

### **3 TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND HEALTH (AN216-2006)**

With reference to the terms of Article 1(b) of the minutes of meeting of this Committee of 5 December 2005 the Director of Planning and Transportation was remitted to contact the Health Protection Agency (HPA) with a view to establishing the current position with regard to health concerns in connection with telecommunications apparatus.

A letter was issued to the HPA on 13 December 2005 summarising the Council's concerns and requesting clarification as to when it expects research to have reached such a stage that revised and unambiguous guidance to local authorities can be issued in respect of the undertaking of their duties as planning authorities.

Following the issuing of a reminder letter on 6 March 2006 and a telephone call to the HPA a letter of apology for the lateness of response was received from Sir William Stewart, Chairman of the agency on 16 May 2006. A full response letter dated 19 May 2006, from the Deputy Director of HPA, has now been received.

Copies of all the correspondence are available in the Members' Lounges.

The main response letter outlines the extent of and progress with technical research and indicates how the industry, government and the Board of the National Radiological Protection Board (now HPA) have been working together to offer advice and information to the public. The letter also indicates that Sir William Stewart is concerned that people should be involved in the choice of sites for telecommunications stations in their local areas and that planning authorities should take local concerns into account.

No indication in the letter is given as to if and when revised/updated guidance may be issued to planning authorities either nationally or in Scotland.

Finally, the Deputy Director indicates that he would be prepared to organise a visit to Dundee to address the Council's concerns. He has previously held such meetings in Fife and Glasgow.

It is recommended that:

- a The response of the Health Protection Agency is noted and the progress with research monitored;
- b the Scottish Executive Development Department be again made aware of the Council's concerns and of the response of the Health Protection Agency; and
- c the representatives of the Health Protection Agency be invited to address a meeting of the Development Quality Forum.