

Environmental Audit Committee

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

Health Committee

Transport Committee

Oral evidence: Improving Air Quality, HC 433

Thursday 23 November 2017

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 23 November 2017.

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Members present:

Environmental Audit Committee: Mary Creagh (Chair); Zac Goldsmith; John McNally; Dr Matthew Offord.

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee: Neil Parish (Chair); Alan Brown; Dr Caroline Johnson (also a member of the Health Committee); Sandy Martin; Sheryll Murray.

Health Committee: Andrew Selous; Mr Ben Bradshaw; Maggie Throup.

Transport Committee: Lilian Greenwood (Chair); Iain Stewart; Graham Stringer; Paul Girvan.

Questions 1-129

Witnesses

I: Alan Andrews, ClientEarth, and Professor Stephen Holgate, Medical Research Council Clinical Professor of Immunopharmacology, University of Southampton.

II: Martin Adams, Head of Air Pollution, Transport and Noise Group, European Environment Agency, the right hon. Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, and Councillor Adele Morris, Deputy Chair of the Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board, Local Government Association.

Written evidence from witnesses:

- [Alan Andrews, ClientEarth](#)
- [Rt hon Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London](#)



Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Alan Andrews and Professor Stephen Holgate.

Andrew Selous took the Chair.

Q1 **Chair:** Good morning, and welcome to our witnesses in this first session of a joint inquiry between four Select Committees. We have members of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, the Environmental Audit Committee, the Health Committee and the Transport Committee. I will chair the first panel. Can I ask the witnesses to state their names and where they are from? Given that our proceedings are being watched by people outside, could we keep this as acronym-light as possible and speak clearly, so that people can follow?

Professor Holgate: Thank you for inviting us here. My name is Stephen Holgate. I am a Medical Research Council clinical professor at the University of Southampton. I have spent a career in respiratory medicine research. I was the founder-chair of a committee called COMEAP, which continues, and the chairperson of the Royal College of Physicians and Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health report on air pollution, “Every Breath We Take”, which was published on 23 February last year.

Alan Andrews: My name is Alan Andrews. I am a lawyer with ClientEarth and I head our clean air team. As the Committees will be aware, we have been in litigation against the Government for something like seven years now in relation to non-compliance with legal standards for air quality.

Q2 **Chair:** That’s excellent. Thank you very much. I will start with a question to you, Professor Holgate. What are the main health and economic impacts of air pollution, and specifically of nitrogen dioxide? Could you lay that out for us?

Professor Holgate: Of course. Much of the health evidence has come from epidemiology, in not only this country but the United States and Europe, showing that for cardiovascular and respiratory diseases—there are several in each category—air pollution is a very significant contributor to the adverse health effects of those diseases, and particularly of myocardial infarction and ischaemic heart disease, stroke and a variety of respiratory diseases, ranging from asthma through to COPD, pneumonia and lung cancer.

More recently, there has been a lot of increased interest in the wider effects of air pollution on human health, and in particular on the lifelong effects of pollution, starting at conception, in terms of intrauterine effects on the developing organs of the baby, and on the subsequent appearance of disease through early adulthood into late adulthood—here we are talking about diabetes, loss of IQ, onset of dementia and Parkinson’s and other neurodegenerative diseases.



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- Q3 **Chair:** Thank you very much. How would you characterise the response of both the Department of Health and Public Health England to the risks you have outlined over recent years?

Professor Holgate: It has obviously improved a lot, with the science strengthening year on year. The last World Health Organisation chief executive in Bonn recently stated that we really do not need any more evidence to link air pollution to adverse health. There is by far and away sufficient evidence to make the case. The question then is: how much do we value these particular health aspects?

From the physician's point of view, which I am speaking from today, and that is who I am representing in this report, we attach a lot of significance to this, because we are affecting people who are at the extremes of life. We are affecting people who are disadvantaged with diseases that put them at increased risk, and we are affecting people who live in disadvantaged communities to a greater extent. There is an equality issue in all this. And of course, it is preventable. We now have such strong evidence—not in this country, as yet, but in other countries—to demonstrate that if you start reducing pollution, you improve the health of the nation.

Chair: Thank you very much. That leads us on nicely to our second question from Neil.

