

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE  
13 SEPTEMBER 2017

1(A) QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

1. Anna Walker to ask the Chair:

Noise and Air Pollution

Can the Lead Member please tell me what actions Reading Borough Council is taking to mitigate the problems of noise and air (focussing mainly on particulate) pollution in Reading, and how is Reading Borough Council measuring success in this? Could the Lead Member also give me a forward view as to what the Council would like to do over the next 5 years to further the work it has already undertaken ?

REPLY by the Chair:

**Noise**

Problem noise is investigated by the Environmental Protection & Nuisance Team, and where necessary legal action is taken against those causing the noise.

It is Council policy that the impact of noisy plant is assessed prior to installation, so that it does not cause 'background creep' - where the background noise level steadily increases through the cumulative impact of successive developments.

Noise during construction work is unavoidable, however we ask for industry best practice to be used and restrict the hours for noisy works to between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm Saturdays, with no noisy work on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

**Air Quality**

The Council have an air quality action plan updated at the end of 2015. The action plan contains a range of measures which are being and will be implemented with the objective of improving air quality. The focus of the action plan has to be on NO<sub>2</sub>, as this is the pollutant that exceeds the national objective level, however as transport is the primary source of both pollutants, measures to reduce one will help to reduce the other.

Recent measures include:

- Installed electric charging points and introduced the first electric vehicle to the council fleet.
- Currently undertaking a no idling campaign. This will target idling hotspots such as outside schools and taxi ranks.
- Taxi emissions policy - to remove the oldest taxis from the fleet and gradually improve the emissions performance of taxis, as well as incentivise the uptake of ULEV.
- Promoting sustainable transport and active travel to reduce use of the private car by securing significant external investment for schemes including South Reading Mass Rapid Transit (MRT), Green Park Station, East Reading MRT and National Cycle Network (NCN) route 422.

Over the next 5 years we will continue to implement the measures included in the action plan, but be mindful of developments that may come about following the recently introduced national air quality plan and the quickly evolving picture in relation to air quality. We will be mindful of any further government guidance to come out and will take advantage of any funding streams that become available to help improve air quality.

