

Air Quality Petition Administration Response - Full Council 10th July 2018

Agenda item 6

Petition: Bring air pollution in Portsmouth within legal limits

PCC is requested to:

'commit to reducing air pollution in Portsmouth to ensure compliance with legal limits and World Health Organisation guidelines as soon as possible, certainly no later than December 2020, and therefore urgently publish its Air Quality Action Plan for consultation, incorporating quantifiable outcomes to address the city's illegal and unhealthy air pollution levels'.

Administration Response

The Council sincerely thanks Mr Tim Sheerman-Chase for submitting the petition to PCC and further raising awareness of air pollution.

PCC recognises the unquestionable public health benefits associated with improving air quality. Air quality is a significant public concern and Portsmouth City Council (PCC) commits to reducing air pollution in Portsmouth to ensure compliance with all legal limits and target values and to work towards achieving World Health Organisation guidelines in the shortest possible time.

PCC is actively working on an update to the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) and the 2018 progress report contained within the 2018 Annual Status Report (ASR) which will identify actions aimed at reducing levels of air pollution in Portsmouth.

Whilst PCC is focusing on all pollution hotspot locations and areas of concern, particular attention is being given to targeting improvements within AQMA 6 (Fratton Road / Kingston Road / London Road corridor) as it is within this central corridor where exceedances of the EU and National Air Quality Objectives (NAQO) for nitrogen dioxide are still occurring.

In delivering solutions, we will continue working with Defra on a targeted feasibility study to identify interventions which will promote improvements to air quality within AQMA 11 (Mile End Road corridor) in the shortest possible time. However, in line with our own identified local needs, we have already commissioned an extension to this targeted feasibility study to focus on AQMA 6. Both of these two studies will help to inform the development of a new city-wide AQAP to continually improve pollution levels.

Over the last few years the City Council has significantly increased the number of sites within the city where air quality is monitored. This has allowed the City Council to be able to have real readings for the air quality at the southern end of Mile End Road and be able to show the projections by the Government of air pollution in this location is significantly lower in reality than the Government projections. Further

down the road into the city there are no active data points and we will need to introduce them here, so we can find out if the Government figures are right.

Perversely the area of main concern to the City Council - the area north of Kingston Crescent up to Stubbington Ave, is not highlighted by Government. To help public transparency on this issue I have asked the City Council to show on its webpages the map of where all the air quality testing stations are, and the results from each of these. This has been done and I aim for the readings to be kept up to date and public so we can monitor progress towards being within both UK/EU legal limits and also WHO limits by the end of 2020 or earlier.

A critical part in the development in the AQAP is consultation and communication with our key stakeholders as this will enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of our decision making processes. A Steering Group involving residents' groups, interest groups, key employers and transport operators has been established to guide the development of the AQAP. Invitations to the first meeting, to take place later in July, have been sent. PCC commit to completing the action planning process by the end of December 2018. Thereafter actions will be quantified and appropriately delivered.

In respect to WHO compliance, our monitoring shows that in 2017 levels in 4 out of the 5 AQMA's are achieving compliance with the annual average NAQO for nitrogen dioxide. We know that only 1 AQMA, AQMA 6, is currently exceeding the NAQO and the WHO guideline levels as these standards are numerically the same.

PCC is currently meeting the WHO annual average PM₁₀ guideline values at all 4 of its monitoring locations and, whilst the monitored annual average levels at our 3 monitored sites for PM_{2.5} are close to the guideline, we acknowledge the fact we are not meeting them and so continue to commit to achieving these as quickly as possible.

The Council acknowledges the actions that the Administration has taken and what action the Cabinet is planning in respect to improving air quality.

Proposed Councillor Ashmore

Seconded Councillor Vernon-Jackson