
SCRUTINY INQUIRY PANEL - AIR QUALITY
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 JANUARY 2015

Present: Councillors Hammond (Chair), Coombs, Galton, McEwing (Vice-Chair), O'Neill, Parnell and Tucker

Apologies: Councillors Lloyd

20. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

It was noted that following receipt of the temporary resignation of Councillor McEwing the Panel, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, acting under delegated powers, had appointed Councillor Tucker to replace them for the purposes of this meeting.

21. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 18th December, 2014 be approved and signed as a correct record.

22. **CRUISE & TRAIN OPERATORS IN SOUTHAMPTON**

The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive setting out written evidence submitted by cruise operators, Carnival UK and Royal Caribbean Cruise Ltd and train operators, South West Trains and Freightliner Group.

The following points/responses were given:

Train operators -

- Concerns were raised that the idling times of trains were not being adhered to as many residents had evidence that showed that idling continued for a considerably longer time than had been indicated. It was felt that the issue was probably due to individuals being left to make the judgement decision about the idling rather than there being any sort of automatic cut out.
- Clarification was also sought on why the idling time on the Freightliner vehicles was far greater than that of South West Trains. It was questioned if this related to the start-up procedure for such vehicles; and if this was the case would they consider replacements in the future with electric trains. There was also a question as to whether the engine of these vehicles were possibly the only source to heat them, which was the case for many buses.
- Information was requested specific to Southampton, rather than national generic information – how often did the one diesel vehicle with the new trial diesel transmission system visited; and how many PowerHaul locomotives used.

Cruise operators -

- Park and ride solutions had been investigated however there were many issues with regards to location and cost.
- The phasing of the traffic lights needs to be looked at as a priority.
- Carnival were receptive to looking at ship to shore power. This was used in other countries however clarity was sought on the industry standard for such things as DP World/ ABP had said that there was not one. Concerns were also raised about the effect of the amount power that would be drawn from the national grid.

- Details on the particular matter was requested from the discharge from the “scrubbers” in port, as it was thought that this was not allowed at sea.
- Further details were requested on the directive that due to be introduced to remove sulphur from fuel sources from 2017.
- It was asked who monitored the regulation to switch to auxiliary engines once in port for more than 2 hours.
- Carnival have a Ships Energy Plan, it was questioned if this was also the case for Royal Caribbean.

23. **EXPLORING IDEAS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive on exploring options for possible recommendations to incorporate in the final report.

COUNCILLOR TUCKER IN THE CHAIR

The Panel considered written evidence from Dr Allan Whitehead relating to his membership of the House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee and participation of its recent inquiry into air quality.

It was questioned if enough was being done to ensure that air quality measurements were within permitted limits. And whether appropriate action/ sanctions were being imposed.

Concerned were raised about some anomalies in regulations which allowed for the air quality to remain effected. For example vehicle engines may comply with new standards such as EuroVI, however if these vehicles then have refrigeration units, their diesel generators probably do not comply.

It was felt that enforcement rules needed to be introduced to ensure that drivers were turning off their engines. Examples of lorries along the Millbrook Road and taxis outside of the hospital were given.

NOTE: Councillors Hammond and Combes declared an interest in the evidence given by Mr Whitehead matter and left the meeting during its consideration.

COUNCILLOR HAMMOND IN THE CHAIR

Louise Fagan gave a brief summary to the Panel on the areas that had been covered and the evidence that had been presented.

Ambition and Vision – Ultra-Low City Status

- To support a bid for a share of the £35 million Ultra Low City Scheme – the inquiry has attracted possible partners willing to sign up to support a bid
- Continue to take full advantage of other grant opportunities available within this area and ensure sufficient resource (time and capability) is available to develop strong grant applications.

Low Emission Zones and Low Emission Strategy

- To support the introduction of the Low Emission Strategy for the city and its proposals – possible ownership by the Health and Wellbeing Board with all areas working collectively
- A Low Emission Strategy would be a more practical way forward to address the issues along the Western Approach.

Joined up working across the council

- Make sure SCC decisions/ policies and plans take air quality into consideration
- Encourage Eco driver training (mandatory for all staff driving SCC vehicles)
- Eco the SCC fleet – including turning on driver monitoring equipment

Strengthening the Planning function

- To develop stronger links with planning and provide contribution to the proposed local plan review
- Green infrastructure
- Encourage modal shift where possible

Communication on Air Quality

- Aim to develop IT to communicate air quality activities and data in to a more public friendly format, alongside existing regulatory and service needs
- To support the continued delivery of the Air Alert service after the existing finance expires (DEFRA grant is estimated to support contracts until end of 2015/16)
- Explore opportunities to integrate the Air Alert service with other information/messaging and health alert services i.e. using mobile technology, cold alerts, heat alerts.

Other ideas

- Community monitoring programme
- Encourage greater use of the Sustainable Distribution Centre?
- Keep the traffic flowing

Longer term

- Explore Shore Power technologies within the Port

An update was given on the bid that had been submitted, if successful with the outline then the full bid would be August, 2015.

It was noted that there was a need to look at any negative impacts to business caused by the introduction of any new schemes. All proposals were be subject to an economic assessment.

Support was given to the introduction of a low emission strategy rather than a zone.