PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON 08 SEPTEMBER 2022

COMMENT & QUESTIONS from Peter Dobbs, Ashbourne Resident regarding AQMA Ashbourne

Comment

The latest NOx diffusion tube data for air pollution in Ashbourne includes a raw data reading from a building on Buxton Road of almost 76 ugm-3. The legal limit is 40.

So 16 months after the AQMA was declared, 3 years after it was perfectly obvious to any scientist that it should be declared and 5 years after I started this campaign **no mitigation measures whatsoever for NOx pollution on Buxton Road have taken place.**

I am deeply concerned that unless you as Councillors intervene it is possible that another 5 years will pass with no significant improvement in air quality on Buxton Road.

I have circulated a document that summarises the 11 actions that I understand are in the draft action plan. I have also commented on each one to indicate its likely impact in the next 5 years on the NOx levels of that building on Buxton Road.

I hope you agree that there is little in the current plan that will give any confidence to Buxton Road residents that their air quality will be less harmful in the future.

The part that the County Council has played in developing this plan is disappointing. You will have noted how much time was lost waiting for their decisions. The actions they have proposed are all projects they were already carrying out. They have admitted that no additional money will be spent on the actions that they have suggested.

It dismissed actions that might have worked and substituted ones that are unlikely to achieve any reduction in NOx levels at locations where they are currently highest.

Is this council going to intervene to insist County Highways takes timely and effective action on air quality in Ashbourne? Or are they prepared yet again to take criticism for a problem that they did not create?

So my **questions** are these;

Q1. Is this council prepared to take instruction from members to put in place a process to amend the draft action plan so that it **will** be able to have a significant effect on NOx levels on Buxton Road? And

Q2. Will this process provide a fully transparent mechanism by which local stakeholders can make their opinions heard?

OFFICERS RESPONSE

Thank you Mr Dobbs for your questions.

Council Members are very interested in this air quality issue and in the development of the action plan. It is expected that a draft action plan will be considered by a meeting of our Community and Environment Committee in the near future and this is to be preceded by a Member briefing session. In both of these ways Members will be able to learn more about the action plan and its expected impacts, and will also be able to make their views known about the Plan. It is also worth noting that the Action Plan will be a living document that can be amended, added to and subtracted from during its lifespan.

In relation to your second question, there will be a period of full public consultation before the adoption of the action plan and all comments will be reported to committee.

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