

Call for Evidence – the Implementation of 5G Connectivity to the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) area.

By - Councillor Philip Broadhead, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board at Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council.

Details of the Call for Evidence – Views are sought in relation to the implementation of 5G connectivity to the BCP area.

Reasons for inquiry – Residents, businesses, organisations and academia of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole have made representations to the Council in relation to the introduction of 5G connectivity to the area. In response to this, and in order to gain a better understanding of views, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Board has arranged an opportunity for the submission of views to the Board on the matter of 5G connectivity. By giving those with an interest in this field a forum to bring evidence to the Council, it will enable Councillors to look in real detail at the balance between the perceived benefits and concerns relating to 5G connectivity. All views are invited to assist the O&S Board in gaining a full understanding of the issues and public opinion relating to the roll-out of 5G connectivity. The views received may prompt the O&S Board to undertake further work to investigate the matter of 5G connectivity and the implications of this, and to make recommendations to the Cabinet or to organisations external to the Council as a result.

Key lines of inquiry – At this initial stage, the Chairman is posing the following broad questions:

- What are the perceived benefits to the area as a result of the implementation of 5G?
- What are the perceived concerns relating to the implementation of 5G?

An inquiry is only as good as the evidence it receives. These questions are prompts to assist respondents and all comments are welcome. This may include submissions from business owners, industry experts, academics, those within the health profession, representatives of action groups and organisations and those acting alone. All views are welcomed.

What is overview and scrutiny and a call for evidence? - Overview and scrutiny (O&S) is a function of the Council which enables Councillors to look in greater detail at decisions being made inside and outside the Council and matters of concern to residents. Overview and Scrutiny in BCP Council is formed of three separate committees with Councillors sitting on them. If Councillors feel that action is required, some of the options available for O&S are:

- Recommendations to other parts of the Council;
- Recommendations to external organisations;
- Lobbying;
- Assistance in the development of policy.

Overview and Scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects ‘the area, or the area’s inhabitants’.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is formed of 15 councillors who meet monthly.

Ways to respond to the call for evidence -The public may respond to the call for evidence in two ways:

- **Verbal submissions:**

The O&S Board Chairman has put aside time at the Board meeting of 23 September 2019 to receive views on the matter of 5G. The meeting will take place at the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Christchurch, BH23 1AZ. A period of one and a half hours has been allotted, from 4pm, to provide opportunity for those interested to attend and address the Board in this respect. Those wishing to speak are asked to submit their intention to do so in advance by 12 noon, Friday 20 September 2019 to 5GEvidence@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

A maximum of 5 minutes per speaker will be provided on a first come first served basis. Members of groups and organisations are asked to elect a spokesperson to avoid duplication of submissions and enable as many views as possible to be heard. Those speaking may be asked questions by members of the O&S Board or other speakers on what they have said. Anyone interested is welcome to attend and speak. The Chairman will provide equal opportunity for perceived concerns and benefits to be expressed.

- **Written submissions:**

Written views may also be provided to the O&S Board. These may be submitted to the Board by email, or paper copy by post, using the below contact details. Submissions with a maximum length of four sides of A4 are requested.

Email: 5GEvidence@bcpcouncil.gov.uk

Post: The O&S Specialist, Democratic Services, BCP Council, Town Hall, Bourne Avenue, Bournemouth, BH2 6DY

The opening date for written submissions is 10 September 2019.

The closing date for written submissions is 7 October 2019.

Next steps – After the closing date of this call for evidence, all views submitted in written and verbal form will be gathered and provided as evidence to the O&S Board to discuss. The Board will take account of this information at its meeting on 11 November 2019 and consider whether any further scrutiny work is required on this matter.

Should additional scrutiny work be commissioned as a result of these considerations, key lines of inquiry may then be refined to ensure that the review is focused and its outcomes will be able to add value to the Council and the residents of the area. If you have responded to the call for evidence, the Board may want to talk to you again at this stage to hear more and help in further work – please let us know if you would be happy to be contacted in this respect when you provide your submission.

Further options for the O&S Board to agree on 11 November may include the commissioning of working group or a public inquiry day to discuss 5G connectivity further and agree a set of recommendations; or a recommendation to another part of the Council for further work to be done in respect of 5G. The O&S Board may also consider that information provided in the call for evidence does not indicate a need for further work. These options will be considered in full by the O&S Board at its meeting on 11 November 2019.

Information for respondents:

- Respondents to all opportunities for submission of views are asked to include contact details of the person or organisation submitting the evidence. All submissions will be treated as evidence to support future O&S work on this matter and as such may become in part or in full a supporting document to a public report of the Council. Any respondent wishing their submission to remain non-public is asked to state this and the reasons for this within their submission.
- If you have responded to this call for evidence we will share with you information on this matter as it progresses. Please provide contact details to enable us to do this.
- If you have responded to this call for evidence, the Board may want to talk to you to hear more – please let us know if you would be happy to be contacted in this respect when you provide your submission.
- Those attending meetings of the Council should note that these are public meetings. Please note that meetings are audio recorded by the Council for subsequent public broadcast, and may also be filmed by the Council for live or subsequent broadcast. The meeting may also be audio recorded and/or filmed for live or subsequent broadcast by members of the public. Public meetings of the Council are open to the use of Social Media by attendees to report on any part of the meeting via Twitter, YouTube, Facebook and blogs. Any member of the public attending meetings of the O&S Board to submit views and not wishing to be recorded in any format should make this view known to the Chairman prior to the meeting by informing Democratic Services using the contact details at the bottom of this advisory note. The Chairman's decision regarding the permission of recording in any format of his meeting will be final.
- All enquiries relating to this call for evidence should be made to 5GEvidence@bcpcouncil.gov.uk