

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC
Wednesday 9 October 2019

1. QUESTION FROM MR SLEIGH (NOT IN ATTENDANCE)
Re: Climate Change and Meat and Dairy Consumption

Given the declaration of a climate emergency and the global environmental impacts of animal agriculture, what steps are the Council taking to encourage their staff and local residents to reduce consumption of meat and dairy?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

As an immediate response to the climate emergency, the council updated the advice on its website for individuals about how to reduce carbon emissions – this now includes advice on diet and has been circulated to all staff via email - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/energyandclimatechange/saving-energy/top-tips-for-everyone>. In the medium term, through the Devon Climate Emergency project, the Net-Zero Task Force has been charged with developing a Devon Carbon Plan through a set of themed hearings and the use of a citizens' assembly. It is likely that one of the themed hearings will be focussed on issues related to agriculture and food.

2. QUESTION FROM LISA GOUDIE (IN ATTENDANCE)
Re: Power to Cancel 5G Exposure

Do you think that it is possible that considering other cities have cancelled 5G exposure, that we in Devon have the power to do the same?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

It is not clear at present how areas in England could 'cancel' the implementation of 5G. The Government's strategy for future digital infrastructure – full fibre and 5G – is set out in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR), published in 2018. The Government set a target that the majority of the population will be covered by a 5G signal by 2027, delivering ultrafast wireless connectivity.

The County Council is not involved with mobile infrastructure planning applications; this is a District Council responsibility as part of the planning authority remit.

It should be noted that with regard to mobile infrastructure planning requirements, the Government is currently consulting on the reform of permitted development rights to support the deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage. Members of the public are invited to respond to the consultation, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-permitted-development-rights-to-support-the-deployment-of-5g-and-extend-mobile-coverage>

The County Council can determine access to its street furniture for 5G uses and would take guidance from Public Health England in considering any public health risks from 5G deployment from suppliers. Where street furniture is concerned, we are not aware of any Council assets that are currently hosting mobile network operators' 5G technologies, but we would review any such request from mobile network operators in accordance with Government guidance and PHE guidance.

3. QUESTION FROM GABRIELE SIMONS (IN ATTENDANCE)

Re: Internet Speed and 5G

How can Council warrant putting speed of internet access over safety for the welfare of its people, considering there are absolutely no safety guidelines for the new 5G technology. On the contrary, many condemning studies are available and does Council not feel obliged to study them in depth? Council refers to PHE and ICNIRP whose guidelines are irrelevant for the majority of the population, outdated and studies were time-limited, not for 24/7 use.

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

The County Council is not responsible for mobile infrastructure installation (please see my answer to Question 2. above). Public Health England is the statutory organisation with responsibility for health protection, and this County Council is – as are all other Local Authorities – advised by them. Public Health England's specialists in the Centre for Radiation, Chemical and Environmental Hazards (CRCE) have reviewed international evidence including the studies referred to, and are keeping the evidence under active review. Nevertheless, the stated national position on this is that the existing precautionary advice on the use of mobile telecommunications equipment should be followed and that, providing exposure to the internationally-agreed electromagnetic frequencies is not exceeded, there should be no consequences for public health. Nevertheless, Public Health England has committed to monitoring all evidence applicable to this and other radio technologies, and to revising its advice, should this be necessary.

4. QUESTION FROM MARIANNE BONNETA (ATTENDANCE TBC)

Re: Independent Non Industry Funded Experts

Would Devon County council be willing to invite independent non industry funded experts, scientists and doctors to a council meeting to give a talk about the many impacts that non ionizing radiation has on our DNA and on the health of humans, animals, and plants?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

The Government and local authorities take their specialist health protection advice from the statutory national organisation, which is Public Health England.

Such a request would be a matter for the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees who will be considering 5G technology in the near future.

5. QUESTION FROM CHARLIE KAY (IN ATTENDANCE)

Re: Application of the Precautionary principle and Out of Date Research

I recently attended the International Conference of Electronic Magnetic Fields and Radiation at the end of September in London. Professor and scientist, all peer reviewed and renown in their field of expertise stood up, one after the other, and presented their research over the last 10 years and more. All their research indicated harmful effects of EMF's, at below current guidelines, including carcogens, damaged DNA, emotional and mental trauma, and significantly increased damage to sperm and fertility.

