

# Agenda – Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

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Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: Thursday, 16 March  
2017

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Marc Wyn Jones

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6363

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## Private pre-meeting (09.15–10.00)

**1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest**

**2 Inquiry into Marine Protected Areas in Wales: An examination of evidence and decision making in MPAs using scalloping in Cardigan Bay as a case study**

(10.00–11.00)

(Pages 1 – 17)

Prof Michel Kaiser, Professor of Marine Conservation Sciences – School of Ocean Sciences, Bangor University

Dr Emma Sheehan, Marine Institute Research Fellow – School of Biological and Marine Sciences, Plymouth University

Attached Documents: Research Brief

**3 Paper(s) to note**

(11.00 – 11.05)



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**Letter from Minister for Social Services and Public Health on air quality in Wales**

(Pages 18 – 19)

Attached Documents: CCERA(5)–09–17 – Paper 1 to note

**Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs on air quality in Wales**

(Pages 20 – 22)

Attached Documents: CCERA(5)–09–17 – Paper 2 to note

**Letter from Chief Executive of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board on air quality in Wales**

(Pages 23 – 25)

Attached Documents: CCERA(5)–09–17 – Paper 3 to note

**Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government on air quality in Wales**

(Pages 26 – 29)

Attached Documents: CCERA(5)–09–17 – Paper 4 to note

**Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Education on air quality in Wales**

(Pages 30 – 31)

Attached Documents: CCERA(5)–09–17 – Paper 5 to note

**Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure on air quality in Wales**

(Pages 32 – 35)

Attached Documents: CCERA(5)–09–17 – Paper 6 to note

- 4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the remainder of the meeting**

**Break (11.05–11.15)**

- 5 Scrutiny of the Legislative Consent Memorandum on Farriers (Registration) Bill**

(11.15–11.25)

(Pages 36 – 37)

Attached Documents: Legal Brief

- 6 Inquiry into the future of agricultural and rural development policy – discussion of report**

(11.25–12.30)

(Pages 38 – 93)

Attached Documents: Draft report

**Lunch (12.30–13.00)**

- 7 Inquiry into the future of agricultural and rural development policy – discussion of report**

(13.00–15.00)

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Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA(P)/RE/0454/17

Mark Reckless  
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

23 February 2017

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter dated 31 January 2017 regarding air quality in Wales. I was pleased to learn that your committee discussed this important issue on 18 January, as exposure to air pollution is a significant determinant of health.

As you are aware, policy responsibility for air quality sits with the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs. However, tackling air quality requires a multi-pronged approach, and action covers a wide range of areas - including local air quality management, industry regulation, matters relating to the planning regime, and the promotion of active travel. As such, my officials within Public Health Division, with support from Public Health Wales, work with their Environment and Rural Affairs counterparts on air quality issues which require public health input.

You will know that the Welsh Government recently undertook a public consultation on how local air quality and noise management can be improved. My officials are engaged in considering the consultation responses, and will assist in developing proposals regarding what more can be done, with the aim of reducing health risks and inequalities arising from exposure to air pollution. Actions my officials will be taking forward include:

- an awareness raising campaign on air quality for health professionals and the public; and
- the development of guidance for Local Health Board Directors of Public Health, Local Authority Directors of Public Protection, and Public Health Wales, to encourage integration to support a more effective and joined-up implementation of local air quality management work. It is intended that this guidance will reiterate the need for a dual approach to local air quality management, outlining actions that reduce risks for all *and* targeted interventions to reduce risks and inequalities in areas with the poorest air quality and greatest public health needs.

Given that Public Health Wales is undertaking research that seeks to enhance the Local Air Quality Management regime in Wales to maximise public health integration, collaboration, and impact, my officials will work closely with them on both workstreams.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

In discussions with Public Health Wales and local authorities through the Welsh Air Quality Forum, my officials are also involved in efforts to:

- improve national planning policy and guidance for local authorities in regards to air quality; and
- develop ideas for more substantive proposals for improving the way local air quality management works in Wales.

This response highlights some of key pieces of work which I am taking forward on air quality. If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The script is cursive and fluid.

