

### **Notice of Motion by Councillor Wetenhall under Standing Order No. 6**

Councillor Wetenhall moved, and Councillor Moore seconded a Notice of Motion under Standing Order No.6 in the following terms:

“This Council resolves that:

- full and transparent information about air pollution levels on specific roads and health impacts of living on or regularly using those roads whether as a pedestrian, cyclist or motorist.
- information on alternative walking and cycling routes or travel modes for known regular commuter and school run routes, avoiding the most polluted roads.
- Fuller information on the health impacts of air pollution from all sources, both inside the home (for wood burners, open fires, mould and damp) and outside and actions to take to reduce these impacts.”

In presenting the motion, Councillor Wetenhall made the following points:

- there was currently misleading information and information that was difficult for lay people to understand;
- 92% of nitrogen dioxide monitoring sites did not meet WHO guidelines;
- there was a simple solution, and it would not be very expensive; and
- she had attended the Exeter Futures Walk put on by the University and it was clear that there needed to be a simpler way to communicate scientific information in way that could be understood by everyone.

The Lord Mayor advised that an amendment had been proposed and invited Councillor R Williams to speak. Councillor R Williams moved, seconded by the Leader, Councillor Bialyk, an amendment that under Standing Order 7 (4) that his motion be referred to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

In proposing her amendment, Councillor R Williams informed Members that the Air Quality Report was going to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee as an item at the November meeting.

During debate on the amendment, Members made the following points:

#### **Councillor Palmer:**

- this amendment essentially squashed the motion; and
- vulnerable people could not wait for this to be deferred.

#### **Councillor Read:**

- she appreciated that scrutiny was able to look at things in depth;
- reports were often only noted at scrutiny;
- it would be helpful for Council to make a decision now, that would support scrutiny regarding air quality;
- the original motion enabled communication with residents and provided solutions residents on how they can solve their problem; and
- if this amendment was approved it would be a vote to not provide transparency.

**Councillor Ketchin:**

- the Strategic Scrutiny Committee would be assessing the reporting of air pollution in the city;
- the original motion was about simple measure to update information for the public; and
- this brought forward wood burners which had not previously been addressed.

**Councillor Atkinson:**

- Devon County Council were responsible for devising and putting into place an Air Quality Plan, the role of Exeter City Council was to put up monitoring equipment and collect data;
- Exeter City Council was creating plans to deal with mould and damp and that would be an issue for Customer Focus Scrutiny; and
- this motion should go to Scrutiny for an informed debate on these issues as they had a valuable role and informed policies.

**Councillor Wetenhall:**

- this was not about tackling air pollution, but about providing more information;
- the rest of the city would not be covered by the Air Quality Action Plan; and
- this motion was simple and quick, referring the matter to scrutiny was a poor use of scarce officer time.

**Councillor Wood:**

- this was an incredibly important subject that everyone was passionate about;
- this required partnership input, and experts were needed on communication and air quality as this was a complicated process;
- he supported the amendment as it would send this issue to the correct platform;

- he recognised the importance but also the complexity; and
- scrutiny had capacity to bring in external people to explore.

**Councillor Rees:**

- many cities across the UK were dealing with improving air quality;
- it was important that these issues were identified as cross-party and that the intention was to communicate with residents;
- it would be better to work together, even if views were different about how; and
- work must be done in partnership with Devon County Council.

Councillor K Mitchell asked for clarification from the mover of the amendment to this motion that it would be separate from the Air Quality Action Plan on the agenda at the Strategic Scrutiny Committee, as is stated in the Standing Orders. Councillor Mitchell also asked for clarification on what the considerations were for this being referred to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor R Williams advised that the Air Quality Action Plan was not coming to Strategic Scrutiny, but the Air Quality Status Report 2025, and alongside that would be a timetable for the Air Quality Management Area and information about Air Quality Action Plan timetable.

**Councillor Moore:**

- this was about science communication;
- this motion could have been dealt with now;
- Exeter City Council had an educational role with Denis the Dustcart;
- the Director of Public Health had been clear about the damage to health; and
- the best time to start communicating with residents was now.

Councillor M Mitchell raised a Point of Order on the amendment and asked for clarification from the Monitoring Officer on whether the matter would be referred from Scrutiny to the Executive Committee and then back to Council. The Lord Mayor advised that this would be the case.

**Councillor Wright:**

- this information could be difficult to understand unless you were a scientist;
- she would like to provide information that was easy for people to understand;
- the information provided would need to be looked into to ensure that it was full and transparent information; and
- this should go to public scrutiny to ensure it was the relevant information.

**Councillor Pole:**

- wanted to reassure Members, as Chair of Strategic Scrutiny, that this would be undertaken in a cross-party manner;
- the Air Quality Monitoring Report and Monitoring Area were prerequisites for the Air Quality Action Plan;
- she would look at all these items and meet with the Portfolio Holder to support this work which would be done in collaboration with stakeholders; and
- this motion appeared to be pre-empting a bigger piece of work.

**Councillor Bialyk, Leader as seconder:**

- the amendment was clear, and the motion would be on the agenda, the mover of the original motion would be entitled to speak and it would be debated;
- there were a number of councillors with severe respiratory diseases, and they were invested in improving air quality; and
- Exeter City Council was responsible for monitoring air quality.

In summing up, the mover of the amendment, Councillor R Williams made the following points:

- all were passionate about air quality;
- the Air Quality Status Report was 130 pages long and it was essential that it was read and considered alongside this motion;
- accurate and targeted communication was essential; and
- to ensure the best for the people of Exeter, she asked Members to trust that this could go to Strategic Scrutiny and be examined.

Following a vote, the amendment was CARRIED and became the substantive motion.

Councillor Wetenhall proposed an amendment which was ruled out of order by the Lord Mayor.

Following a vote, the substantive motion was CARRIED.