Is the council aware that the guidelines suggested by ICNIRP, the Independent Council of Non Ionising Radiation Protection, and which PHE, Public Health England, adhere to are based on outdated research from 30 years ago, exposure of no longer than 6 minutes and was about the heating of the body, not about non-ionising radiation which is now proven (the science is no longer in question) to have significant harm on humans, pollinators and life?

This relates to current EMF's; broadband, wifi, phones, etc and the implementation of 5G, which is far more intrusive with regards to the effects it will have on the human body, will have devastating effects. There has been NO research into the effects of 5G. Will the council

therefore impose the precautionary principle and put a moratorium on the roll out of 5G until independent (and I stress independent) research has been done then proves it to be safe?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

Firstly, I must reiterate that the Government and local authorities take their specialist health protection advice from the statutory national organisation, which is Public Health England, and which keeps its advice updated based on the latest national and international research.

In terms of what action is possible by the County Council, it is not responsible for mobile infrastructure planning. The County Council can determine access to its street furniture for 5G uses and would take guidance from Public Health England in considering any public health risks from 5G deployment from suppliers. Where street furniture is concerned, we are not aware of any Council assets that are currently hosting mobile network operators' 5G technologies, but we would review any such request from mobile network operators in accordance with Government guidance and PHE guidance.

6. QUESTION FROM CLIFF MOORE (IN ATTENDANCE)

Re: Duty of Care

It is my understanding that the electorate vote on a local basis for public health and environmental safety to be checked and balanced as per the councils Constitution statements on your duty of care.

Regarding the existing and now impending UNLAWFUL roll out of harmful untested and uninsurable WIFI microwave technology infrastructure within the boundary's of DCC.

It seems that you have sadly been deceived or have knowingly made yourselves redundant and incapable to serve the electorate in your duty of care.

My Question is why do we need you if you cannot full fill your sworn and fundamental Obligations to public safety?.

And how have you allowed your powers to serve your community to be diminished to allow central government to dictate to us in this un democratic way.

How can we together return democracy to the electorate and this County once again.

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

While local authorities' democratic accountabilities cover a wide range of responsibilities, it is important to make it clear that matters of health protection and environmental safety are not the statutory responsibility of Devon County Council.

5G implementation is part of the Government's national Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review (FTIR) which was published in 2018.

Any concerns you have about national Government policy should be raised with your Member of Parliament.

7. QUESTION FROM RHIANNON AUGENTHALER (IN ATTENDANCE)

Re: Independent Studies

I have attended the international conference - "Radiation health: get the facts" in London on the 28th of October 2019 during which international scientists informed us about the serious

consequences and accumulative health effects of constant exposure to non ionizing radiation and of the fact that due to these consequences thousands of scientists, professors and doctors around the world advise us to do a lot more independent non industry funded research to find out whether or not it is safe for our health and for our environment to introduce the technologies associated with 5G and with exposure to increased emf radiation prior to considering the roll out of 5G.

Can Devon County Council contact PHE England and ICIRNP and ask them on behalf of the constituents of this county to provide us with one independent peer reviewed study during which subjects of the study have been exposed to the levels of radiation present in 5G 24/7 for at least one year with the results of the study being that there are no adverse health effects and can you make their response publicly accessible?

REPLY BY COUNCILLOR CROAD

In relation to specific research on the implementation of 5G user devices and networks, the technology is at an early stage. Use of higher levels of non-ionising radiation for 5G (approximately ten times higher than those used by current network technologies, up to a few tens of GigaHertz) is not new, and the current International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection, ICNIRP) guidelines apply up to 300 GigaHertz. Health-related research has been conducted on this topic over several decades. In particular, a large amount of new scientific evidence has emerged over the past few years through dedicated national and international research programmes that have addressed concerns about rapidly-proliferating wireless technologies. It is acknowledged that fewer studies have been carried out at the higher frequencies, but I am happy to enquire of PHE with regard to the specific research question on your behalf.