**Rebecca Evans AC/AM**

Gweinidog Iechyd y Cyhoedd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol  
Minister for Social Services and Public Health



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA-(L)/LG/0103/17

Mark Reckless AM  
Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
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21 February 2017

Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter of 31 January, requesting I set out actions I am taking in terms of understanding the extent of air quality issues in Wales through monitoring activity, improving air quality through regulation and enforcement and monitoring the environmental risks associated with poor air quality.

Monitoring of air quality and its associated environmental risks, occurs at a number of levels. National monitoring is managed in accordance with EU Directive requirements by the Environment Agency through the national monitoring network under a UK-wide contract. Monitoring by Local Authorities is carried out in accordance with their local air quality management (LAQM) duties under the Environment Act 1995. Monitoring is also commissioned by highway authorities and is required by environmental regulators in the vicinity of certain industrial operations.

My Department sponsors the Welsh Air Quality Forum website (<http://www.welshairquality.co.uk>), which provides a wide range of air quality monitoring data to the general public. Air quality data across the whole of the UK is available on the Defra website at <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk>.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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Regulation and enforcement occur through a number of channels, including LAQM, land use planning and environmental permitting, all of which fall within my portfolio.

Our public consultation on local air quality and noise management in Wales closed on 6 December and received 50 responses. I am currently considering recommendations based on the responses received. I will publish the consultation responses in full and issue a statement to Assembly Members on how I intend to change the LAQM process in Wales, before the end of March 2017. The responses to the specific proposals contained in the consultation document were generally favourable, particularly with regard to the need for more collaborative working and the need to reduce air pollution across the population as a whole, as well as focusing on areas where the national air quality objectives are exceeded. My Department will produce revised policy guidance for Local Authorities, followed by an improved annual progress report template. I also intend to intervene, where necessary, to improve the level of Local Authority compliance with reporting and action planning deadlines.

My officials are working with colleagues in Public Health to take forward an educational campaign on air quality for health professionals and the public and to produce national guidance for Directors of Public Health in Local Health Boards, Directors of Public Protection in Local Authorities and Public Health Wales. This guidance will encourage collaboration to support the delivery of LAQM.

My officials are working with Local Authorities and other stakeholders to review and improve national planning policy and guidance in relation to air quality and noise. Many of the responses to the recent consultation will feed into this process.

Both Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and Local Authorities regulate emissions to air from industrial processes through the environmental permitting regime and my officials work closely with regulators and operators where appropriate. We have a short-term action plan in place for particulate matter in the vicinity of the Port Talbot steelworks, and have recently commissioned studies both in relation to particulate matter in Port Talbot and nickel in the Swansea Valley.

On air quality more generally, in November the High Court concluded the UK Government's 2015 air quality plan, produced to meet the requirements of the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive, should be quashed. The judgement found the plan did not meet the UK's legal obligations to improve air quality in the shortest possible time. It considered the predictions based on modelling were not accurate, making compliance with air quality limits unlikely.

The UK Government is, therefore, required to draft a new air quality plan to achieve compliance with the Directive. This new plan is due to be consulted on by 24 April 2017, and must be put in place by 31 July 2017.

The implications of this for the Welsh Government's plans to tackle nitrogen dioxide pollution in Wales will depend on new UK-wide compliance projections to be provided by Defra. These will include updated and more accurate traffic emission estimates and improved time resolution (i.e. giving predictions not just for the years 2020, 2025 and 2030 but for other years as well) within air quality assessments. The new draft UK plan will need to show how compliance with air quality limits is likely to be achieved by the soonest date possible, including in the four non-compliant zones in Wales.

In our recent White Paper on the transition from the EU to a new relationship with Europe, we were clear on the need to be vigilant and insist the protections and standards which benefit our citizens and the well-being of society as a whole are not eroded. We currently meet our EU obligations for national air quality monitoring and modelling through UK-wide contracts funded centrally from a shared UK air quality evidence budget managed by Defra. Similar UK-wide contracts are in place to provide technical support for LAQM, notwithstanding the different requirements for LAQM in each UK administration. While there may be scope to better align the national and local air quality regimes following our exit from the EU, I would be concerned by any move on the part of the UK Government to decrease the overall level of monitoring, modelling and technical support currently provided through UK-wide contracts.