- Q4 **Neil Parish:** Good morning, gentlemen. Professor Holgate, you talk about the vulnerable groups in particular; we seem to have a real problem with vulnerable groups, especially in our deprived areas. Can you explain exactly why the air quality for children and elderly people is so important?

Professor Holgate: If one looks at the distribution of where disadvantaged people are living, they are often close to roads and exposed to increased traffic. Secondly, people living in these environments are disadvantaged by a number of different factors. Tobacco smoking is increased. Obesity is increased. Diets are poor. There are social and economic factors of stress and poor housing. All those conflate to magnify the effects of pollution on these particular individuals. That really puts them at increased risk of contributing to the excess deaths and increased morbidity that we witness.

- Q5 **Neil Parish:** Over the years, we have been almost obsessed with carbon emissions. At what stage were you alerted to the fact that nitrogen dioxide might also be very much a potential killer?

Professor Holgate: When I was chairman of COMEAP, NO₂ was thought not to be a toxic pollutant; you are quite correct in saying that. In chamber studies, when people were exposed to NO₂ in fixed environments, they could not measure any changes. Subsequently, very good epidemiology, particularly across several years—not just cross-sectional but longitudinal studies—started to separate out some of these health effects from the particulates, which were the major drivers for the health effects. As those studies got bigger and bigger, the largest being 60



million people in the United States in a study published recently in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, they have absolutely confirmed that NO₂ is contributing to these adverse health effects, albeit to a lesser degree than particulates.

- Q6 **Neil Parish:** I have a final question. You can understand the public being slightly sceptical when one minute they are told to drive diesels because they are clean, and the next minute they are told not to. One minute it is carbon, and then it is nitrogen dioxide. A little bit further down the road—sorry about the pun—are we going to find something else being wheeled out that is now the problem?

Professor Holgate: It isn't a matter of "the problem". You and I are breathing in this room a mixture of chemicals. Any one chemical, particle, NO₂, volatile organic chemical, or whatever is not alone in contributing to the health risk. We are breathing in a mixture of chemicals, just as in the 1950s, when we got the Clean Air Act, the mixture of chemicals caused the problem. We would like the public to understand that it is not any single chemical substance; in fact, it is the whole emissions, largely coming from tyre wear on the roads and from the burning of carbon fuels, that are causing the issue.

Neil Parish: Thank you very much.

- Q7 **Sandy Martin:** On that theme, the National Audit Office report that came out last week focuses almost exclusively on nitrous oxide. There are quite a lot of other emissions that have been reducing, but do you believe that there is too much focus on nitrogen oxide? Do you think that we need to be also worried about carbon monoxide and benzene, for instance?

Professor Holgate: Yes, indeed; you make the point very well. We tend to focus on things when a flurry of new evidence comes in that fuels the interest. Yes, I think NO₂ is particularly stubborn and it is difficult to get levels down, so people focus on that one. I am absolutely convinced that other chemicals are involved in this. We go forward with new technology to measure, for example, particles; in different parts of the United Kingdom and elsewhere, the chemical composition of those particles changes. We do not know yet what the individual chemicals in the particles are that drive some of the health effects, but they are like Trojan horses: the particles carry chemicals into the human body, and they end up in the brain, the pancreas or other parts of the human body, where they sit and aggravate ongoing disease processes.

- Q8 **Dr Johnson:** The DEFRA report states that air quality since the 1970s has improved significantly in the UK. It says that sulphur dioxide is down by 96%, nitric oxides are down by 69% and small particulates are down by 70%. Has that led to any epidemiological effect on the improvement of public health?

Professor Holgate: There is a limited amount of evidence from the United Kingdom, unfortunately, partly because to be able to do the sort of studies that you talk about, cross-sectional analyses are not terribly helpful. What we should do is what they have done in the United States:



take the whole population, look at the air quality measures across the whole country and start looking at the longitudinal effects of interventions as a country, not just around one particular area. We have not done that, but we could do that. That gives me the opportunity to say that the amount of research funding in this area is infinitesimally small. It is not something that the research councils or any other organisation have given any priority to at all. That has led to a porosity of information, which is very frustrating. I would like one of the report's recommendations to be that we should invest more in that sort of really big study, where the margin of error almost disappears.

