

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

COUNCIL HELD ON 15 JULY 2020

QUESTION from Mr Dobbs an Ashbourne resident, on whether Buxton Road Ashbourne should be declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

For the avoidance of doubt will the Council confirm or deny the rumour that they will NOT be declaring an Air Quality Management Area on Buxton Road, Ashbourne at this time?

If an AQMA is NOT being declared in the Annual Status report that has been submitted to Defra, could the Council explain how they will therefore NOT be in breach of the 1995 Environment Act. In particular how they have followed the advice in TG16 Chapter 2 which contains the following;

It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their area and take action to improve air quality when objectives set out in regulation cannot be met. Throughout the annual reporting cycles, Defra expects local authorities to have identified all areas within their jurisdiction where air quality exceeds the objectives, or may do so in future. Where these areas have been identified, the local authority is obliged to declare them as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and put in place an action plan to reduce emissions from key sources.

Could the Council also indicate if they have taken legal advice as to the consequences of ignoring this obligation?

Thank you,

Peter Dobbs

ANSWER

'Mr Dobbs is aware that the Council's 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report has been submitted to Defra for assessment prior to publication. Amongst other things, this report considers the air quality data obtained for Ashbourne during 2019.

In August 2019, 4 additional diffusion tubes were deployed in Ashbourne in order to obtain more information about levels of nitrogen dioxide. This was in response to exceedances of the air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide on Buxton Road and were intended to provide information about the area over which those exceedances might exist. We have asked Defra for their views on the information submitted and their initial response is:

In response to your initial query on the 16th of June 2020 (ref 6349), a Detailed Assessment should be commenced once there is a full 12 months of monitoring data available from the additional NO₂ diffusion tubes you have put out. In terms of the

impact of CV-19 upon monitored concentrations, this should be taken into account when looking at the input data that is used within any modelling that is completed, e.g. traffic data and the monitoring data.

Once 12 months of monitoring data is available if you wish to talk through the scope of the DA please just give the helpdesk a call and we'll be happy to talk through how this should be completed.

Officers are awaiting Defra's final comments before publishing the Report. The implications of Defra's opinion are being discussed with the Council's Legal Team.'

QUESTION from Mr Dave Smith a Wardlow resident, on the motion to be prepared for Council in September in support of the condemnation of racism.

On 2nd July the council passed a motion to review property it owned that might have connections to slavery, colonialism and racism. I welcome the intent of this motion, however some of the wording was disturbing. It appeared to be conflating colonialism, slavery and racism, as if racism could be deemed to be in the past due to the abolition of the slave trade and the end of the British Empire, and that racism only applies to objects.

As slavery was abolished and former colonies gained independence, racism continued.

When the slave trade ended, the perpetrators of the crime were compensated for their loss of 'property'. The victims were left abandoned in a country they had been forcibly removed to, with nothing. This, after having been traded like cattle to 'owners' who could beat, rape and kill. The victims had no recourse to the law, as under it they were deemed to be property.

The British Empire stripped out the natural resources of any country it ruled by military occupation, to fuel the rapid industrialisation and wealth creation that allowed workers here to eventually gain better employment conditions. The people in those countries suffered incarceration, brutality and genocide.

For Britain to behave in this way it needed labels so the public here did not see the people in far off countries deserving the rights and considerations they were demanding here. This is why language like 'savages' and 'children' was used. It created a narrative that those countries, and the people in them, had been 'civilised' and benefited from colonialism because they were incapable of running things themselves, and that enslaving them was not a problem because they were not real people.

The legacy of slavery and empire is real and it is here now. It created the hostile environment, it feeds the notion that commonwealth citizens who come here, and any children they have, are spongers and are somehow 'other' so don't belong here and shouldn't have the same rights. This impacts directly on their life chances and their experience of living in Britain. Internationally, it has allowed multinational companies to indulge in a form of corporate colonialism and modern-day slavery that destabilizes governments in search of cheap labour to fuel the West's desire for cheap consumer products, where people live and work in conditions that would not be tolerated in the West.

In passing the motion, the council chose not to consult with the very people who are left dealing with these legacies, and instead to put the review solely in the hands of officers.

My Questions are:

- 1. Will residents be given the name(s) of officer(s) given the task of assessing council property, and will we be able to scrutinise any qualifications/life experience, etc., which make them, apparently, more suited to carry out this task than residents?*
- 2. When will the council recognise that dealing with racism should involve BAME communities in the process? What steps will the council be taking to start this process?*
- 3. From the debate it is clear the council is at the bottom of the learning curve on the issue of racism. What steps will it be taking to educate itself, since this has implications for how welcome BAME communities feel both living in, and visiting, the Derbyshire Dales?*

4. Cllr Joyce Pawley had the additional words “as a first step” inserted into the motion. However, it was not made clear what the end goal is intended to be. When will the council be clarifying this?

Kind regards

Dave Smith

ANSWER

The Council did not prescribe the review process, procedure or timescale. The starting point is collating the asset list. The mechanism for reviewing assets will then be planned and undertaken.