There are, of course, some important levers for improving air quality which it should be noted are non-devolved, for example fiscal measures in relation to diesel vehicles, and we look to the UK Government to play its part in improving air quality in Wales.

The Committee has previously expressed some interest in the Aberthaw Power Station court case and on this matter I recently wrote to all Assembly Members. I trust this clarified the current position in respect of Aberthaw's emissions of oxides of nitrogen and the steps being taken by NRW to give effect to the judgement.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the bottom.

**Lesley Griffiths AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Amgylchedd a Materion Gwledig  
Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs

GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALESBwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Aneurin Bevan  
University Health Board

Our Ref: JP/Np/jac

Direct Line: 01633 435958

3 March 2017

Mr Mark Reckless  
Assembly Member  
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee.  
Welsh Government  
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**Re: Air Quality in Wales**

Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017 regarding the decision and making process in relation to appraising options for the location of the Specialist Critical Care Centre (SCCC).

Plans for the development of the SCCC from a clinical perspective were developed in the context of the Clinical Futures Programme, the aim of which was and still is to provide better local access to a broad range of services in recognition of the impact that this has on inequalities in health, promotion of health and well-being and integration of care. The future location of specialist and critical care services has been a central consideration for the Clinical Futures programme and was one of the priority issues that emerged from early public engagement work at the outset of the planning process in 2003. Whilst the public accepted the case for change in relation to specialist and critical care services, and endorsed the Clinical Futures model of care, they were concerned to ensure that the location of these services was as accessible as possible for the whole population. This was a particular concern in the rural and valleys areas to the north of Gwent where roads and access to transport is more problematic.

Whilst access to services can be achieved through advancements in technology, improved communications and telemedicine, geographical and physical access to specialist and critical care services is an important factor in planning particularly in terms of major emergencies, paediatric and obstetric care. The location of SCCC services in Gwent needed to reflect the fact that the catchment population covered a wide geographical area within which there are a wide range of transport and access issues, for example, low car ownership in deprived areas or poor public transport in rural communities, such as south Powys and north Monmouthshire. Although some parts of the catchment population are concentrated in urban areas such as Newport, other parts such as Monmouthshire and South Powys are widely dispersed.

In addition the mobility and location of the workforce has had to be considered in terms of the future location of services. Whilst all staff groups must be considered, in the context of specialist and critical care services which are currently delivered at both the Royal Gwent Hospital and Nevill Hall Hospital sites, the relocation of these services would have a particular impact on the clinical staff working in these areas. As these specialist skills are not transferable and are in short supply within the NHS this needed to be a prime consideration in determining the location of the SCCC.

In the context of the above and in order to identify optimum locations for the SCCC a travel times review was undertaken between 2005 and 2007 as set out below:

<p><b>Stage 1 2005</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel Times Analysis completed by RKW, Healthcare Strategists based on clinical activity data and model informed by patients and clinical staff</li> <li>- The analysis was based upon the Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust's patient activity in 2004/05, using a proxy for numbers of visitors, and including both private and public transport modes.</li> <li>- Weightings were used for emergency journeys and length of journey to reflect the need to get all patients to specialist and critical care services within an acceptable time.</li> </ul> <p><u>Outcome</u> The analysis showed that the best location for the SCCC would be within a 3 mile radius of Croes-y-ceiliog, Cwmbran, with good access to the A4042. At this location 95% of patients can reach the SCCC within 30 minutes and 100% of patients can get there within an hour. This level of access is key in achieving the investment objectives of the Clinical Futures Programme</p>
<p><b>Stage 2 (Jan – Sept 06)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Informal discussions regarding the outcome of the Travel times analysis took place with key stakeholders – South East Wales Transport Association (SEWTA), Welsh Ambulance service, Torfaen LA Highways Department, LHB Boards, Community Health Council, Clinical Futures Public Forum</li> </ul> <p><u>Outcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- widespread support for a central location and the approach</li> <li>- SEWTA commended approach taken</li> <li>- support from Welsh Ambulance Service</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 3 (Sept – Dec 06)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formal public consultation on the location of SCCC, with options for respondents to suggest alternatives</li> </ul> <p><u>Outcome</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Majority support for a central location (83 % of respondents)</li> <li>- Minority objection from Newport LA in favour of Newport locations</li> </ul> <p>The following paragraph is an extract from Community Health Council's Report on Public Consultation</p> <p><i>"Specialist and Critical Care Centre: 496 people or 95% of all respondents asked the question on the general location of the SCCC. A clear majority supported the location of the SCCC in the</i></p>

