



To: Directors of Planning Services, City and County Councils  
CC: Chief Executive, City and County Councils  
Senior Planners, City and County Councils  
An Bord Pleanála

**Circular Letter: PL 03/2018**

3 July 2018

**Revision of Development Contribution Guidelines in respect of Telecommunications Infrastructure**

I have been asked by Mr Damien English TD, Minister of State in this Department with special responsibility for Housing and Urban Development, to advise of a revision to the 2013 *Development Contribution Guidelines for Planning Authorities*. In this regard please also see circulars PL 3/2013 and PL 18/2013. This Circular is issued under section 28(1C) of the *Planning and Development Acts 2000-2017* to update the 2013 Guidelines<sup>1</sup> and for this purpose contains a "specific planning policy requirement" which, pursuant to Section 28(1C), is mandatorily required to be applied by planning authorities.

As you are aware, one of the underlying objectives of the 2013 Guidelines was to assist local authorities in facilitating economic development in their areas with a specific focus of helping to secure investment in capital infrastructure and encouraging increased economic activity. In this connection, local authorities were required to include various waivers and reductions in development contribution charges in their Development Contribution Schemes, including the application of a specific waiver for broadband infrastructure (masts and antennae). While this waiver was primarily targeted at broadband infrastructure to facilitate the roll-out of broadband nationally, most local authorities have since unilaterally extended the scope of the waiver under their Development Contribution Schemes to include mobile phone infrastructure for the purpose of assisting in improving mobile phone coverage in their areas, including in rural areas.

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<sup>1</sup> To be read in conjunction with the Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures Guidelines (1996)

To ensure that a consistent approach is applied by all local authorities in this regard, action 3 of the *Report of the Mobile Phone and Broadband Task Force* – jointly chaired by the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and the Environment and the Minister for Regional and Community Development – recommended that the 2013 guidelines be now revised to ensure that such waivers are applied in Development Contribution Schemes in respect of both mobile phone and broadband infrastructure. In light of this, those local authorities who have not yet done so should now ensure that their Development Contribution Schemes are updated accordingly as soon as possible.

This waiver shall apply to any telecommunications infrastructure, both mobile and broadband, being deployed as part of a Government endorsed telecommunications strategy, plan or initiative. Where mobile or broadband operators demonstrate to the satisfaction of the planning authority that their infrastructure provides services to customers who would not otherwise be able to avail of an adequate mobile or broadband service, such infrastructure shall not attract development contributions. Furthermore the waiver applies to masts, antennae, dishes and other apparatus or equipment being installed for such communication purposes.

The 2013 Guidelines are amended accordingly in Chapter 2 and it is now a requirement that waivers for broadband infrastructure (masts and antennae) be extended to include mobile phone infrastructure.

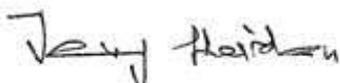
Since the issuing of the 2013 Guidelines, other inconsistencies have come to light where some local authority Development Contribution Schemes contain references to outdated

- Government programmes (e.g. the National Broadband Scheme) and/or
- titles of Government Departments.

Local authorities are accordingly requested to update relevant references in their Development Contribution Schemes at the next available opportunity.

Any queries in relation to this circular letter should be addressed to the Department's Planning Policy section using the contact details provided below.

Yours sincerely,



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