



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Roseanna Cunningham
Cabinet Secretary for Environment,
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c/o Clerk to the Committee
Room T3.40
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By email only

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Dear Roseanna

Air Quality in Scotland Inquiry

I am writing to seek an update on progress made by the Scottish Government towards meeting the recommendations of the ECCLR Committee's Air Quality in Scotland Inquiry report, published in February 2018.

The key recommendations of the report are outlined Annexe A to this letter.

The Committee would appreciate it if you could provide details of progress in each of these areas and highlight where work is still to commence.

Yours sincerely,

Gillian Martin MSP
Convener
Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Cleaner Air for Scotland Strategy (CAFS)

- The Committee is concerned about the direction of travel, rate of change and action on the ground and recommends that CAFS is kept under review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose given the continual changes that are being seen in this area. In order to best ensure that it meets its broader climate change targets, CAFS' contribution to meeting the Scottish Government's climate change, environment and health policies must be at the forefront of this change.
- The Committee considers that, as highlighted in evidence, the Scottish Government's yearly progress report is insufficiently clear to allow an accurate assessment of progress against the 34 original actions laid out in CAFS. Therefore the Committee recommends that a more transparent progress report is provided in future updates to show the status of the delivery against each individual action. This should also incorporate and measure the impacts of any changes to relevant Government policy and budgets. It should also highlight the Government's progress towards EU compliance by 2020.

National vs Local Policy Cohesion

- The Committee recommends that the Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform, along with the Minister for Transport and Islands, continue their discussions with the Minister for Local Government and Housing to ensure the planning and placemaking ambitions set out in CAFS are fully realised. Otherwise the active travel and sustainable transport aspirations of the Scottish Government will not be met. Air quality must be a key component in the reviews of the national planning framework and national planning policy.
- Behaviour change remains a significant challenge and the Committee would welcome further detail on how the Scottish Government plans to address this.
- The Committee also recommends that the Cabinet Secretary and Minister consider what additional mechanisms are required to resolve any disconnect between national agencies and local authorities in delivering the CAFS objectives. The Committee would also welcome further information on funding to support local authorities to deliver the CAFS outcomes.

Low Emission Zones (LEZs)

- The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government provides an update on the progress being made on the introduction of the four LEZs by the end of June 2018 along with an indication of the date of which they will be enforceable.
- The Committee believes that for LEZs to best contribute to improvements in air quality in their respective areas, cars should be

included. The Committee therefore recommends that the Scottish Government ask the relevant local authorities to include private vehicles in their LEZs.

- Given the resources needed to implement LEZs, the Committee recommends that the Scottish Government, local authorities and all relevant public agencies work jointly to ensure that all available technology is shared to help ensure a consistent and efficient approach across the country.
- The Committee further notes the view that congestion charging and workplace parking levies may also help to improve air quality and recommends that the Scottish Government explore these options following the introduction of the LEZs.

Cars

- The Committee is clear that the harmful emissions from diesel cars is one of the major contributors to poor air quality. The Committee welcomes the Scottish Government's commitment to phase out both petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032 but recommends that the Government provides a timeline for how it intends to reach this commitment including any legislative measures, non-legislative regulation and incentives to reach its target. The timeline should include milestones the Scottish Government aims to reach between now and 2032 to ensure that it on schedule to meet the commitment.
- The Committee also recommends that the Government provides details for what this will mean in practice for diesel car and van owners and its plans for ensuring that there is the necessary national and local infrastructure for alternative vehicles to facilitate this.

Public Transport

- The Committee seeks detailed explanation of the delay in the roll out of the relevant public transport actions in the Cleaner Air for Scotland Strategy along with a revised timetable for delivery.
- The Committee recognises that compliance with the proposed LEZs will come at a significant cost. It recognises the Scottish Government is already providing financial assistance in this regard. The overall cost is unclear. Therefore, the Committee seeks details from the Scottish Government of the best available estimates for these zones, broken down by both city and the private/public purse.

Freight Transport

- The Committee recognises the potential benefits to air quality in removing freight from the roads, particular during peak times in urban areas and recommends that the Scottish Government provide an update on its plans for consolidation centres, moving freight from road to rail and night time deliveries.
- Given the Scottish Government's plans to phase out both petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2032, the Committee asks the Scottish

Government to set out detailed plans for assisting the road haulage industry in moving, over time, to alternative fuelled vehicles.

Active Travel

- The Committee considers that to meet both air quality and wider climate change targets, increasing the number of journeys by bike to 10% and beyond is necessary. The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government complete a full review of why the percentage of journeys only rose by 0.2% between 2010 and 2016 and sets out a detailed delivery plan to overcome the barriers to progress, including around placemaking and training. The Committee also asks the Scottish Government to provide a breakdown of its spend on safe infrastructure for active travel and what level of additional investment in such infrastructure may be required to meet the 10% target.
- While highlighted in an earlier chapter of this report, the Committee considers that it is imperative that active travel is a key component of any update of planning regulations and guidance and recommends that the Scottish Government make this a similar priority so that suitable walking and cycling infrastructure is at the heart of all future developments. Furthermore, the Committee asks that the Scottish Government consider what further planning guidance is required to support local transport strategies and ensure a consistent approach across the country.
- The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government breaks down its active travel targets for urban and rural areas to show the expected rate of uptake in different parts of the country.

Monitoring Air Quality

- The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government provide updated guidance on what types of non-automated air quality monitors can be used to provide sufficiently accurate data to compliment its automated equipment so that local authorities and national agencies can properly record and benchmark air quality much more widely than currently possible. This data should then be incorporated into the Scottish Government's air quality website.
- The Committee recommends as a matter of urgency the Scottish Government review whether the current guidelines and regulations around the monitoring and tackling of Air Quality Management Areas is sufficiently robust to ensure that problems can be identified and rectified.
- The Committee also considers the existing 95 automated monitoring stations to be a missed opportunity to raise awareness of air quality issues and encourage behaviour change. It calls on the Scottish Government to review how they might be publicised and also potentially provide live data to highlight pollution levels. This is currently done with speed cameras showing simple 'happy' or 'sad' faces based on the speed of a motorist - why not with air pollution?
- Finally, the Committee recommends that the Government review any school located close to an Air Quality Management Area and whether

additional mitigation should be in place near the school building or grounds. In addition, the planning of any new school or the updating of any existing facility must have the mitigation against poor air quality and harmful climate change emissions at its heart.

Other Causes of Air Pollution

Agriculture

- The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government updates the Cleaner Air for Scotland Strategy to include agricultural pollutants and how, and to what scale, it expects these to be reduced in the coming years. The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government provide guidance to the agricultural sector on how to adopt such new techniques as well as consider what incentives might be offered to help accelerate the use of new methods.

Wood burning

- The Committee recommends that the Scottish Government undertake research to understand the extent of pollutants emanating from wood burning stoves and biomass boilers, which are regulated differently, so that informed decisions can be made on whether any harmful impact needs to be mitigated.
- The Committee also recommends that the Scottish Government review the current regulations and guidance on the installation of wood burning and multi fuel stoves and boilers in homes to ensure that air pollution from wood burning and multi-fuel stoves is sufficiently considered and appropriately regulated.