	<i>central location – 83% in support. Although there was a more substantial minority from Newport against this proposition, it was still supported three to one by city residents. There was a particularly low response from Blaenau Gwent residents, though an overwhelming majority favoured the central location. Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust has confirmed its support for the Clinical Futures proposals. It also preferred a site in the central zone "rather than any other location in Gwent."</i>
<b>Stage 4 (28 Feb 07)</b>	- Gwent Trust and 5 LHB Boards in Gwent formally note their support for the outcome of consultation

A study of the impact on staff working in the Gwent Healthcare NHS Trust was also undertaken. Information on current staff highlighted that the 10 most populous post codes in terms of staff residence were based on a reasonably well defined geographical area that runs along the A4042 with a concentration of staff residences in and around the towns of Newport, Cwmbran and Abergavenny, The staff residing in these areas represented approximately 58% (6211) of the total number of staff employed by the Trust. Of these top 10 postcode districts:

- 2577 members of staff resided in districts in and around Newport.
- 1513 members of staff resided in post code districts in and around Cwmbran
- 902 members of staff resided in postcode districts in and around Abergavenny

This indicated that a central location as defined above would minimise the impact on staff, whereas a Newport or a Nevill Hall location would require significant numbers of staff to travel from one end of the catchment area to the other.

Whilst the above has obviously focused on the key issue of accessibility to specialist and critical care services and the need for a central location, the Health Board, via a rigorous business case and option appraisal process, has also had to demonstrate that the SCCC itself is the best option for the delivery of these services from a clinical, financial and non-financial perspective. The business case process consisted of a Programme Business Case (submitted to Welsh Government in 2008), an Outline Business Case (submitted to Welsh Government in 2012) and a Full Business Case (submitted to Welsh Government in 2015). It should be noted that at each stage identified above Welsh Government undertook a rigorous assessment process prior to their approval. This culminated in formal approval of the SCCC Full Business Case in October 2016 which has allowed the Health Board to proceed with its construction.

I hope that the above provides you with assurance that the decision to locate the new hospital at Llanfrechfa, Cwmbran has been made in the context of a very rigorous and detailed planning process. If you require any additional information or require copies of the above business cases please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



**Judith Paget**  
Chief Executive/Prif Weithredwr



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Mark Reckless AM  
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
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6 March 2017

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter of 31 January in relation to action being taken to monitor the impact of my portfolio on air quality in Wales.

Your letter makes specific reference to the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan. In determining our four year capital investment plans, approved by the National Assembly in January, the assessment process included consideration of the consequences of climate change and the carbon impact over the lifetime of the programmes proposed.

Environmental considerations have been built into our capital planning and form an integral part of the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan, which in turn is aligned to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. An example of our commitment is demonstrated by the capital investment of over £145m in the Budget 2017-18 to develop and implement climate change policy, energy efficiency and Green Growth, which all play a part in air quality.

In respect of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, my role in the implementation of the Act gives rise to further opportunities to monitor air quality. The 46 Well-being of Future Generations National Indicators were published in March 2016. An air quality indicator has been agreed as one of those indicators which will, in future, measure progress towards the seven well-being goals set out in the Act. The technical document on the national indicators is available from:

<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/national-indicators/>

and sets out the actual indicator which is:

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Indicator 4: Levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) pollution in the air measured as Annual Average levels of nitrogen dioxide  
(NO<sub>2</sub>) pollution exposure measured in µg/m<sup>3</sup>

The technical document also references examples of contextual data to aid analysis. In the case of air quality these include:

- Public health outcomes framework

<http://gov.wales/docs/phhs/publications/160329frameworken.pdf>

- Air quality in Wales website

[http://www.welshairquality.co.uk/index.php?t=&n\\_action=&lg=e](http://www.welshairquality.co.uk/index.php?t=&n_action=&lg=e)

Local authorities have an important role to play in improving air quality. They have legal duties under the Environment Act 1995 to carry out reviews and assessments of air quality, and where there is non-compliance with national air quality objectives, must declare an 'air quality management area' and produce and implement a local air quality action plan in pursuance of those objectives. Local authorities also have a broader role in considering air quality impacts of developments in land use and transport planning, and preventing new problems from arising, as well as providing support to the air quality health agenda.

