

SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Co-operative Executive

Meeting held 26 October 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Terry Fox (Chair), Julie Grocutt (Deputy Chair), Jayne Dunn, Cate McDonald, George Lindars-Hammond, Douglas Johnson, Paul Turpin and Alison Teal

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mazher Iqbal and Paul Wood. An apology for absence was also received from Kate Josephs (Chief Executive)

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

4.1 The Leader reported that two petitions and questions from three members of the public had been received prior to the published deadline for submission of petitions and questions for this meeting. A representation for one of the petitions was made in writing on behalf of the petitioners.

4.2 Petitions

4.3 Petition requesting a mix fleet of Hackney Carriage Vehicles licensed by Sheffield City Council

The Council received an electronic petition containing 101 signatures requesting a mix fleet of Hackney Carriage Vehicles licensed by Sheffield City Council.

Representations on behalf of the petitioners was made by Ibrar Hussain. Mr. Hussain addressed the Co-operative Executive and explained that 101 Hackney Carriage drivers had signed the petition which highlighted the concerns felt regarding the recommendations in the Clean Air Plan report and the consequences for the trade.

There needed to be a Licensing Policy review on the specification for Hackney

Cabs as options will be limited and this could impact on disabled passengers. There were now 610 licenced Hackney Carriages in Sheffield and this number was continuing to fall.

The Hackney Carriage drivers were asking to work with the Licensing Department and have an immediate review of the policy in 6-8 weeks and ensure proper consultation with stakeholders.

The Leader referred the petition to Councillor Douglas Johnson (Executive Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport). Councillor Johnson thanked Mr. Hussain for presenting the petition and explained that there would be full consultation on the Clean Air Zone which Hackney Carriage Drivers would be able to feed in to. Changes had been made to the original proposal and it was important to minimise any impact on disabled persons.

4.4 Petition requesting the Council save space for walking and cycling in Sheffield.

The Council received an electronic petition containing 939 signatures requesting the Council save space for walking and cycling in Sheffield. There was no speaker for this petition, but the Monitoring Officer read out a supporting statement from the lead petitioner.

The Leader referred the petition to Councillor Douglas Johnson (Executive Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport). Councillor Johnson undertook to supply a response in writing, but noted that the petition summed up why it was so important to make the city healthier and happier. Younger people and children need clean air to grow up with. Cycling and walking measures will be retained.

4.5 Public Questions

4.6 Mr Hafeas Rehman from Sheffield Taxi Association attended the meeting and asked the following question:

The Sheffield Taxi Association was not against the Clean Air Zone – everyone needs clean air to breathe. Members of the Sheffield Taxi Association had been consulted with and had really thought about what needed to happen and how to make the city cleaner. They had also given thought to alternative vehicle specifications.

The proposal for a mixed fleet was the perfect solution and was used in other cities such as Newcastle and Leeds. Why wasn't it right for Sheffield?

The Clean Air Zone wasn't needed to improve vehicle specifications. Disabled people preferred rear loading taxi's which enabled them to be forward facing and had a better passenger experience in Newcastle and Leeds.

What else had been done to improve air quality in Sheffield. The most polluted area of the city was outside Sheffield Station and the taxi rank was under the canopy which was even more polluted. Does the health of the taxi drivers not

matter?

Time was needed to change vehicle specification and allow drivers time to purchase new vehicles before the Clean Air Zone was implemented. Reductions in the number of taxi's in the city also presented a risk to the public and Uber prices would increase.

Mr. Ibrar Hussain asked the following questions:

What will happen to those vehicle's where the owner of current licenced hackney carriage or private hire wants to replace vehicle engine euro 4 petrol or euro 6 diesel in a vehicle that's currently licensed will you allow that to happen?

(Some vehicles its cheaper to replace an engine than buy an vehicle under current climate, as long as the vehicle full fills the criteria of euro4 or euro6 engines)

When will the licensing go paperless at Sheffield City Council as it has in other authorities? This would make it easier for drivers. Also, When will the Licensing Department open up for drivers to visit and when will consideration be given to taxi drivers using bus lanes?

The Leader referred the questions to Councillor Douglas Johnson (Executive Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport) whilst noting that the Council had worked throughout the pandemic to deliver the best service that it could for the public.

