



County Hall  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW  
Tel: (029) 2087 2000

Neuadd y Sir  
Caerdydd  
CF10 4UW  
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2000

## CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

**Committee** ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Date and Time of Meeting** THURSDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2021, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact [scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk)

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Ref: RK/RP/MM/11.11.2021

11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Councillor Michael Michael,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Cllr Michael,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 11 November 2021 – Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) - Adoption And Future Maintenance Of Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) Features Report**

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you as well as Officers from the Planning, Transport and Environment Directorate for attending Committee on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November to discuss the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) - Adoption and Future Maintenance of Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) Features Report.

Following our consideration, Members of the Committee have requested that I feed back the following observations and requests to you.

The Committee noted the comments made by yourself in relation to the difference that SuDs initiatives are having on new and old building developments and the associated work that is being undertaken with developers to ensure that the right model is in place. Likewise, Members appreciate the comments made by the Director for Planning, Transport and Environment in relation to how crucial this work is to any major development in the city and the option proposed would mean that the Council can manage the process and look to the long-term benefit for householders and the City as a whole.

**Enforcement**

Members questioned whether enforcement could be undertaken in relation to SuDS on older developments to which Officers advised that unfortunately the

new legislation did not allow for this and only applied to newer developments of more than one property. It was confirmed that it was now at the forefront of design with developers and the Council had the powers to refuse adoption of any SuDS features that were not up to standard.

### **Resources**

The Committee expressed concern during the meeting over the resources within the Council to take on the responsibility of future maintenance of SuDS features. The report and officers at the meeting stated that the existing service area would be developed and expanded to undertake this as more development progresses and more SuDS assets are introduced. Members were advised that the team would expand in line with demand and develop into a specific Street Scene SuDS maintenance team. Members welcomed reports from Officers that part of this expansion would incorporate apprenticeships as well as in-house training but expressed concern over how long this would take to develop and whether the need for the service would expand more rapidly than the team would be able to cope with, posing a risk to the Council. The Committee therefore **requested** written confirmation of the planned approach to expand the team and provide the service required, including how many apprenticeships this would include.

### **Requests following this scrutiny**

For ease of reference the requests contained in the letter are as follows:

- That the Committee receive written confirmation of the planned approach to expand the existing team to enable them to undertake maintenance of existing features and other flood risk associated assets, including how many apprenticeships this would include.

Thank you once more to you and the officers for attending the meeting.

I would be grateful if you would consider the above comments and provide a response to the request detailed in this letter.

Regards,

Handwritten signature of Ramesh Patel in black ink.

Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Andrew Gregory – Director for Planning, Transport & Environment
- Matt Wakelam, Assistant Director, Street Scene – Highways
- Gary Brown - Head of Highway Infrastructure and Operations
- Simon Dooley - Team Leader (Drainage & Flood Alleviation)
- Heather Warren, Cabinet Support Office
- Cabinet Support Office
- Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager
- Leaders of the Opposition
- Tim Gordon - Head of Communications & External Relations
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee

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Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM46744

Dyddiad / Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021

Councillor Ramesh Patel  
Chairperson  
Environmental Scrutiny Committee  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Councillor Patel

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee - 11 Nov 2021 - SAB - Adoption And Future Maintenance Of SuDS Features**

Thank you for your letter following the meeting of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2021. Following your request:

***That the Committee receive written confirmation of the planned approach to expand the existing team to enable them to undertake maintenance of existing features and other flood risk associated assets, including how many apprenticeships this would include.***

We would respond as follows:

The planned approach to increase staff numbers relates directly to development and demand. As SuDS features are adopted and a Commuted Maintenance Sum (CMS) is received, the ability to employ additional staff will be realised. There are existing staff within the Drainage and Public Rights of Way Teams that undertake similar work at present and can be utilised in the short term.

In addition, many SuDS features are constructed with extensive maintenance periods. This means that they will be maintained by the developer for a set time before they become the responsibility of the Council. Maintenance periods will vary depending on the development but may be up to 5 years.

**GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI**

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

**WORKING FOR CARDIFF, WORKING FOR YOU**

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Therefore, development will continue to be monitored and staff employed as and when demand dictates and finances become available. Although it is not possible to advise on exact numbers of apprenticeships at this time, it is planned for apprenticeships to be introduced once the team is established and a significant demand is experienced.

I trust the above is of assistance.

