Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Inquiry into air quality in Scotland

Written submission from Selkirk Regeneration Company

Does Scotland have the right policies (Clean Air for Scotland Strategy), support and incentives in place to adequately tackle air pollution?

Policies are OK but implementation is patchy, hotspots ignored and scrutiny of LA performance and diligence is insufficient

How does the Scottish policy fit with the UK and EU policy on air quality?

Scottish policy’s timescale is better than rUK’s but in view of recent research on varying individual susceptibility to air pollutants means that policies on pollutant levels originating in the EU may need updating.

Are the policies sufficiently ambitious?

One can visualise a salad of measures tailored to individual local conditions but a radical discouragement of diesel engine use would achieve much more at much less cost.

Are the powers and resources of Local Authorities and SEPA to address air pollution adequate?

Chasing local deviations in the quality of monitoring would be costly, result in sporadic improvements and involve uneconomic manpower use. Far better and cheaper to discourage pollution at source by diminution of the use of diesel engines.

Are the policies and delivery mechanisms (support and incentives) being effectively implemented and successful in addressing the issues?

No

Is Scotland on target to have a pilot low emission zone (LEZ) in place by 2018 and should there be more than one LEZ pilot?

The targets set should be planned to be achieved as soon as possible. More than one, why not?

How should the improvement of air quality be prioritised in areas where there have been persistent breaches of NO₂ limit values?
There is unacceptable pollution in untested areas as well as areas persistently breaching NO2 values. A blanket policy reducing harmful exhaust pollutants would improve results whether in breach or not.

**Is adequate consideration given to air pollution from agriculture?**

I am unaware of any particular health risks in agricultural practice but global warming would be improved by diminished numbers of methane producing ruminants.

**Are there conflicts in policies or barriers to successful delivery of the air quality objectives?**

An overarching policy could be devised which would avoid complicated and patchy results from additional and more stringent regulations. A conflict exists where diesels are not discriminated against positively. Encouragement of petrol engines in the short term and electric powered vehicles in the longer term is the most effective way forward although measures must be tailored to be as little financially damaging as possible.