

**MEMBER QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER at Place Scrutiny Committee – 11
January 2018**

Response to be made by Councillor Denham, Portfolio Holder City Transformation, Energy & Transport

Questions from Councillor Musgrave on the Air Quality report on the agenda

Question 1

For past ten years, and in this report, Exeter's air quality is described in these terms: "Air quality in Exeter is mainly good, with just a small number of hot spots where levels of nitrogen dioxide are above government objectives". Does the PH agree with me, that this is highly misleading?

Q1 Response

Councillor Denham as Portfolio Holder City Transformation, Energy & Transport responded that she did not agree. The data that the Council had collected showed that air pollution levels were below the objectives in all but a few locations. She agreed that there was no city wide data on particulate concentrations, but there was nothing to suggest that emissions of PM^{2.5} in Exeter were unusually high. She considered that it would be misleading to suggest that pollution levels in Exeter were comparable to larger cities or conurbations.

She stated that it did not detract from the Council's commitment to take action to cut congestion, to reduce air pollution emissions and cut exposure to harmful pollution. The draft plan proposed that the Council would seek a full assessment of the actual health impacts of air pollution in Exeter which would be a reliable measure on the impact and make a clear case for action.

Supplementary Question

Does the Portfolio Holder agree that despite 64% of the locations which show that the NO² levels are above the safe level, there is no acceptable level for NO²?

Supplementary Response

The Portfolio Holder City Transformation, Energy & Transport referred to the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager and Senior Environment Technical Officer who responded that the monitoring locations focus on the areas with the highest levels and not representative of the city as a whole. Health impact evidence was not consistent between scientists for what a safe level would be, however Exeter was considered good for air quality, which the Air Devon Health Impact report could provide more information.

Question 2

Will the Portfolio Holder ask for a more accurate and full picture of the reality of current air quality in the city, instead of the incomplete information provided in this draft version?

Q2 Response

Councillor Denham as Portfolio Holder City Transformation, Energy & Transport responded that the air quality data was presented in the Annual Status Report published on the Council's website and was presented to Place Scrutiny Committee every September. She considered that there was no benefit in reprinting a vast amount of scientific data which was

already in the public domain and appropriately referenced in the draft action plan presented at this meeting.