

**Providing Council with Written Responses to Questions asked at Council  
27 November 2019**

1.	<p><b>Janet Lovell and Shey Edlington Douglas</b></p> <p><b>In relation to Minute 99 – “Public Questions” – Questions 5 &amp; 10, 5G</b></p> <p>1. “Given the repeated evidence of the collapse of bee colonies following exposure to quite small quantities of WiFi radiation, what steps are the council taking to protect local parks, wild life and bee colonies from the proven damaging effects of 5G radiation when it is activated in Swansea?”</p> <p>2. “Swansea Council has officially declared a climate emergency so how can councillors stand back as the tech industry installs the infrastructure for 5G given that the anticipated carbon foot print of just 4G equivalent to the whole world’s aviation industry combined is set to double by 2020 but will exponentially increase with 5G?”</p> <p><b>Response of the Leader</b></p> <p>May I take this opportunity to let you know that the safety of our citizens and wild life is always going to be paramount when Swansea Council roll out new technologies and innovations.</p> <p>Public Health England (“PHE”) has recently updated its advice in respect of 5G and states: “It is possible that there may be a small increase in overall exposure to radio waves when 5G is added to an existing network or in a new area. However, the overall exposure is expected to remain low relative to guidelines and, as such, there should be no consequences for public health.</p> <p>Even though there is currently no specific fixed date around the implementation of 5G in Swansea, it has the potential to provide a new level of underlying connectivity to transform services within our City and help us become a smarter city, delivering huge cost and time savings.</p> <p>Matt Warman MP (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Digital and Broadband) has recently written to all local authorities outlining his thoughts on 5G and confirming that he will be working with Ofcom, PHE and the telecommunication network operators to help us understand more about the technology and the science relating to any 5G health concerns.</p> <p>The telecommunication network providers also have responsibilities on health and well-being and they are committed to follow the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection guidelines (ICNIRP) guidelines.</p> <p>ICNIRP is an independent organisation which is formally recognized by the World Health Organisation. It issues guidelines on exposure to electromagnetic fields, based upon the consensus view of a large amount of research carried out over many years.</p> <p>I can assure you, Swansea Council will continue to work with UK and Welsh governments to investigate the impacts of 5G technology and discuss our finding with all stakeholders.</p>
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**Nortridge Perrot**

**In relation to Minute 99 – “Public Questions” – Questions 7 & 11, HMOs**

1. “Could the Council say if this PINS decision is susceptible to similar s288 Statutory Challenge/Review as the sandwiching policy within H9 was not considered in the reasoning given?”
2. “Whose view of the Sustainable Devt Principle, Well Being objectives and the WCFG Act –Goal of Cohesive Communities should prevail or be preferred?”
3. “What specific actions are being undertaken by the Council to rectify, remedy or otherwise correct this PINS challenge to the H9 policy and say how and when during the AMR Process the CCS will reflect any procedural and substantive deficiencies in the operation of the LPA or H9 policy?”
4. What statutory guidance and / or ministerial directions to PINS Inspectors could be litigated to achieve consistency and comprehensibility and does the CCS think that the WFG Act Commissioner [Menu for Action for Planning actors] is helpful / useful?”
5. “Is this accurate for the Council [CCS] and say what is the basis of the £2.4mn investment figure & say if the s13A Provisions were used?”
6. “Does the Council have any plans to promote, instigate or otherwise facilitate the above modus operandi within the CCS area and describe the consequent use of the s13A Provisions?”

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Delivery & Performance**

1. Any planning inspectorate decision can be subject to challenge by the Council or third party if it is made correctly and within the required timescales.
2. Each planning application or appeal is considered on its own individual merits but as in this appeal the Planning Inspectorate represents the higher authority unless the decision is subsequently challenged through the courts by the Council or an interested party.
3. The Authority has been in discussions with the Chief Planning Inspector regarding the interpretation of LDP policy H9 and the Council is in the process of adopting Supplementary Planning Guidance on HMO’s and Purpose Built Student Accommodation to support its interpretation of policy.

In-line with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 76) and Local Development Plan (LDP) Regulation 37, the Council will publish and submit to Welsh Government (WG) an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) setting out how the objectives of the Plan are being achieved. AMRs are the mechanism to assess the delivery and implementation of the Plan’s strategy. The first AMR following adoption of the LDP earlier this year is due by 31st October 2020 (in-line with the WG Guidance which states that the first AMR should be submitted by the 31<sup>st</sup>

October in the year following adoption of the LDP, unless less than 12 months would have passed since adoption). The published AMR will be publically available on the Council's website. Table 14 of the Swansea LDP sets out the monitoring indicators for the Plan which will form the basis of the AMR. The indicator for Policy H 9 on HMOs is Indicator 10 which is described on p341 of the LDP. The Council will monitor the number of registered HMOs within the Castle and Uplands Wards, to ensure the number of HMOs as a proportion of the total number of residential properties within the HMO Management Area does not significantly exceed the 25% threshold. Council databases will be used as the data source. A trigger point is identified where action may be required if the average concentration of HMO's within the Lower Super Output Areas of the HMO Management Area either reduces or increases by +/- 2% from the base level, which is currently around 25%.

4. The policies of the LDP have been subject to Examination. The Examination process found the Plan to be sound and in accordance with the objectives of the WFG Act and Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10<sup>th</sup>). It is a matter of interpretation whether Inspectors consider a particular proposal complies with the requirements of locally adopted policy and National Guidance, based upon the circumstances and evidence before them at the time of determination.

5. The Council has provided Welsh Government funded Houses into Homes / Landlord loans (up to end of June 2019) of £2.55 million to bring back into use 65 empty properties creating 110 units of accommodation. The loan scheme does not use s.13a powers.

6. Welsh Government is currently looking at introducing a national private sector leasing scheme. The Council is committed to considering all possible options, including private sector leasing, to assist empty home owners in bringing their properties back in to use.

3. **Councillor C A Holley**

**In relation to Minute 109 "Councillors' Questions" Q1**

"Can you please specifically outline what the surplus car park monies were used for?"

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management**

The income and expenditure in car parking forms part of the overall budget for Highways and Transportation. In addition to this, any surpluses from on street parking and traffic enforcement are reinvested in improving on street enforcement and also used for traffic and road safety improvement schemes in line with Section 55 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

The overall funding contributes to;

- Maintenance and improvements within the car parks
- Supporting the Council's Park and Ride operation
- Traffic Management and Road Safety including providing a school crossing patrol service, road traffic advice, speed surveys and analysis and collision analysis and accident investigation.

4.

**Councillor SM Jones**

**In relation to Minute 109 “Councillors’ Questions” Q2**

“Could the Cabinet Member look into the possibility of placing an Amnesty Skip at Civic Amenity Sites at certain periods of the year?”

**Response of the Cabinet Member for Environment & Infrastructure Management**

In response to the suggestion for periodic amnesty skips for wood at the Recycling Centres, I would not support this due to the fact that this wood may not be recyclable going forward if circumstances change, the confusion this could cause for residents leading to them taking wood to those sites outside the amnesty period, the adverse impact on the Recycling Centres other materials, there not being room to do this at Penlan or Garngoch following improvements for other waste streams, and due to increased costs.

We did experience a small number of complaints in the first few months of implementing these changes. However the number of complaints have reduced, and in the last 3 months we have received no complaints at all. It now appears that this change has settled down well, and to introduce an ongoing varying service for wood is likely to cause more problems than benefits.

I have asked the Waste Team to explore options to ease queueing at Llansamlet HWRC at peak times such as Easter and May Day Bank Holidays.