Yn gywir  
Yours sincerely

Michael Michael

**Councillor / Y Cyngorydd Michael Michael**  
**Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Strydoedd Glân, Ailgylchu a'r Amgylchedd**



Ref: RK/RP/MM/SE/11.11.2021

11<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Councillors Michael Michael and Susan Elsmore,  
County Hall,  
Atlantic Wharf,  
Cardiff CF10 4UW.



Dear Cllr Michael and Cllr Elsmore,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee – 11 November 2021 – Local Air Quality Management – Cardiff Council Air Quality Annual Progress Report 2021**

On behalf of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee, I would like to thank you as well as Officers from the Planning, Transport and Environment Directorate for attending Committee on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November and providing the Committee with the opportunity to consider and discuss the Council's Air Quality Annual Progress Report 2021. Following our consideration, Members of the Committee have requested that I feed back the following observations, requests and recommendations to you.

**Bus Retrofitting Programme**

The Committee welcomed the reports regarding the Cardiff Bus Retrofit scheme confirming that all 36 buses would be on route by early in the new year 2022. It was further clarified by Officers that this included the installation of sufficient charging points for all 36 buses at the bus depot.

In relation to the routes that these retrofitted buses would be covering and how this had been prioritised, Officers confirmed that the two inner-city Air Quality Management Areas had been previously identified for this scheme. Members queried whether there should be further targeted routes towards the west of the City, particularly bus route areas around Ely, which have previously been identified as having an air quality issue. Officers at the meeting agreed to contact Cardiff Bus to clarify whether any of the retrofitted

buses would be utilised for any areas to the west of the City. Members **requested** to receive this information as soon as it was available.

### **Electric Vehicles**

The Committee expressed concern over the longer-term impact in relation to the development of electric vehicle infrastructure given that, as reported by Cllr Michael, technology is rapidly changing, and the goalposts can often be moved. Members agreed that gradual and cautious steps needed to be taken in developing any infrastructure in this field to ensure it is fit for purpose and sustainable for the future.

### **Next Bike**

The Committee questioned the success of the NextBike scheme and the recent suspension of the scheme in Cardiff due to vandalism and theft. Members queried whether there was any data to evidence its impact on car use which would indicate its level of success in Cardiff, or possibly even evidence of an increase in bus usage during the period of the scheme's suspension. Members requested that they consider this item as part of their future Work Programme to examine its success, particularly in light of the unfortunate vandalism, and what is planned to address this.

### **Pilot Project**

The Committee welcomed the pilot to expand the air quality monitoring network with the introduction of 50 more Air Quality Monitors across the city. It was **recommended** that a number of these be assigned to areas outside schools where they have yet to put in place and Active Travel Plan. This will enable data to be gathered that can physically demonstrate the impact of the Active Travel Plan following its introduction and consequently provide clear evidence to inform future ways of working both for the schools and the Council.

The Committee queried whether there was any evidence to suggest that the school streets project which involved the temporary closure of road links surrounding a number of specific schools, had led to school related traffic

congestion simply being displaced to the areas just beyond these Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) zones. Officers said that they hadn't received any evidence of this, however they supported the Committee's **recommendation** for a few of the new air quality monitors to be placed outside of the identified TRO zones. The Committee highlighted that this would provide evidence to assist the Council to assess whether there is a real reduction in parents using cars to drop children off or whether it has simply relocated the problem to the streets just beyond the zone boundaries.

### **Levels of Air Pollution in Cardiff**

In response to a query asking how Cardiff compared with other cities regarding air pollution Cllr Michael provided information resulting from a recent study from Natwest in conjunction with experts from the University of Southampton. This Green Cities Report looked at 25 of the biggest cities by population using 17 criteria in six categories: green space, energy use/production, motor vehicles, waste and recycling, commuting travel and pollution. Cllr Michael reported that this study had identified Cardiff as the third greenest city. The Committee agreed that this was a positive result for the Council and **requested** that they receive sight of this report as well as information on how Cardiff compares with the other 9 Core Cities in the Core Cities Group in relation to air pollution.

