

Question from Councillor Alison Wheelhouse to Councillor Gareth Williams, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration

“Given recent multiple Permitted Development “prior notification” applications for 15m high mobile phone masts across the county, and in view of the recently completed Government consultation on this topic, please will the Cabinet Member for Planning and the Leader ensure that: **1.** a new Electronic Communications Supplementary Planning Document be implemented as soon as possible; and **2.** that an Article 4 Direction be made without delay in relation to permitted development rights for electronic communications masts and cabinets, so that these will require planning consent and can be called-in to planning committee. The SPD and Art.4 Directions are needed for the following reasons:

- To avoid piecemeal applications for masts and associated cabinets from multiple carriers and to implement a strategic overview.
- The need for a clear policy on mast sharing, site sharing and a requirement for submission of data on existing availability and sharing facilities in any given area.
- To maximise the use of existing sites and masts.
- Much distress is being caused to communities by carriers making unsuitable prior notification applications under the current permitted development rules, leaving communities with limited voice on the matter. This issue will be further aggravated if proposals are implemented as set out in the Government’s recently completed technical consultation, which would allow masts up to 15m as permitted development without need for prior approval.

In summary, could the Cabinet Member please confirm what steps the Council intends to take to address the points raised above at 1. and 2.?”