



**Information Governance Team**

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Dear Sir/Madam

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)**

**Request ID: FOI436767164**

Thank you for your request for information relating to 5G infrastructure.

You have requested the following information:

**1. Insurance companies have stated that RFR is a high risk for them and generally exclude it from policies; Have you checked the insurances of the Council with regard to cover of RFR related damage? Provide evidence that you can support, potentially for life, any individual or group affected, should such ever occur and be proven;**

The Council's liability policy has no specific exclusion in relation to radio frequency radiation.

**2. Safeguarding: what measures and policies do you have for protecting those people who may be more vulnerable to RFR? Including, but not limited to, children, elderly, those with chronic sickness, people with implanted medical devices or metal, people already affected (including functional impairment) by current levels of RFR;**

The rollout of 5G is a commercial rollout rather than delivered by the Council. Decisions on the rollout itself are made by the Mobile Network Operators in line with their own network requirements and plans. The electronic communications code, set out in Schedule 3A of the Communications Act 2003, is a set of rights that are designed to facilitate the installation and maintenance of electronic communications networks.

The Code confers rights on providers of such networks and on providers of systems of infrastructure to install and maintain apparatus on, under and over land. The ability of councils to

influence the roll-out of mobile technology is limited by central government regulations.

As a Planning Authority, we can only comment on some aspects of the proposed siting and appearance of the masts. We encourage pre-application discussions with Mobile Network Operators to agree locations considering factors affecting the visual impact of new electronic communications infrastructure.

The UK Health Security Agency is the independent public body responsible for assessing public safety with respect to radio waves and public health, including 5G. Please see the link below to the agency's latest guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/5g-technologies-radio-waves-and-health/5g-technologies-radio-waves-and-health#public-exposure>

Based on the agency's review of all of the scientific evidence it concludes "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."

With regards to the specific questions relating to the WMCA/WM5G 5G testbed, your query would be best directed to WM5G who are leading on this trial activity across the region. They can be contacted at the following email address:

[enquiries@wm5g.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@wm5g.org.uk)

**3. Safeguarding also includes health and safety at every workplace; What consideration has been given to Councillors and the Council employees to ensure that their work environments are safe and healthy? How are you monitoring the health of your staff with relevance to 7 below?**

The Council employs a team of experienced and qualified Health and Safety Officers, who actively audit, inspect and monitor the working environment. There are consultation arrangements to include the Chief Executive, senior managers, trade unions and employees, in health and safety matters. Accidents and incidents are recorded, investigated and reported to the Health and Safety Executive where required.

**4. Safeguarding: Possibly the most important places needing safeguarding are hospitals, nursing homes, care homes and other medical facilities; Apart from staff themselves, such places hold some of the most vulnerable in society; What studies have been done, especially in places such as intensive care centres, to ascertain the increased risks and what measures taken to minimise those risks?**

**Note that ICNIRP states "" "Medical procedures may utilize EMFs, and metallic implants may alter or perturb EMFs in the body, which in turn can affect the body both directly (via direct interaction between field and tissue) and indirectly (via an intermediate conducting object) "**  
**This is outside the scope of the guidelines;**

We can confirm that we do not hold this information and are advising you as per Section 1(1) of the Act. This information is not held by Coventry City Council, this information is held by University

Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire. Freedom of Information Requests can be made to the following email:

foi@uhcw.nhs.uk

**5. Safeguarding also includes environmental health including air pollution (eg 'electrosmog'), safety of nature within SSSI and PSI designated sites and the protection of flora and fauna especially where there are known protected species or sub-species such as bats or newts; What studies have you done or consulted to ascertain the level of risk to such places and more generally to all species on the planet; Take particular note of studies on insects\*\*" as many insects have an important role in the pollination of crops - even though WMCA is not noted as a major agricultural hub, insects take no notice of human designated zones;**

Please refer to Question 2.

**6. Schools and colleges are places where children of all ages congregate for several hours each weekday; They will also have outdoor play areas for both facilitated exercise and non-facilitated; What planning policy is in place so that telecoms equipment is sufficiently far away so the strongest signals will not reach them?**

Policy C2 covers the local telecoms policies, there are no direct requirements regarding proximity to schools or other locations, but applicants are reminded of the requirement of "the need for the ICNIRP Guidelines, and any other relevant guidance in place at the time of the application, for safe emissions to be met".

**7. Provide details that you have carried out an independent, thorough and sufficiently informed assessment of the risks posed to public health by the use of 5G wireless technology including (but not only) the use of collimated beams which is a very different technique in addition to those of earlier telecom systems and of the scope of that assessment;**

**8. As one of seven LPA's within the WMCA, Coventry City is part of the UK's large-scale testbed for the rollout of 5G as announced in December 2018; For any testbed or trial (a word used on the WMCA website) it is essential that there is a plan that includes start and end dates, measures to judge 'success' and 'failure', monitoring against those measures, regular and frequent reviews of progress which include a decision on cessation or continuation and changes, a permanent team to guide the "trial", a recording system and record keeping of the monitoring;**

**In addition there should be a control city within WMCA\* where no 5G monopole towers or other structures will be erected which will have the same monitoring exercise for comparison with Coventry City; Where is that control? Without these organisational aspects it is not a testbed or trial; It is just a policy;**

**\* Within WMCA to reduce the differences and make an easier comparison to judge success or failure**

**9. As part of the testbed (trial) demonstrate the prior consultation exercise that was done within Coventry City and the information that was supplied to all members of the public and**

**to give them the opportunity to express their opinions fully in sufficient numbers to be truly representative; Normally this would exclude comments from partner companies and business stakeholders as they would be seen as biased. Provide documentation that was given to members of the public including balanced evidence of risks and benefits and how and where it was issued, for example a letter to every payer of Council Tax. Itemise the results of the consultation;**

**10. Given that you must be aware that ICNIRP guidelines take account only of thermal (i.e. heating) effects and that the original studies were in 1993, since when thousands of research studies have shown biological effects from the non-ionising range before reaching heating levels, what additional research have you done to assure yourselves, the Council and the public, that the standards you are using are safe and wise in all circumstances? It is also the case that since then mobile phone use and other exposures have increased dramatically; That standard is based on a mere 6 minutes of exposure. Please also comment on the facts that ICNIRP is a private company, not an NGO nor an authority and whose committee members are noted to have potential conflicts of interest. Dr Sarah Starkey has written an original paper in 2016“ and despite minor changes to ICNIRP and other committees (AGNIR, now closed, and PHE, now UKHSA) the arguments remain valid; She has also supplied evidence to a recent judicial review in the UK;**

For Questions 7 to 10, please refer to Question 2

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: [infogov@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:infogov@coventry.gov.uk)

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email [icocasework@ico.org.uk](mailto:icocasework@ico.org.uk).

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

**Information Governance**