### **Castle Street Re-opening**

During discussion around the re-opening of Castle Street, Officers advised the Committee that a detailed analysis had been undertaken of the resulting impact on air pollution and levels of NO<sub>2</sub> in the surrounding streets and roads around Castle Street due to traffic displacement from the road closure. Officers explained that this work had informed the decision regarding the re-opening of Castle Street. The Committee noted this and the response to the Chair's letter from their June meeting, where the same subject had been raised. Members **requested** that they receive a copy of this detailed analysis of the surrounding areas as at the time of their June meeting, this had not yet been completed.

### **TelRam Data**

Following discussion during the meeting with Officers, the Committee **recommend** that the Directorate explore how Telraam data could be used to assist the Council in its data review on traffic and air pollution for locations such as Castle Street and its surrounding areas.

### **Post-Pandemic Air Quality Monitoring**

In response to a query regarding the levels recorded at the non-automatic monitoring sites in Cardiff which monitor levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), Officers reported that there are still similar results being seen as those in 2020. Members were advised that this can be attributed to the fact that there have still been some restrictions in place due to the pandemic and the data had not yet been received for October and November. The Committee agreed with Officers that it would be crucial to monitor the future levels in order to assess the real effectiveness of the Council's initiatives to reduce air pollution in the City following the longer-term recovery from the Covid pandemic.

### **Requests following this scrutiny**

For ease of reference the requests contained in the letter are as follows:

- That clarification be sought from Cardiff Bus as to whether any bus routes to the west of the city had been prioritised for the retrofitted buses, particularly any in areas around Ely, which has previously been identified as having an air quality issue.
- That the Committee consider the 'Nextbike' scheme at a future meeting to examine its success, particularly in light of the unfortunate vandalism, and what is planned to address this.
- That the Committee receive sight of Natwest's Green Cities report developed in conjunction with experts from the University of Southampton, as well as information on how Cardiff compares with the other 9 Core Cities in the Core Cities Group in relation to air pollution.

- That the Committee receive the detailed analysis that was reported to have been undertaken, on the impact on air pollution and levels of NO2 in the surrounding streets and roads around Castle Street resulting from traffic displacement from the road closure during the pandemic.

**Recommendations to be monitored following this scrutiny**

To summarise, the Scrutiny Committees made three formal recommendations which are set out below. As part of the response to this letter we would be grateful if you could, for each recommendation, state whether the recommendation is accepted, partially accepted or not accepted and summarise the Cabinet’s response. If the recommendation is accepted or partially accepted, I would also be grateful if you could identify the responsible officer and provide an action date. This will ensure that progress can be monitored as part of the approach agreed by Cabinet in December 2020.

Recommendation	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
1. That a number of the new Air Quality Monitors introduced under the pilot, be assigned to areas outside schools where they have yet to put in place and Active Travel Plan. This will enable data to be gathered that can physically demonstrate the impact of the Active Travel Plan following its introduction and consequently provide clear evidence to inform future ways of working both for the schools and the Council.				
2. That a few of the new Air Quality Monitors, introduced under the pilot, be placed outside of the identified Traffic Regulation Order zones surrounding specific schools. This would provide evidence to assist the Council to assess whether there is a real reduction in parents using cars to drop children off or whether it has simply relocated the problem to the streets just beyond the zone boundaries.				

<p>3. That the Directorate explore how Telraam data could be used to assist the Council in its data review on traffic and air pollution for locations such as Castle Street and its surrounding areas.</p>				
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Regards,



Councillor Ramesh Patel

Chairperson Environmental Scrutiny Committee

Cc:

- Cllr Caro Wild, Cabinet Member, Strategic Planning & Transport
- Andrew Gregory – Director for Planning, Transport & Environment
- Jason Bale - Programme Manager – Clean Air Cardiff
- Heather Warren, Cabinet Support Office
- Cabinet Support Office
- Joanne Watkins, Cabinet Business Manager
- Leaders of the Opposition
- Tim Gordon - Head of Communications & External Relations
- Members of Cardiff's Environmental Scrutiny Committee

**SWYDDFA CYMORTH Y CABINET  
CABINET SUPPORT OFFICE**



**Neuadd y Sir**  
Caerdydd,  
CF10 4UW  
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2088  
[www.caerdydd.gov.uk](http://www.caerdydd.gov.uk)  
**County Hall**  
Cardiff,  
CF10 4UW  
Tel: (029) 2087 2087  
[www.cardiff.gov.uk](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk)

Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM46745

Dyddiad / Date: 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

Councillor Ramesh Patel  
Chairperson  
Environmental Scrutiny Committee  
County Hall  
Atlantic Wharf  
Cardiff  
CF10 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Councillor Patel,

