

Minutes**RESIDENTS' AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

6 October 2011



**Meeting held at Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW**

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Michael Markham (Chairman) Susan O'Brien (Vice-Chairman) Jazz Dhillon Shirley Harper-O'Neill Judy Kelly David Payne David Yarrow</p> <p>Witnesses Present: Mr William Comery, Community Affairs Manager, Three Ms Christine Jude, Media and Communications Manager, Mobile Operators Association Mr James Rodger - Head of Planning, LBH Mr Gareth Gwynne – Planning Advisor, LBH Mr Roger Bearpark – ICT Service Manager, LBH</p> <p>Officers present: Natasha Dogra, Democratic Service Officer, LBH</p>	
22.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT ANY ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (Agenda Item 3)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items on the agenda were marked Part 1 and were therefore considered in public.</p>	Action by
23.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2011 (Agenda Item 4)</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record by the Committee.</p>	Action by
24.	<p>REVIEW 1 - WITNESS SESSION 2 (Agenda Item 5)</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed the following Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mr William Comery, Community Affairs Manager, Three ▪ Ms Christine Jude, Media and Communications Manager, Mobile Operators Association ▪ Mr James Rodger - Head of Planning, LBH ▪ Mr Gareth Gwynne – Planning Advisor, LBH ▪ Mr Roger Bearpark – ICT Service Manager, LBH 	Action by

Cllr Markham said the aim of the review was to look into the future growth of mobile telephone masts and ancillary equipment and the effects on the residents and environment of Hillingdon and beyond.

Members asked whether it was National Policy to make decisions on telecommunications mast placement without taking health aspects into account. Officers said National Government had indicated that so long as base stations conform to International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidelines they were not dangerous to health. These guidelines were issued in 1998 and were constantly reviewed by ICNIRP which consists of scientists from across the world. In 2009/10 ICNIRP undertook a full scientific review of their guidelines which resulted in no major changes being made to their policy. The organisation set guidelines for every frequency. ICNIRP would be holding their first ever meeting in the UK in 2012 in Edinburgh to undertake a full scientific review of their policies.

Members asked Officers what were the key health issues raised by members of the public with mobile phone operators? Officers said concerns had been raised about the effect of radio waves on humans. Officers said their answer was that research from Central Government, the World Health Organisation and ICNIRP suggested that the frequencies of these waves were very low and therefore not harmful to humans.

Each antenna had either an 'occupational exclusion zone' or 'public exclusion zone' set around it. Occupational exclusion zones were for people working close to antenna. The exclusion perimeter was dependant on the strength of the waves. Public exclusion zones were set for members of the public. For example, for 3G signal the occupational exclusion zone was set at 1m in front of antenna.

Each telecommunications application considered by the Planning Authority must hold an ICNIRP certificate to indicate that the site had been investigated and did not pose any health and safety issues. Mr James Rodger confirmed that mast applications received by the London Borough of Hillingdon did include ICNIRP certificates but did not state what the signal strength would be or what exclusion zone had been decided.

Members asked if radio waves were dangerous to human beings. Officers said all waves could be dangerous depending on how close the person was standing to the outlet. If a person was standing next to a very large output of waves it could result in injury such as skin burn. However, for large waves outlets were not placed within the reach of members of the public.

Members asked whether Mobile Operators exceeded the signal strength limit imposed on them by ICNIRP. Officers said the limit could not be exceeded on any mast. Officers said it was in the operator's interest to operate at lower less expensive frequencies. Mr Rodger said that masts did not have to renew their ICNIRP certificates during their lifespan.

Members asked Officers whether Mobile Operators were sharing masts. Officers said Operators were increasingly sharing masts with different companies: '3' and 'T-mobile' shared almost 100% of their telecommunication masts and ancillary equipment. Vodafone and O2 were also investigating ways of developing joint sites. Officers said masts and boxes were being shared however there was a limit on how much equipment could be placed inside the roadside cabinet POW (Portatsor Optima Weatherproof cabinet).

Member asked Officers what 4G technology would bring to the industry. Officers said 4G would be operating on two new frequencies – 800MHz and 2600MHz. The lower frequency would be used for frequent exchanges of large data. Lower frequencies were able to travel further, while higher frequencies were less powerful. The frequency for National Rail radios was 900MHz while the Police operated at the frequency of 450MHz. Officers said the 4G technology was still being investigated and the frequencies and issues of mast sharing were yet to be determined.

Officers said it was within the interest of operators to share masts, as each mast could cost between £40,000 to £80,000. Members asked whether operators and manufactures had attempted to design the box cabinet within the mast. Officers had seen this but it was very expensive. Officers said cabinets had to be placed above ground as they emitted heat and had to be serviced regularly. Members asked whether cabinets were covered in anti-graffiti paint. Officers said this could be done and operators worked as quickly as possible to remove any graffiti.

Members queried whether radio waves intermixed and overlapped. Officers said waves do not mix as this would result in interference issues. All operators had to conform to Non-interference Standards.

Members asked how much equipment could be held in the POW cabinets. Officers said one dozen data cards the size of an average laptop could be kept within one cabinet. However, the amount of data on each site was different and so the amount of equipment differed. Officers said the colour of the boxes could be changed, however the shape was limited. If operators were offered a number of different styles it may result in increasing costs for operators and manufactures.

The Committee asked Officers whether mast disguising should be encouraged. Officers said this was a very expensive exercise but if a design was investigated and was feasible at a reasonable cost, operators may be inclined to disguise their masts. Officers said it would be a good idea to offer a catalogue of designs for cabinets and masts for operators to choose from. Members asked whether it was possible to place a 'dome' shape over rooftop antenna. Officers said this had been done at Windsor Police Station and could be further investigated.

Officers said the design of the mast and ancillary equipment would be discussed during the application stage with Planning Advisors. At the moment it was difficult to place masts on or near street lamps as this resulted in objections from Highways Engineers.

	<p>Officers said it was difficult to see where the technology was heading in the future, but the only certain thing was that masts were here to stay for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee noted the information from the witnesses 2. Members asked Officers to circulate a list of relevant websites regarding the technology and design of telecommunications masts. 	Natasha Dogra, Democratic Service Officer
25.	FORWARD PLAN <i>(Agenda Item 6)</i>	Action by
	<p>Resolved:</p> <p>The Committee considered and noted the Forward Plan.</p>	
26.	WORK PROGRAMME 2010 <i>(Agenda Item 7)</i>	Action by
	<p>Resolved:</p> <p>The Committee considered and noted the Work Programme.</p>	
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 5.30 pm, closed at 7.00 pm.</p>	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Natasha Dogra on 01895 277 488. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.