

Work for new 3G signal boost approved by five votes to four

Councillors vote narrowly in favour of phone signal

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Support for work that could lead to a 3G Vodafone signal in Tenterden has come from town councillors.

They backed a call for the town to apply for inclusion in the mobile phone company's rural open sure signal programme and for the town hall to host signal-boosting equipment at a cost of £30 a year.

But the decision was only approved by one vote.

Cllr Mike Pearson told the public buildings committee on Monday: "If I go to a restaurant and have something I don't like, I don't go there again.

"If you don't like your mobile phone supplier, change your phone. Vodafone made £1.6 million profit last year.

"If they can't pay £30 a year for an electricity supply, hard luck."

Cllr Sue Ferguson said Vodafone was extending its sure signal programme to 100 areas.

In each area, five to 10 buildings were needed for the equipment



Town councillor Sue Ferguson: 'If this benefits residents, businesses and visitors, it is worth it'

which was the size of a cereal packet and cost £30 a year in electricity to run.

"Vodafone will pay for the installation but not the ongoing electricity costs," she said.

"Historically, Vodafone was the best signal in town. Around 50% of people using a mobile signal here are on Vodafone.

"Not everyone wants to change or is prepared to do so. Vodafone is the biggest supplier.

"If this benefits residents, businesses and visitors it is worth it."

Replying to Cllr Pearson, Cllr Callum Knowles said many people were tied into mobile contracts and it was not that easy to change.

'If they can't pay £30 a year for an electricity supply, hard luck'



Committee chairman Cllr Mike Carter said £30 a year was a fairly nominal sum.

"I propose we go ahead and review it in three years' time," he said.

Councillors voted by five votes to four to support the bid.

Vodafone users have complained about a poor signal in Tenterden for some time.

Last year, the company blamed problems with its mast at St Michael's and branches blocking the signal off Appledore Road.

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