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REPORT TO SHEVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL POLICY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE 1ST JUNE

TACKLING NITROGEN DIOXIDE IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES.

PURPOSE OF THIS CONSULTATION

This consultation which runs from May 5th until June 15th sets out steps the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland propose to take to improve air quality in our towns and cities. The full text of the consultation can be found at: https://consult.defra.gov.uk/airquality/air-quality-plan-for-tackling-nitrogen-dioxide/supporting_documents/Consultation%20Document.pdf . Clean air is one of the most basic requirements of a healthy environment for us all to live, work and bring up families. Air quality has improved significantly over recent decades through action taken by successive governments and newer technologies but levels of pollution, particularly in urban centres, are still too high, and we need to take action now to bring them down more quickly.

Local authorities already have the powers to implement Clean Air Zones. This consultation proposes that, where the evidence shows persistent air quality exceedances, local authorities must develop plans to achieve compliance within the shortest time possible. Government will sign off these plans, ensuring that they are effective, fair and deliver air quality compliance. We expect that implementation of Clean Air Zones will take up to three years, but Government will ensure the plans achieve compliance within the shortest time possible.

RELEVANCE TO SHEVINGTON

Occurrences of NO₂ pollution usually arise from diesel vehicle emissions. Wigan has already been identified as an area where certain roads exceed the accepted level of air quality. Although the highest levels are often in and around large town centres certain Motorways and trunk road also suffer from poor air quality. The M6 passes through the centre of the parish. The consultation accepts that there may be pockets of poor air quality outside the major centres. The Government will also identify parts of the strategic road network where NO₂ levels are projected persistently to exceed legal limits. Highways England will continue to develop ways to improve air quality on the strategic road network by developing local solutions in partnership with local stakeholders.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSULTATION.

A number of these questions are best answered by Wigan Council so there are only suggestions for answers where appropriate.

1. How satisfied are you that the proposed measures set out in this consultation will address the problem of nitrogen dioxide as quickly as possible? - *More detail is needed in addressing the problem on the Motorway network.*

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2. What do you consider to be the most appropriate way for local authorities in England to determine the arrangements for a Clean Air Zone, and the measures that should apply within it? -*No comment.*

What factors should local authorities consider when assessing impacts on businesses? -*No comment*

3. How can Government best target any funding to support local communities to cut air pollution? -*By targeting residential areas affected.*

What options should the Government consider further, and what criteria should it use to assess them? *No comment.*

Are there other measures which could be implemented at a local level, represent value for money, and that could have a direct and rapid impact on air quality? Examples could include targeted investment in local infrastructure projects. -*No comment.*

How can Government best target any funding to mitigate the impact of certain measures to improve air quality, on local businesses, residents and those travelling into towns and cities to work? Examples could include targeted scrappage schemes, for both cars and vans, as well as support for retrofitting initiatives mitigation schemes be designed in order to maximise value for money, target support where it is most needed, reduce complexity and minimise scope for fraud? -*By scrappage schemes and retrofitting cleaner engines.*

4. How best can governments work with local communities to monitor local interventions and evaluate their impact? -*By sharing data on the impact of higher levels of pollution.*
The Government and the devolved administrations are committed to an evidence-based approach to policy delivery and will closely monitor the implementation of the plan and evaluate the progress on delivering its objective.

5. Which vehicles should be prioritised for government-funded retrofit schemes? We welcome views from stakeholders as to how a future scheme could support new technologies and innovative solutions for other vehicle types, and would welcome evidence from stakeholders on emerging technologies. We currently anticipate that this funding could support modifications to buses, coaches, HGVs, vans and black cabs. -*Supported.*

6. What type of environmental and other information should be made available to help consumers choose which cars to buy? -*Impact of emissions levels and engine modifications.*

7. How could the Government further support innovative technological solutions and localised measures to improve air quality? -*By regular discussions with local authorities and Transport for Greater Manchester.*

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8. Do you have any other comments on the draft UK Air Quality Plan for tackling nitrogen dioxide? *No.*

In addition we would like to know whether there are any incidences of poor air quality which Highways England can tell us about between junctions 26 and 27 of the M6 where it passes through Shevington.

Barry King

May 24th 2017