While responsibility for these policy areas sits within other Cabinet Secretaries' portfolios, I am committed to raising these matters with the local authorities where they are an issue. Air quality is one of the topics identified for my next round of meetings with local authority leaders.

Air quality data sources have also been included in the common data sets that the Public Services Boards (PSBs) have been using as a starting point for their assessments of local well-being and PSBs are also required to take into account the national indicators in assessing well-being. Early indications are that air quality is being expressly considered in the assessments being issued for consultation. Many carried out extensive community engagement last summer to gain a fuller understanding of the areas they are responsible for and gather people's perceptions of their area. It will be for each PSB to decide where to prioritise its attention, informed by the assessments. This may mean, but does not guarantee that, in some areas local air quality management will be identified as a priority for collective action.

Procurement is another area of responsibility which falls within my portfolio. The Welsh Procurement Policy statement seeks to drive positive procurement behaviour through key principles and associated actions. One of these requires that procurement activity is subject to the Sustainability Risk Assessment (SRA). The SRA is a tool developed by the Welsh Government's Value Wales division that seeks to enhance the environmental, economic and social delivery of our procurement activity. One key area concerns logistics and transportation, with the SRA suggesting positive ways that this can be minimised or delivered more effectively to lessen the impact on air quality.

The National Procurement Service for Wales (NPS) delivers collaborative procurement solutions across the Welsh public sector and has fully embedded the principles of the Welsh Procurement Policy statement, and also the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 throughout its activity.

The NPS Fleet Category is responsible for a wide range of fleet related procurement activity for the Welsh public sector. The Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 is embedded across all of its activity through the strategic aims that seek to address air quality impact described below.

- *A Healthier Wales* - reducing the amount of CO2 emissions generated in each of the Fleet & Transport sub categories by improving the transport infrastructure and promoting reuse and recycling.
- *Globally Responsible Wales* - ensuring that Fleet operatives are trained to promote economical driving patterns, reducing the CO2 emissions being released into the environment. Exploring the potential to re-use or recycle where ever viable i.e. tyres, redundant vehicles, spares etc.

Putting these measures into practice, the NPS Fleet vehicle hire tender has included the following requirements within its specification:

- the NPS and Customers are committed to sustainability and reduction of emissions and have a target of 130g/km of CO2 as an average across the use of passenger cars. However, all suppliers are encouraged to make available vehicles within each class with maximum emissions of 100g/km of CO2.
- the Supplier shall provide regular information and calculation of CO2 emissions arising as a result of the provision of the Services for carbon reduction.
- the Supplier shall use all reasonable endeavours to assist the Client and Customers in seeking to reduce the CO2 emissions arising as a result of the provision of the services by recommending and providing environmentally friendly vehicles wherever feasible
- the Supplier will assist the Client to identify the Carbon Footprint Profile of the Customers hire vehicles and use this as the baseline for future fuel consumption and emissions output monitoring. The Supplier shall provide the Customer with a monthly table of exhaust emissions readings taken either during planned maintenance of the fleet, at the annual pre MOT inspection or during the annual MOT test.
- Management Information (MI) will also be collected in respect of CO2 emission status of vehicle and total CO2 for the journey.

In respect of European Funds, while they are not directly focused on mitigating the effects of poor air quality, we are supporting activities which support the green and low-carbon economy, particularly through our renewable energy and energy efficiency and research and innovation priorities. For example, schemes such as:

*Deep Green* in Anglesey - £10.5m of EU funds have supported this innovative scheme to design, manufacture and test a low velocity device to produce electricity for thousands of homes from tidal and ocean currents.

*SPECIFIC* (sustainable product engineering centre for innovation in functional coatings) led by Swansea University. £15m of EU funds have supported this scheme which will address the challenge of low carbon electricity and heat by enabling buildings to generate, store and release their own energy – using only energy from the sun.

