
STRATEGIC PLANNING & TRANSPORT STATEMENT

Air Quality Update

I am pleased to inform you that Cabinet approved our Clean Air Final Plan on 13 June 2019, which sets out the Council's preferred option to deliver compliance with the legal limit for NO₂ in the shortest possible time. The Council's preferred option is a package of measures that are aimed at reducing emissions from buses, taxis, and implementing a number of city schemes aimed to encourage and improve active and sustainable travel infrastructure to reduce our reliance on private cars.

The project has involved a huge amount of specialist work to help us understand exactly the extent of air pollution around the city and what is causing it. It also explored a wide-range of measures and modelled these to see what impact they would have. These measures were then narrowed down to a preferred package that we know will not only achieve compliance in advance of the 2021 deadline, but will make a significant positive difference to our air quality and wider public health.

The Council has already carried out a public consultation on the proposed measures and there has been overwhelming support for the project. Despite this general support, I am aware that the changes, especially to highways, will not be without challenges for people, as they may need to adapt to different forms of commuting or readjust their routines. We will continue to work with local residents and organisations in a meaningful way to support people to make necessary changes and be clear about why we are making these changes for the better.

Further consultation on individual schemes will take place in line with statutory requirements. The Clean Air Final Plan will now be submitted to Welsh Government prior to the 30 June 2019 deadline for Ministerial approval to allow funding to be made available to allow us to implement the measures.

Alongside this specific piece of work, I am also pleased to update members on our annual air quality strategy, which outlines some of our wider air quality projects. These now include the addition of plans for non-idling rules, living walls and improved planning guidance.

A copy of the Final Plan can be found at:

<http://cardiff.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s30911/Cabinet%2013%20June%202019%20Clean%20Air%20Appendix%201%20Clean%20Air%20FBC.pdf>

Supplementary Planning Guidance

New Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on 'Shopfront Design and Signage' was approved by the Cabinet on 16 May 2019 and will be considered by Council this month. The SPG relates to 'good quality design', 'conservation of the historic environment' and 'retail' policies in the Local Development Plan (LDP). It recognises the role that well-designed shopfronts can play in enhancing the character and appearance of buildings and streetscapes throughout the city. It replaces old Local Plan guidance from 2011. A 6-week consultation on the draft SPG was undertaken, which received around 50 comments that were generally supportive of the aims of the SPG. Some relatively minor or technical points were raised that have been addressed. The SPG promotes and encourages the use of Welsh Language and bilingual signage on shopfronts and our approach is consistent with other Welsh local authorities.

Nextbike Update

Roll out of the expanded fleet is in progress with public consultation on proposed locations and ideas for other locations having been conducted. Feedback is being collated by nextbike and will be used to inform the final locations. It is anticipated that the full 1000 bikes will be on street by the end of August. A social outreach programme is being developed to support access to the scheme for people who find it hard to join the existing scheme and this pilot is due to be rolled out this summer.

I am aware of issues around bike availability; this is in part due to a rise in misuse and vandalism, and partly due to the higher than predicted use of the bikes. We are working closely with nextbike and senior Police officials to try to improve this situation.

Welsh Government grant funding has been awarded for the introduction of a small number of electric bikes to enhance the fleet and improve accessibility to the scheme and to promote an uptake in cycling in general. Work on how this will integrate into the existing fleet is in progress with the operator.

Welsh Government Funding

I am pleased to inform you that the Council has been successful in receiving over £10M of funding bids from the Welsh Government for a wide range of projects to improve public transport and active travel in the city.

A total of £10,455,000 has been secured from a range of grants including the Local Transport Fund; Local Transport Network, Active Travel Fund; Safe Routes in Communities and the Road Safety Capital Fund. The money will be spent in a variety of ways including:

- Extending the nextbike fleet and trialling new electric bikes
- Investment in the cycleway network and cycle parking
- Improving the highway network in the city centre to encourage sustainable forms of travel
- Improving walking routes
- Building more bus lanes, to make travel by bus quicker
- Improving active travel for schools
- Additional 20mph limit areas and works to create a new default limit

Further details on these schemes will be shared with Councillors, in line with the statutory consultation that will take place. I am of course happy to discuss any of the schemes with you if you have any queries or concerns.

This funding boost is great news for the city and will make a significant contribution to the required funding that we need to improve sustainable transport in the city and the surrounding areas. The funding package is the largest ever received by the council through Welsh Government's annual transport grants bidding process. It represents a strong endorsement of our ambitious programme to transform the city's transport system and enable people to choose more sustainable transport options.

Cardiff Commuter Challenge

To mark national Bike Week, last Tuesday (11 June 2019), a group of Cardiff's Councillors, volunteers and campaigners took part in a rush hour Commuter Challenge. This saw them setting off by bike, car and bus from all corners of the city in a race against the clock to get to Cardiff Castle. The challenge was organised by Cllr Iona Gordon in partnership with Cardiff Cycle City and Cardiff Cycling Campaign.

The commuters set off from Victoria Park in the west of the city, the STAR Hub in Splott to the east and, in the south, the challenge began on Watkiss Way at the International Sports Village. Northern commuters began their journey on Gabalfa Avenue at Llandaff North and Gabalfa Hub. In each case, the journey times included the time it took the car commuters to park and walk and the walk from the bus stop for bus commuters.

For each of the four routes, the bike proved to be the quickest way of travelling from A to B on the morning commute, while the bus was the second fastest mode on all but one of the routes. Car commuters had the third fastest journeys on three out of four routes.

Councillor Caro Wild
Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning & Transport
14 June 2019