Councillor Johnson responded to the questions and understood the point about keeping consultations short. Those driving taxis were among the most affected by air quality and improved working conditions were needed. There were issues with the supply of vehicles and the delay in the Clean Air Zone had caused uncertainty in the industry.

The decision to implement and the consultation would allow the decisions to be made. There would be a requirement to move forward with electric vehicles, but there should be some grant funding available.

The permitted age of the vehicle was not just to do with the engine, but also applied to roadworthiness.

Councillor Grocutt added that the issue regarding the railway station issue was important and the Council would look to work with the Rail Authority to look at the matter.

5. ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY

- 5.1 It was noted that there had been no items called-in for scrutiny since the last meeting of the Co-Operative Executive.

6. CITY CENTRE STRATEGIC VISION - PROGRESS REPORT

6.1 To provide a short report on progress on delivering the City Centre Strategic Vision as set out in the One Year Plan. Also, to provide an overview of the topics to be considered and to approve the delivery timetable.

6.2 **RESOLVED:** That Co-operative Executive:-

1. Note progress on the delivery of the City Centre Strategic Vision;
2. Note the proposed content of the report and the link to the Transport Strategy, Connecting Sheffield programme including how we use Pinstone Street and Clean Air Zone requirements; and
3. Approve the delivery timetable, enabling adequate Member & Public Engagement.

6.3 Reasons for Decision

- 6.3.1
- To provide clarity regarding the overall content of the City Centre Strategic Vision;
 - To be clear on the importance of other policy decisions such as the Clean Air Zone as an enabler for sustainable city centre development; and
 - To agree the timetable for delivery to enable adequate engagement from Members of the Council and the public.

6.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

6.4.1 The alternative option would be not to produce a City Centre Strategic Vision. However, given the need for the centre's continued regeneration in the light of retail re-structuring and other economic challenges along with the need to address the delivery of more homes in Sheffield, the need to deliver a strategy outweighs the option not to deliver one.

6.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

6.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

6.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Executive Director, Place

6.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

7. SHEFFIELD AND ROTHERHAM CLEAN AIR PLAN

7.1 The report updates Co-operative Executive on the development of the Sheffield and Rotherham Clean Air Plan (CAP) to tackle Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) exceedances and sets out the actions required to achieve compliance with our Direction by Government to reach legally compliant annual average levels of NO₂. In summary these are:

- Proceeding with the recommended CAP proposals which includes establishing a Category C charging Clean Air Zone (CAZ) within Sheffield City Centre with wider traffic management measures.
- Accepting the grant funding received from Government in March 2020
- Commencing public consultation in November 2021.
- Submission of the Full Business Case to Government early in 2022 including any revisions arising from the consultation
- Completing the procurement, and thereafter contract awards, for any necessary infrastructure, goods and services required, together with any other such steps, to implement and meet the aims and objectives of the Clean Air Plan.
- To report to the Executive on the consultation findings early in 2022.

Background

In common with other cities, air pollution is a major public health challenge that is damaging the health and life chances of people in Sheffield, contributing to the deaths of around 500 people a year in the city. Multiple places across our road network are in breach of legal limits for air quality with road vehicles (and particularly diesel vehicles), exposing communities to invisible but harmful concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂).

In 2017 Government placed Sheffield and Rotherham under a legal duty to improve the city's air quality by reducing NO₂ emissions below the legal limits in the shortest possible time.

In response, SCC and RMBC developed and submitted an Outline Business Case (OBC) to Government in December 2018, which identified the option to deliver compliance was a Category C+ Charging Clean Air Zone on and within the Inner Ring Road, along with a number of additional traffic management measures.

In February 2020 Government issued a further Ministerial Direction under which SCC are legally obliged to implement a CAZ C charging Clean Air Zone.

Having announced a review of our Clean Air Plan in September 2020, to consider the implications of Covid-19 and the lengthy period between the submission and Government's approval of the OBC, this is now complete.