Through our Structural Funds investments, we also ensure all schemes supported address environmental sustainability within their activities. So, for example, infrastructure

developments must adhere to BREAM standards and we encourage schemes to develop sustainable travel plans and initiatives, where relevant.

I am pleased that the Committee is taking a close interest in this important issue. Recent reports of poor air quality in parts of south east England show how quickly the situation can deteriorate and we must do all that we can to prevent a similar situation in Wales. I will continue to utilise all of the tools available to me to monitor and mitigate the effects of any actions within my portfolio which negatively impact air quality. However, overall responsibility for air quality in Wales does not fall within my portfolio, so any future requests for advice should more appropriately be addressed to the Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

**Mark Drakeford AM/AC**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol  
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA-P/KW/0637/17

Mark Reckless AM  
Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
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24<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter of 31 January regarding the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee's enquiry into air quality in Wales and the Education portfolio's contribution to that.

Band A of the 21st Century Schools and Education Programme will see investment of £1.4 billion, which will pay for the rebuild and refurbishment of 150 schools and colleges across Wales over the five year period ending 2019.

The Programme aims to reduce the number of poor condition schools and colleges and make our educational estate more efficient and effective.

All new buildings funded through the Programme required to be BREEAM Excellent and have an EPC rating of A. In addition, we ask for 15% use of recyclates.

Higher Education Institutions in Wales are aware of the contribution they can make to improving air quality and implement a number of measures to reduce harmful emissions. All Welsh universities have externally approved environmental management systems in place which commit them to reducing all harmful emissions arising from the operation of the university, including harmful emissions to air arising from heating, business travel, or other operations within their control. In recent years progress has been made by the sector in reducing these emissions through investment in the estate both in new buildings and in improvements to insulation and heating systems.

All of the Welsh universities complement this approach by the use of travel plans which aim to discourage both staff and students from travelling to university by car, but also include wider approaches that in some cases relate to the development of

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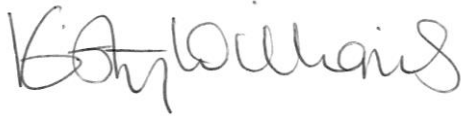
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new facilities. An example of this is to ensure that student accommodation is built, as far as possible, within walking distance of the campus, or alternatively dedicated bus services are provided to minimise travel by car.

I trust this information is helpful to the Committee's report on air quality in Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

**Kirsty Williams AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg  
Cabinet Secretary for Education



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Mark Reckless AM  
Chair  
Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

02 March 2017

Dear Mark

Thank you for your letter of 31 January regarding the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee's meeting on air quality in Wales.

The attached annex sets out the actions taken within my portfolio to monitor and mitigate against the effects of air quality

Yours sincerely



**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure

## **Actions with the Economy and Infrastructure Portfolio in relation to air quality**

### **Transport**

#### **Road**

The Welsh Government is not responsible for vehicle emissions standards in Wales, which are set for the whole of the UK by the UK Government.

We do not carry out routine monitoring of air quality, although specific monitoring is carried out in relation to road tunnel safety and to inform decisions as described below.

The treatment of air quality issues in Welsh Government road infrastructure projects is driven by a number of established processes, where air quality is considered alongside other environmental and non-environmental considerations. These processes cover the following pollutants: dust, particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>), NO<sub>x</sub> and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).

These processes revolve around the Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges Guidance. The latter Guidance meets the requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Highways (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2007.

WelTAG enables decision makers to consider the implications of air quality from an early stage in a project's development, in terms of the justification for the intervention and an examination of potential options which could be taken forward. It is also used to develop objectives for the project involved which, if warranted, can include objectives for air quality.

The EIA process enables decision makers to consider the significance of air quality impacts, both during construction and operation of the project, alongside other environmental issues.

As part of the EIA process, results from a number of existing monitoring sources are used, such as local authorities' monitoring networks, alongside scheme specific monitoring designed to ensure an accurate and proportionate assessment is carried out.

During project construction, monitoring is carried out to deal with the implications of dust pollution and where relevant, other pollutants. Post construction, monitoring of pollutants is carried out when there is a need to do so.