**Environmental Scrutiny Committee, 11 November 2021 – Air Quality Annual Progress Report 2021**

Thank you for your letter following the meeting of the Environmental Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2021. Each of the Committee's three recommendations are addressed in the attached appendix (Appendix A). The Committee also made a number of specific requests, which are addressed below:

- **That clarification be sought from Cardiff Bus as to whether any bus routes to the west of the city had been prioritised for the retrofitted buses, particularly any in areas around Ely, which has previously been identified as having an air quality issue.**

The bid to the UK Government Department of Transport Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) fund and the subsequent award of grant funding for the buses specified the routes on which the vehicles are to be used. This was agreed at the time of the bid and initially targeted high impact routes in the City Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)/Castle Street and Stephenson Court AQMA on Newport Road. Cardiff Bus has confirmed that the routes in question have had to be assessed for battery life and these journeys are now built into the charging services contract that has been agreed with the supplier to ensure that the vehicles are charged appropriately and able to operate the route distance each day. Cardiff Bus has also had specially designed rotas in place for the electric buses since September 2021, which limit the number of drivers who drive them in order to get the best out of the battery life, as recommended by the manufacturer.

**GWEITHIO DROS GAERDYDD, GWEITHIO DROSOCH CHI**

Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg, Saesneg neu'n ddwyieithog. Byddwn yn cyfathrebu â chi yn ôl eich dewis, dim ond i chi roi gwybod i ni pa un sydd well gennych. Ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

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It is therefore not possible to re-allocate this batch of electric buses to routes that serve the west of the city. However, as a benefit to the Ely Bridge area, the arrival of the electric fleet will result in the removal of the Euro3 articulated bus fleet, which will be replaced by the current mixture of Euro4 and Euro6 emission standard double decker buses, which should have a positive impact on air quality.

We will continue to work with Cardiff Bus and all bus operators in Cardiff to identify further funding opportunities to deliver an ever-increasing number of zero emission buses.

- **That the Committee consider the ‘Nextbike’ scheme at a future meeting to examine its success, particularly in light of the unfortunate vandalism, and what is planned to address this.**

Cabinet Members and relevant officers would be happy to provide the Committee with an update on the Nextbike scheme to outline the work that is being progressed with partners to resolve the vandalism issues and ensure the continued success of the scheme in Cardiff.

- **That the Committee receive sight of Natwest’s Green Cities report developed in conjunction with experts from the University of Southampton, as well as information on how Cardiff compares with the other 9 Core Cities in the Core Cities Group in relation to air pollution.**

Enquires have been made with the main contributor to the NatWest Green Cities report, Professor William Powrie of Southampton University, who has confirmed that a report was not actually produced, with the findings being published as part of a [press release](#) that was issued on 10 November 2021. Professor Powrie also confirmed that the metrics used were all drawn from publicly available, mainly government, data and were as follows:

- public green space per person;
- car ownership and % ULEV;
- cycle commuting and car commuting;
- electricity use and green energy production;
- waste produced and % recycled; and
- air pollution for a range of contaminants.

Cities were ranked in each of these six categories and a score was assigned to the rank. The overall scores were then combined to produce the final league table that was published in which Cardiff was ranked third of 25 UK cities.

In terms of air quality comparisons with other UK Core Cities, as was highlighted at the Committee meeting on 11 November 2021, caution needs to be taken when doing so due to the differences in geographical, meteorological, population and transportation conditions that are particular to each city. Looking at reported data for 2020, currently, only Glasgow, Manchester, Newcastle, and Nottingham have publicly available data from their 2021 progress reports. To provide a simplistic



comparison, the average NO2 concentration captured by non-automated diffusion tubes in each city is provided below:

<b>Core City</b>	<b>2020 Average NO2 from Diffusion Tube Network ugm3</b>
Cardiff	20
Glasgow	19
Manchester	27
Newcastle	26
Nottingham	34

- **That the Committee receive the detailed analysis that was reported to have been undertaken, on the impact on air pollution and levels of NO2 in the surrounding streets and roads around Castle Street resulting from traffic displacement from the road closure during the pandemic.**

As outlined previously to the Committee, the Cabinet had to consider a range of factors in coming to its decision regarding the reopening of Castle Street and was concerned primarily with air quality modelling data that was produced to support any decision. The results of the modelling were made public as part of the report to Cabinet in June 2021 ([Appendix 4](#)), which contained the updated modelled analysis data and maps of the data. These results detailed that the option to continue to have Castle Street closed to general traffic resulted in increases in NO2 concentrations in surrounding residential areas. While the modelled rise in surrounding areas is within legal limits, there are clear concerns that any rise of air pollution in residential areas, in favour of achieving lower levels of pollution on non-residential Castle Street, was one that needed to be carefully considered before the Cabinet took any decision. This is particularly important as many of these residential areas already have poor levels of air quality and it is evidenced that there is no safe limit of NO2 pollution.

