

# DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR FUTURE ECONOMY AND INNOVATION

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Friday, 5 September 2025 commencing at 1.00 pm and finishing at 1.22 pm.

**Present:**

**Voting Members:** Cllr Ben Higgins – in the Chair

**Shadow Cabinet Members:** Cllr Lee Evans (Oxfordshire Alliance Group)  
Cllr Andrew Crichton (Labour & Cooperative Party Group)

**Officers:** Craig Bower, Digital Connectivity Programme Manager  
Jack Nicholson, Democratic Services Officer

*The Cabinet Member considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.*

## **1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

(Agenda No. 1)

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2 QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

(Agenda No. 2)

There were no questions from County Councillors.

## **3 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS**

(Agenda No. 3)

The Shadow Cabinet Member (Oxfordshire Alliance Group) made a public address regarding Item 4 on the agenda as follows.

The Shadow Cabinet Member thanked the Cabinet Member for his work in his new portfolio and said that he was pleased with officers' work on Mobile Digital Twin. However, he identified that the Office of Communications (Ofcom) already provided a map of the country with data for phone signal quality; Oxfordshire's data was quite granular. He also asked:

1. how the Council intended to translate the proposed investment into infrastructure and whether there was a clear road map of action;
2. whether the Council could get data on indoor phone signal, because the data collected only showed the quality of phone signal outside; and
3. whether there was a limit on capital for the project in the future, and what contingency measures were in place should issues arise.

## **4 MOBILE DIGITAL TWIN**

(Agenda No. 4)

The Digital Connectivity Programme Manager introduced the report and responded to the Shadow Cabinet Member’s public address as follows.

The Programme Manager said that the Mobile Digital Twin would add to Ofcom’s existing map of the country, firstly, by detailing Oxfordshire assets that could be used to improve phone signal quality and, secondly, by giving the Council better data about the challenges residents faced. He said that this data could, in turn, be used to put pressure on network operators to improve service delivery. He also made the following remarks:

- 1. The plan was around recording what could be done to improve outcomes for residents, for instance, by changing antennas’ orientation.
- 2. The plan involved algorithms that could provide some information around what indoor phone signal was like, although that was a challenge.
- 3. The £500,000 investment was enough to capture an evidence-based approach in Oxfordshire and, therefore, remove critical dependence on other authorities investing in similar projects. The Council would retain control via a termination for convenience clause in the contract.

The Programme Manager referred to the government’s plan to have 95 per cent 5G access countrywide in the next five years. He said that in his view, this was not going to be delivered; however, an Oxfordshire mobile digital twin would enable new, more realistic targets for Oxfordshire around improving 5G access for residents.

The Cabinet Member sought and received confirmation that the anonymity of residents would be maintained by M2 Capital Partners UK (Ltd) should he approve the recommendations.

The Shadow Cabinet Member (Oxfordshire Alliance Group) sought and received confirmation that the Mobile Digital Twin’s data, both around infrastructure and connection quality, would be made available to the public. The Programme Manager agreed with the Shadow Cabinet Member that this information should create commercial opportunities across the County.

The Cabinet Member asked if the Shadow Cabinet Member (Labour and Co-operative Party Group) had anything he wanted to say; he did not.

**RESOLVED to**

- a) approve a G-Cloud call off contract for a total contract value of up to £5m; and**
- b) approve the Council’s contribution of £500k toward the total cost of the contract to go alongside contributions from other programme partners.**

..... in the Chair

Date of signing ..... 2026