Mitigation for air quality in individual schemes has to be tailored to the context of the scheme, the costs involved and the effectiveness of the measures.

In some cases, for example the A483/A489 Newtown Bypass and, if taken forward, the M4 Corridor around Newport, the provision of new infrastructure removes traffic from existing roads and can significantly reduce air pollution. Care is taken to ensure that the change of route does not cause unnecessary issues on the new route.

Similarly, during construction, process practices are carried out to ensure that the effects of the works on people and other features from dust are minimised.

#### **Bus**

There are incentives through the Welsh Government Bus Services Support Grant to encourage greener buses. Local authorities and bus operators in Wales are also eligible to apply for Department for Transport grants to green their fleets.

## Rail

Through our procurement of Wales and Borders rail services and the South Wales Metro we are requiring bidders to put arrangements in place to improve environmental efficiency across the franchise. The new contract will deliver an increase in passenger capacity to cater for existing and forecasted growth in passenger numbers.

Metro Phase 2 will deliver two specific benefits:

1. Removal of diesel-only trains, therefore less diesel and associated emissions from the rolling stock; and
2. Modal shift from cars to public transport as a result of more frequent and faster services.

Both the ongoing Strategic Environmental Assessment for Metro and Environmental Impact Assessment for Core Valley Lines will investigate the impacts of potential changes on Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) as a result of the introduction of more attractive, cleaner and energy efficient rolling stock. Future phases of Metro are planned to operate on-street around Cardiff City centre offering greater penetration of public transport into some of the poorest and most densely populated AQMA.

## Air

Air quality in aviation remains the responsibility of operators and users. In the support function of infrastructure, aerodromes exercise initiatives towards air quality which are compatible with their operation but remain exclusive to those activities. Working in cooperation with users of aerodromes (airlines) more efficient flight paths can be utilised to assist air quality.

Cardiff International Airport received an award for Environmental Initiative from the Airport Operators Association (2015) for a range of activities which had undertaken.

## Learner Travel

The current learner travel legislation in Wales recognises the importance of achieving sustainable modes of travel. Section 11 of The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 ('the Measure') places a statutory duty on Welsh Ministers to promote sustainable modes of travel, the definition of which may improve the physical well-being of those who use them and/or the environmental well-being of the local area.

Section 2 of the Measure places a statutory duty on local authorities to risk assess walked routes to school. This provision ensures the provision of available walked routes to school which, in turn, promotes walking and cycling amongst learners. This contributes towards relieving congestion and reducing the carbon footprint.

The Welsh Government's Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014 advises local authorities to encourage learners to walk to school with adults, friends or groups (walking buses) and to provide kerb craft training for learners.

The Active Travel Act 2013 requires local authorities to continuously improve facilities and routes for pedestrians and cyclists by identifying routes for use and promoting access. Potentially, these routes could include routes to school.

Learners provided with free home to school transport generally travel by bus and this therefore removes multiple private vehicles from the school run thereby reducing congestion and pollution.

## Low Carbon Vehicles

We are committed to exploring opportunities to reduce emissions from transport and maximise the low carbon vehicle sector's opportunities for growth and jobs in Wales. We are considering the recommendations of the Low Carbon Vehicle Expert Steering Group in the wider context of our decarbonisation duties under the Environment (Wales) Act.

## **Economy**

Our economic sector teams have participated in Welsh Government workshops to look at how the sectors can play a part in reducing Wales' carbon emissions in line with The Environment (Wales) Act 2016. For example, the ICT Sector has a key role to play with the growth of the Digital Economy. Access to secure and reliable technology enables people to work more flexibly reducing the need to travel for work. This contributes to reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

## **Infrastructure Commission**

We recently consulted on the setting up of a National Infrastructure Commission for Wales later this year following a full public appointments exercise. We are currently analysing the responses.

The consultation made clear that the commission would be remitted to work in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in advising the Welsh Ministers on strategic longer term infrastructure needs. From analysis of the responses so far, this aspect is strongly supported. My expectation is that this will provide the context for the commission taking into account air quality issues in providing advice.

# Agenda Item 5

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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# Agenda Item 6

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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