The outcome of the review of the Clean Air Plan has confirmed that in order to achieve legally compliant levels of air quality in Sheffield we need to deliver a Class C Clean Air Zone along with wider traffic management measures. The

review has also confirmed that the original proposals around the compliance standards for taxis can be amended to incorporate the current standards without major additional burdens on the majority of the existing taxi fleet .

The primary goal of the proposed Clean Air Zone is to encourage and support the removal of the most polluting vehicles from the city's roads in order to make our air cleaner and safer to breathe. It is not the intention to penalise drivers or companies and the report sets out the proposed financial support measures that will be offered to certain drivers to upgrade and replace non-compliant vehicles. In addition, the report includes details of specific fleet where circumstances determine that an exemption to charges is appropriate.

The CAP proposals are significant and form part of Sheffield's ambitions to deliver clean air for everyone and support the development of safe, reliable and clean transport options in the city.

Given the proposals to see the continued regeneration of the City Centre and the delivery of approximately 21,000 new homes in the central area, the importance of making our air cleaner and safer to breathe must be a pre-requisite to continued development. The proposals for the City Centre Vision will highlight this aspect further.

Whilst a major consultation on our CAP proposals was undertaken in Summer 2019, given the time that has elapsed and the development of the scheme, it is now proposed that consultation on the final Clean Air Plan proposals is undertaken. This will provide an opportunity for people to give feedback on the full details of the scheme, including financial support measures and exemptions, the detail of which was not previously available.

Alongside this, the Full Business Case will be developed in liaison with Government's Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU), but only finalised once the outcome of the consultation is known and any final amendments to the scheme are made where necessary. In addition, arrangements to distribute funds to support those businesses, individuals and organisations who need to upgrade their vehicle to become compliant will be finalised and in line with existing delegated authority the delivery of the Clean Air Zone infrastructure will continue to be progressed.

7.2 RESOLVED: That Co-operative Executive:-

1. Approve acceptance of the grant funding of £23,967,436 awarded in March 2020 from the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department for Transport to enable the Council to comply with its statutory duty through the measures described in the report;
2. Approves the launch of further consultation on the Clean Air Plan in November 2021 as detailed in the report;
3. Delegates authority to the Executive Director, Place to enter into the contract for the successfully tendered infrastructure work required for the charging zone including supply, installation and maintenance of Automatic

Number Plate Recognition cameras;

4. Delegates authority to the Executive Director Place in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport to submit to Government a Full Business Case to deliver a Category C Charging Zone as outlined in the report; and
5. Where no existing authority exists under the LSOD, delegate authority to the Executive Director, Place, in consultation with the Executive Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, and with the Director of Financial and Commercial Services to approve such procurements and thereafter contract awards for any necessary infrastructure, goods and services required together with any other such steps to implement and meet the aims and objectives of the Clean Air Plan.

7.3 Reasons for Decision

- 7.3.1 The recommended proposal is predicted to reach legal compliance within the shortest time to achieve the outcome of protecting public health by minimise exposure to harmful NO₂ pollution.
- 7.3.2 Other recommendations within this report are included to ensure that in the CAP actions can be progressed as quickly as possible to achieve the outcome above.

7.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 7.4.1 In assessing options, the primary success factor required by Government is ensuring 'compliant levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) emissions within the shortest time'. The Full Business Case (FBC) appraisal process will follow HM Treasury guidance and be consistent with the approach taken at OBC.

Post Covid 19, remodelling work was undertaken to establish whether any alternative CAZ approaches would be sufficient to meet the legal obligations. A CAZ C continues to be the model most suited to achieving compliance within the shortest time and this remains the requirement mandated by Government. No other form of CAZ is permissible without Ministerial consent.

A set of technical documents detailing the analytical modelling work will be submitted to Government, forming part of the Full Business Case. These documents are currently being drafted and will be submitted to the JAQU for review by their technical assurance panel prior to FBC submission. Further detail will be published on the SCC Clean Air website after JAQU technical review process is completed.

7.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

11.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

11.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Executive Director, Place

11.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

NOTE: The above item is not subject to call-in as the recommendations are removed from the call-in process to progress the Clean Air Plan to implementation to achieve legal compliance within the shortest possible time, predicted to be 2022. This is dependent on committing resources and expenditure to commence the implementation programme in November 2021.