

Formal Council Questions and Responses

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1 **Question to the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity : 2023/15 - Air Pollution**

Councillor Routley asked:

Cabinet member let me highlight the pressing issue of air pollution in the Bishton/Langstone Ward of Newport. The consequence of no M4 relief road has led to frequent gridlock along the M4 corridor, resulting in increased emissions of pollutants for my residents.

Consequently, drivers seek alternative routes through Bishton/Langstone area exacerbating the gridlock and pollution issue along the Magor Road and the A48 leading to the Coldra roundabout.

Air Pollution Statistics:

Research conducted by the Centre for Cities reveals alarming statistics regarding the impact of air pollution in Newport. It is reported that one in 22 deaths in the city is linked to air pollution. In 2017 alone, 113 deaths in Newport were attributed to long-term exposure to microscopic particulates (PM 2.5) in the air, accounting for 4.5% of all deaths that year. Furthermore, Welsh citizens face a staggering 21 times higher likelihood of dying from air pollution compared to a traffic accident. These statistics underscore the severity of the air pollution crisis in Newport.

You are aware cabinet member that Newport's air pollution levels did surpass international targets and rank among the highest in the UK.

Cabinet member you must acknowledge that urgent action is require, Scientific research has established a clear link between such exposure and an increased risk of strokes, heart disease, and lung problems.

Those residing on the Magor Road & A48 are in an air pollution sandwiched created by the M4 grid lock and drivers seeking alternative routes into Wales.

Please provide us with your plan of action for today and not a long-grassed answer for Tomorrow.

Councillor Forsey responded:

There are currently no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in the ward of Bishton and Langstone. In relation to the specific concern, traffic-based poor air quality is usually the result of a location where the dispersal of traffic emissions is impaired in some way. This effect occurs in a 'street canyon' setting.

Newport currently has 11 Air Quality Management Areas. However, our existing monitoring demonstrates that the air quality in Newport does not exceed current air quality objectives

(the national standards) and suggests the start of sustained compliance. This situation is the result of a wide range of air quality measures undertaken in recent years. The Annual Air Quality Progress Report can be found on the council website and provides details of the measures taken.

I would specifically highlight the following that has helped improve air quality:

- Creation of more active travel routes across the city
- Significant investment in Fleet and Bus EVs
- Reduction in speed limit along M4
- Replacement of gas boilers with Heat pumps
- Reduction in the usage of private vehicles due to the increase of working from home.

Further actions, specifically to improve emissions from traffic are set out in the Southeast Wales Transport Commission Review. We are working jointly with Welsh Government, TfW, and neighbouring councils to implement these recommendations.