Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform Committee

Inquiry into air quality in Scotland

Written submission from North Ayrshire Council

Does Scotland have the right policies (Clean Air for Scotland Strategy), support and incentives in place to adequately tackle air pollution?
Yes. The CAFS would appear to consider all the potential sources and be putting the relevant support and incentives in place in a holistic manner to tackle air pollution.

How does the Scottish policy fit with the UK and EU policy on air quality?
Figure 3 on page 19 shows the CAFS Governance and Item 3.11 with Table 2 on page 27 shows how this fits with policy.

Are the policies sufficiently ambitious?
Yes. The CAFS sets clear Actions with proposed measurable outcomes.

Are the powers and resources of Local Authorities and SEPA to address air pollution adequate?
No, the regulators are good at monitoring and reporting, however, there are many factors which are out with their control eg real time emissions from vehicles and more needs to be done by the manufactures to achieve real world emission efficiencies. If air quality is the deciding factor then more powers are required to take quicker and decisive actions eg directly controlling or forcing change on the source of pollution.

Are the policies and delivery mechanisms (support and incentives) being effectively implemented and successful in addressing the issues?
They would appear to be effectively implemented according to the Case Studies presented in CAFS.

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?
According to CAFS and the 2016 Progress Report Scotland is on target to have a pilot low emission in place by 2018.

How should the improvement of air quality be prioritised in areas where there have been persistent breaches of NO\textsubscript{2} limit values?
This may be achieved either through a strong, persistent awareness campaign or through more powers to effect change quickly.

Is adequate consideration given to air pollution from agriculture?
No. It is identified in the CAFS Table 1, page 25 as source but appears not to be mentioned again.

Are there conflicts in policies or barriers to successful delivery of the air quality objectives?
There may be potential conflicts with policy for development, an increasingly mobile population and the need to maintain a strong economy. A main barrier may be perceived as being the increasing amount of traffic on the roads, which has offset any advances in ambient air quality to date. If this is to continue more needs to be achieved by low or no emission vehicles. Consideration should be initially given to concentrating on reducing emissions or replacing diesel fuelled light goods vehicles, heavy goods vehicles and buses as it is these vehicles that are doing the most miles and not private cars.