

Petitioner submission of 24 August 2022

PE1944/B: Enforce engine idling ban

Response to the decision to ignore the petition above. I have also undertaken an additional petition from Change.org with over 500 signatures.

The government response is grossly inadequate and does not address the many proposals raised, nor reflect the gravity of the issue as outlined, nor the legal and moral obligation under the Climate Emergency to cut our emissions with immediate effect.

- 1) Please supply the name and position of the government official that signed off / made the decision so that they are publicly accountable.
- 2) The Scottish Government state the current law is **“fit for purpose”** when it is clearly, catastrophically dysfunctional as outlined in this petition - to the extent that even the police are both ignorant of the law and, ignoring the legal status of idling. The police have defended the actions of their fleet vehicles engine idling, often empty, lining mile upon mile along the climate demonstrators route at COP 26 in Glasgow 2021 in the face of over 100,000 people demonstrating against inadequate leadership under this existential emergency. Local councils are likely squandering in excess of £100,000 each per annum on engine idling within their fleet and perhaps twice that amount with road works contractors.

The law is not fit for purpose and must be expanded on, updated and enforced robustly, as outlined in the petition to reflect the emergency and massive financial burden inflicted on the tax payer.

- 3) The law the Scottish Government claim is “fit for purpose” was enacted 1998 and updated 2003. Since then we have more vehicles on the roads and engine idling has risen exponentially. We now have thousands of drivers sitting with smart phones idling

at every opportunity – for extended periods of time. We have fuel costs rising exponentially and those costs passed onto the tax payer. Millions of tax pounds wasted on idling when the country is needing millions of pounds for ecosystem recovery, regenerative farming etc to protect our water supplies, energy needs and food security.

- 4) We now have thousands of delivery vans idling on and polluting every street in the country on a daily basis and becoming more severe by the week.
- 5) The Scottish Government appear to have no cognisance to the financial, health or environmental impact of idling, nor seem to want to know. This situation needs addressing with immediate effect.
- 6) The Scottish Government claim “feedback is positive – that drivers turn off engines when asked by traffic wardens.” Is this a joke? Is this really the best defense they have?

Firstly – Idling is not a victimless crime. Just one inhalation can kill an asthma sufferer in short term or kill by cancer / heart attack later in life. There are no safe limits for the pollution from idling vehicles and our NHS bills are already unsustainable, as are our emissions.

Secondly - This response is utterly irrelevant! A handful of councils ask around a dozen idlers out of tens of thousands of polluting idlers a day and they claim this negates any responsible action to be taken by the Scottish Government! Tell it to the thousands inhaling toxic fumes everyday as they walk past idlers. Tell it to those unable to utilise social care facilities or financial support where councils are cash strapped, yet squander millions on engine idling under their fleet and contracted works.

- 7) **Fixed penalties:** In the past 3 years – no fixed penalties were issued by councils – Glasgow, PKC, Dundee, Aberdeen, Stirling. The **Scottish Gov has advised** them not to fine people, when this is the only available deterrent and raises much needed revenue. Their advice and handling of this is grossly irresponsible.

- 8) Why has the Scottish Government not included **any anti idling clauses and reduced fuel payments within contracts** into the A9 duelling and other such contracts? This has probably cost the Scottish tax payer literally millions of pounds in fuel wasted. I have lost count of the times I witnessed contractors sitting idling while reading papers, on phones, empty vehicles, lorries, heavy plant etc. Millions wasted on fuel losses across the country on Government contracts.
- 9) The Scottish Government's statement - '**Cleaner Air for Scotland – Towards a Better Place for Everyone**' sounds ambitious but fails to address one of the worst causes of pollution. There is no requirement for informing the public of the personal costs of idling and that they will be fined instantly if found idling at work place car parks, schools, supermarkets, roadsides, laybys, taxi ranks, and so on.

Climate Emergency: Where does this “fit for purpose” law and its comprehensive lack of enforcement address the Climate

Emergency? We are required to reduce emissions by 45% over the next 8 years to avoid exceeding 1.5 degrees of global warming.

However, thanks to a catastrophic absence of thought and leadership across the world we are on course to increase emissions by 14% within 8 years.

Please realise now – that anything over 1.5 degrees almost guarantees the end of humanity and, long before that – the end of everything we hold precious. A rise of 3 degrees by 2050 is already baked into the system at current emission levels.

Nature is not negotiating the terms of our continued survival.