Monitoring has taken place throughout the period of the closure of Castle Street to general traffic. However, it is difficult to provide a direct comparison of these values to pre-closure levels as there was a meaningful change in travel behaviour throughout 2020 and the early parts of 2021 when national restrictions were still place as part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which – as reported in the Air Quality Annual Progress Report 2021 – has impacted on pollution levels across the city. The results will be reported in the 2022 annual progress report once all data from 2021 have been obtained, verified, and fully ratified in accordance the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) reporting requirements.

Furthermore, the Council wants to gather more data on traffic flows across the city centre as commuters return to work and visitor numbers return to normal with the easing of restrictions due to the pandemic. This up-to-date data on traffic flows will then be used to inform plans to further reduce air pollution and congestion in the city and inform on a permanent decision on the future of Castle Street, which will be subject to further Welsh Government approval.

We hope that the information provided assists in addressing the various requests and recommendations made by the Committee.

Yn gywir  
Yours sincerely

Caro Wild

**Cynghorydd / Councillor Caro Wild**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Gynllunio Strategol a Thrafnidiaeth**  
**Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport**

Michael Michael

**Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Michael Michael**  
**Cabinet Member for Clean Streets, Recycling & Environment**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Strydoedd Glân, Ailgylchu a'r Amgylchedd**

Susan Elsmore

**Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Susan Elsmore**  
**Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health & Well-being**  
**Aelod Cabinet dros Ofal Cymdeithasol, Iechyd a Lles**

## APPENDIX A: RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
<p>1. That a number of the new Air Quality Monitors introduced under the pilot, be assigned to areas outside schools where they have yet to put in place and Active Travel Plan. This will enable data to be gathered that can physically demonstrate the impact of the Active Travel Plan following its introduction and consequently provide clear evidence to inform future ways of working both for the schools and the Council.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>As detailed in the report to Cabinet on 18 November 2021 and in discussions with the Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2021, officers will adopt a risk-based approach in line with appropriate <u>Technical Guidance</u> for air quality management when selecting appropriate sites. We recognise the concerns about exposure of young school children to poor air quality and, therefore, the siting of a number of monitors in close proximity to schools will be a key objective of the pilot. We will also look to include schools that currently do not have an Active Travel Plan in place.</p>	<p>Jason Bale</p>	<p>31 March 2022</p>
<p>2. That a few of the new Air Quality Monitors, introduced under the pilot, be placed outside of the identified Traffic Regulation Order zones surrounding specific schools. This would provide evidence to assist the Council to assess</p>	<p>Partially Accepted</p>	<p>As detailed in the report to Cabinet on 18 November 2021, monitoring for NO2 currently does occur outside the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) zones at each of the schools to assess levels of air quality outside. At each of the schools monitored to date, NO2 levels outside of the TRO are compliant with</p>	<p>Jason Bale</p>	<p>31 March 2022</p>

Recommendation	Accepted, Partially Accepted or Not Accepted	Cabinet Response	Responsible Officer	Implementation Date
whether there is a real reduction in parents using cars to drop children off or whether it has simply relocated the problem to the streets just beyond the zone boundaries		the annual air quality objective for NO2. However, the concerns raised by Scrutiny Committee members have been noted and, where appropriate, officers will look to position a small number of monitors in these areas to provide further evidence on air quality in these locations.		
3. That the Directorate explore how Telraam data could be used to assist the Council in its data review on traffic and air pollution for locations such as Castle Street and its surrounding areas.	Accepted	The Cabinet is aware of the We Count Project and the Telraam data that is being captured. Officers will work directly with the project team to ensure that, where appropriate, the data captured is fed into ongoing assessment and reporting of air quality in Cardiff.	Jason Bale	31/12/2022