and Trial project.
- Paul Morris, Vodafone: mobile network operator perspective on lessons from the past year, in terms of digital adoption and changes in attitudes (digital will be key to sustainable recovery). Focus should be on 5G's benefits for businesses (growth of private networks in manufacturing, transport, education). The Shared Rural Network is a model that should be replicated more widely in the mobile industry.
- Paul Stonadge, Cellnex UK: telecoms infrastructure provider, with over 8000 sites in the UK, including small cells in urban environments. 5G will be an important foundational technology as the UK economy recovers from the pandemic, with good connectivity benefitting consumers and businesses.
- Rhys Enfield, West Midlands 5G: WM5G was founded as a 5G Testbeds and Trials project in March 2019 aiming to accelerate 5G deployment and adoption, and testing and proving its applications, in four key areas: 5G application accelerator for businesses; transport use cases; healthcare; and manufacturing.

Q&A and open issues

- Increasing understanding of 5G among UK citizens at a local level
 - Important to make the business case for 5G, with use cases in rural areas of particular importance, and how to industrialise
 - How 5G infrastructure is executed is also important, with collaboration on delivery, as well as increasing awareness of other technology options
 - Information sharing through local authorities and councils is also useful, particularly on the benefits of 5G technology
- Domestic capability in the UK telecoms supply chain:
 - The 5G Supply Chain Diversification Strategy has pointed to Open RAN as a way for the UK to develop strengths in the UK value chain
 - The UK may take a leading position in one part of the value chain, such as chipset/software design
 - Support for diversification should include R&D tax credits
- Barriers to rollout of 5G and mobile infrastructure and policy levers:
 - Proposed changes to the [Electronic Communications Code](#) (consultation closes on 24 March; [Speed Up Britain campaign](#))



- Alternative connectivity options:
 - Satellite, which can help with coverage for very remote areas, backhaul for mobile is nearly there for 5G
 - Fixed Wireless Access: could be a viable option in the gigabit programme
- Blockers to connectivity on road and rail transport corridors:
 - Connectivity needs to be considered in the round, and not as an add-on for other types of infrastructure such as railways
 - Road and rail assets should be made freely available for communications infrastructure

Adjournment

Please follow the APPG on Twitter here: <https://twitter.com/AppgDigicomms>. Meeting was adjourned at 15:00 by Selaine Saxby MP. The next meeting is at 14:00 on [21 April 2021](#) on the Levelling Up Agenda.



Attendees

Name	Company (if information available)
Sophie James	techUK
Matt Evans	techUK
Richard Wilson	techUK
Jo O'Riordan	techUK
Julia Ofori-Addo	techUK
Selaine Saxby (Chair)	-
Henrietta	-
Rhys Enfield	WM5G Limited
Karen Green	-
Paul Stonadge	Cellnex UK
David Meyer	Beacon Technology Services Ltd
Jacob Proffitt	-
Antony	-
William Frost	-
Simon Moore	-
Ben Roome	Digital Mobile Spectrum Ltd
Paul Morris	-
Abel Mayal	-
Kamala Mackinnon	Vodafone
Mike Knuckey	-
Henry Darren	-
Oliver Wilkinson	-
John Okas	Real Wireless
Adam Gibbor	-
Ted Wilson	-
Tom Leighton	-
Simon Whelband	-
Frances Mckenna	-
Jack Masterman	-
Chad Male	-
Calum McGrath	-
Henry Johnson	Farcombe
Jane B. Hunt	-
Simon Fletcher	Real Wireless
Stephen Timms	House of Commons, Defence Committee
David Manson	-
Niamh Forgy	-
Chris (Geoffrey Cox MP Office)	-
Ryan Pratt (Lord Taylor's Office)	-
Sally-Ann Hart	-
Tom Davis	Avast
David Willis	HMT
Lewis Leach (Andy Carter MP)	-
Lewis Brown (Brownland)	-
Arthur Virgo	-
Ray Faulder-Jones	-



Hefin Rees Edwards	-
Ric Reilly	Hart Communications Consulting LLC
Sam Winterbottom	Gamma Business Communications Limited
Stuart B. Crown	-
William Haslam	-
Peter Curnow-Ford	Viatec
Jamie Hall (Office of Dr. Neil Hudson, MP)	-
Noemi de Hevia Mendez	CGI UK IT LTD
Rosie Cooper	-
Huw Merriman	-
Gareth Alston	OneWeb
Robin Millar	MP
Wendy Chamberlain	MP
Peter Couch	JRC