

Air Quality Steering Group Minutes – Meeting 2

15th June 2016 at 14:00

Winchester Guildhall St Cross Room

Present:

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| • Cllr Frank Pearson | (FP) | WCC Portfolio Holder |
| • Cllr Eleanor Bell | (EB) | WCC Shadow Portfolio Holder |
| • Phil Gagg | (PG) | WinACC |
| • Dan Massey | (DM) | WCC Strategic Transport |
| • Hannah Baker | (HB) | HCC Strategic Highways |
| • David Ingram | (DI) | WCC Head of EH & Licensing |
| (Chair) | | |

Apologies:

Mike Slinn

Introductions:

Phil Gagg introduced himself as a 'new' member of the steering group.

Local Air Quality Management (TG 16) and Clean Air Zones (CAZ's)

- DI gave an overview of the TG 16 Guidance and produced the 'Notes in preparation' summary. In particular he mentioned the 5 non London areas that have been identified to have a mandatorily imposed CAZ (including Southampton), but that any provisions would fall short of including cars;
- EB queried the regional approach on air quality and PG asked to what extent the Winchester district is captured;
- DI confirmed that Allbrook area in the WCC district is 'clipped' by the air quality agglomeration zone identified under the Southampton Urban Area UK0019. It is the expectation that WCC work with Southampton City Council as well as Eastleigh BC and Test Valley BC toward a regional Low Emission Strategy (LES);
- PG raised the key question of an emissions profile and that any air quality strategy should focus on the biggest gains, which includes private light goods vehicle class i.e. domestic cars, which make up by far the largest vehicle profile, which should therefore be captured by any air quality action plan;

- FP queried which cars we'd need to capture in any CAZ and was reticent about focusing on cars at this stage, preferring to lead toward remaining non Euro 6 buses and Commercial vehicles;
- DM stated that buses can be retrofitted with new Euro 6 engines but this is very expensive and without a CAZ in place we couldn't require it. Also said that much of the Stagecoach bus fleet is now Euro 6, so we'd be focusing on the other companies that access the city, but suggested that as the big player 'Stagecoach' is already meeting expectation realising any significant air quality benefits may be diminished;
- DI reminded the group that any actions / proposals in the AQAP must be based upon what they will realise in modelled improvements to air quality and not just based on supposition. DI also stated that the ;
- PG urged a sense of 'proportionality' on buses and he cited the BV report p14 of which contains the traffic profiling data. He quoted the fact that cars in all areas run in excess of 80% of the total traffic, followed by Light Goods Vehicles at around 10%. HGV's and buses account for around 1.5% and 3% respectively depending on the location. On this basis PG suggested that LGV's would be the next best traffic profile on which to concentrate efforts;
- There was some discussion on the use of a distribution hub and that this had already been explored without success;
- Also the group discussed whether we could use the last BV modelling option available to us to determine the potential benefits to air quality from a CAZ on LGV's, recognising that the positive effect of a CAZ would be dependant on the size of the charging levy as a deterrent if at all;
- It was recognised that any penalty imposed on LGV's for entering a CAZ would almost certainly be passed onto the delivery customer business, which would be very unpopular;
- It was also recognised that in declaring a fully targeted CAZ, aside from the political difficulties there were the logistical costs of implementation and associated enforcement. This would necessitate the installation of 'Automatic Vehicle Plate Recognition' cameras and software which in of itself is very expensive, in addition to which there would be the cost recovery process which would also be costly;
- DI suggested that there was within the LAQM Guidance, the option of adopting a voluntary CAZ, which was in effect a statement to underpin the AQAP and any

associated supplementary planning guidance toward air quality improvements. It would provide a 'vehicle' to raise public awareness through signage when entering the AQMA with the intention toward behavioural change. It would also potentially make funding of ULEV charging points more forthcoming as well as other Low Emission Strategy actions, such as the adoption of Workplace Levies on the strength of its designation;

- There was some interest in the group in this option as it meant we could avoid the significant costs of implementing a charging system and avoiding the associated political challenges, whilst raising the profile of air quality to those visiting Winchester.
- There was then some discussion on careful consideration of such signage and its location, whether VMS signs could be used to vary the message and keep it 'fresh'. There was suggestion that the messaging should raise a positive Public Health message and not scare away potential visitors or inflame the ire of the business community, and the environmentalist lobby;
- There was some discussion about the petrol vs diesel argument on NOx and whether this could be a basis for a CAZ in the future.

Recommendation AQ2/1

It was therefore agreed that a 'Voluntary' CAZ was a potential option and would merit further investigative work.

Workplace Levies (WPL)

- DI presented the primary details as to what a WPL is, including the legislative powers under the Transport Act 2000. The main purpose of a WPL Scheme is to reduce congestion and is not in of itself intended to improve air quality, although this would inevitably be a benefit from reduced congestion. See DI's background paper as presented at the meeting;
- The main/only authority to have designated a WPL is Nottingham who adopted the scheme to reduce congestion and to raise revenue for further transport improvements, which in their case was a light railway;
- DM suggested that there was a minimum number of parking spaces (10?) that applied before a WPL could be applied and DI said that he would look into this. This would have a potential impact on how a WPL could be applied in Winchester and whether it was worth doing, again recognising that this would be potentially unpopular;

- There were discussions about challenging a business' choice to occupy a premium location in the City and that in driving into the AQMA and contributing to the ambient NOx levels that they should be required to financially contribute to any air quality improvement's through any LES infrastructural improvements i.e. ULEV charging points;
- DM made the point that whilst we could adopt a scheme to encompass business located within the AQMA, he recommended that such a scheme should also capture city based business outside the AQMA as many employees will pass through the AQMA in order to get to work;
- DM stated that there were planning standards for parking but these have now gone, albeit there are 'Old Guidelines' that are still considered relevant.

Recommendation AQ2/2

It was agreed that it would be of benefit to undertake a feasibility study on the adoption a WPL Scheme, from which the group would determine a position on whether to adopt it as a recommendation in the updated AQAP.