

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 February 2021

QUESTIONS from Mr Peter Dobbs, a resident of Ashbourne, in relation to the District Council's approach to air pollution monitoring.

I believe that the current approach to air pollution monitoring in Derbyshire Dales, in particular the communication of information to Cllrs and the public, leaves room for improvement.

Q1 *Is Council aware that the NOx levels data used in the recent DCC Aecom Ashbourne Traffic Options report was two years out of date (2018 data in the Environmental Constraints reports dated October 2020)?*

*It would appear that DCC (or at least their contractors) are at present **less** well informed about NOx levels in Ashbourne than ward members and Ashbourne Town Council.*

Q2 *Are DCC directly updated about NOx levels and if so when was the last data set provided to DCC?*

RESPONSE:

Derbyshire County Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council are both members of the Derbyshire Air Quality Network and attend quarterly meetings. Local air quality reports are given at each meeting and Derbyshire County Council have been regularly updated about issues in Ashbourne.

We are currently working with Derbyshire County Council on the Detailed Assessment for Buxton Road and will be working with them to devise an Action Plan, if an Air Quality Management Area is declared.

Communicating air pollution information solely via the Annual Status Report (ASR) means that by default some information is always at least 18 months out of date and can give rise to misleading conclusions as we have seen in the Aecom report.

I welcome the new locations of some of Ashbourne's NOx sample tubes, however using the present reporting protocol it will be not until at least June 2022 that this data will be released in an ASR.

Q3 *Would it be possible to make air pollution data (that the public have paid for) available to the public in a more timely manner, perhaps by publishing the raw data on the DDDC website as it is collected?*

RESPONSE:

Air quality data is currently available on request at any time. Data is provided to a range of interested parties in Ashbourne on a monthly basis. We are working to develop a webpage on which monthly figures can be published and have obtained advice from the Local Air Quality Management helpdesk on how this should be undertaken, bearing in mind that raw data is uncorrected and may differ from that later published in the annual reports.

In this way those who care about the consequences of air pollution on health can make informed choices.

It will require significant co-operation between DCC and DDC as well as other stakeholders in order to address the problems described in the resolution passed at the last C&E meeting "That the District Council advises Derbyshire County Council that it considers that, in order to improve both traffic and environmental conditions within Ashbourne town centre in the short to medium term, mitigation measures should be implemented immediately, especially to address Heavy Goods Vehicles"

Q4 *What steps have been taken by the Council to set up meetings for such a group of stakeholders, to enable such co-operation?*

RESPONSE:

In terms of air quality our officers are already working with Derbyshire County Council as part of the Detailed Assessment and will work with them on an Action Plan, should an Air Quality Management Area be declared. We have also offered to work with Ashbourne Town Team to inform any Action Plan that might need to be developed.

I note that the workshop on this Council's approach to Air Pollution Monitoring, requested by seven Cllrs in August last year, has still not taken place.

Q5 *When will it take place?*

RESPONSE

Officers believe that it would be most timely and appropriate to hold the workshop once the outcomes from the Detailed Assessment become clear.