In the 60 million study in the United States, the line connecting the level of particulates with increase in death goes through zero. There is no safe level of air pollution. In all the rest of the studies, we talk about thresholds and it being safe below a certain level, but it is not. That is a numbers game, and when you do the numbers game, there are health effects all the way down to the bottom. That basically means that even at very low levels, the most vulnerable—children with severe asthma, for example—will still have effects.

We tend to look at average levels of pollution when we do this monitoring, but that is not the issue. Take a mother wheeling a baby along the South Circular Road, for example; you will have very high levels locally at that environmental site. The monitoring we do in this country does not take that into account. New asthma, which is a new bit of work being done, and which is now shown to be definitely happening, is linked to proximity to the air pollution emissions. The emissions are close to roads, and where houses or schools are situated close to roads, that is where the fresh emissions are. We have only limited knowledge from the average pollutant levels, but we need research to look at what happens locally in small pockets, where the pollution levels build up to much higher levels.

Q9 Dr Johnson: It is interesting that you said that there is a linear relationship between the amount of particulate in the air and the effect on human health. There are lots of different ways we could improve air pollution in this country. One of them is through clear air zones, where, essentially, we take air that has particularly high levels and bring them down; but if we stop people from coming into city centres, to make the air quality better there, do we just shift the problem out into the countryside? People make mail or internet orders, so lorries are going round the countryside delivering those orders, and there are large parking areas outside towns. Are we just spreading the problem out and maybe actually making more people ill by doing that?

Professor Holgate: That is an argument I have heard. The issue for air pollution is more around the static vehicle. You and I have sat in traffic queues for hours, breathing the fumes of a car right in front of us, where the emissions are greatest. A car—a diesel vehicle—moving down a motorway at 50 mph or 60 mph is emitting much less, in terms of its health effects. With these four-lane carriageways now, we have all these cars and other vehicles coming into London. They hit the South Circular and then stop and spend an hour and a half sitting there waiting, with all



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the pollution just accumulating. Moving vehicles are fine, but we are running out of space for moving vehicles in this country, especially around our urban areas.

- Q10 **Dr Johnson:** Do you think we are focusing on the right thing? We focus on nitrogen dioxide when we know that particulates are more harmful. Are we focusing on the right thing?

Professor Holgate: It's a relative game, this. As you know, there is a big debate about whether there is overlap between the health effects of NO₂—nitrogen dioxide—and particulates because they are co-emitted. The ultra-fine particles—the very, very small particles that get into the circulation—follow NO₂, so it is very difficult to disaggregate them, but COMEAP have now concluded that there are separate health effects for NO₂, so we have at least got to that point, which is excellent. If I may, I want to stress again that it is not any one pollutant that is the issue here; it is the whole mix that really is causing all these health effects. We really have to stop thinking about any single pollutant and start thinking about the source of the mix, which of course in large part is the burning of fossil fuels.

- Q11 **Mr Bradshaw:** Can you be clear about mortality—the 40,000 figure that we have been given in the briefing, and also by organisations like the British Heart Foundation? DEFRA now seem to be challenging that, with this downgrading of their impact assessment in their latest piece of work. What is your view of that?

Professor Holgate: It's not DEFRA challenging it; it's COMEAP—and quite rightly. As I have just mentioned, there is co-emission of ultra-fines with nitrogen dioxide, so you measure two pollutants when you are measuring one. The big question is: how much overlap is there between these two? They have been discussing this for two years now, and they still have not concluded.

In our college report, we had one of COMEAP's members on our panel—an economist, Mike Holland—and we made what we thought was a rubric estimate of about 40,000. That is 29,500 coming from the particulates, which is good, solid data, and around about 12,000 or 13,000 coming from the nitrogen dioxide. Reading the latest COMEAP minutes, they seem to be arriving at close to that number, but that is expert opinion. In other words, they are in the same situation as we were when we wrote this report: the actual evidence base for nitrogen dioxide in this country is not as strong as it should be, because we have not had studies of the size that is needed to be able to disaggregate these things clearly.

- Q12 **Mr Bradshaw:** And 40,000 would make this the second biggest avoidable killer after tobacco.

Professor Holgate: Correct.

- Q13 **Mr Bradshaw:** You could make the argument that you can avoid tobacco if you choose to, but you can't avoid this.

Professor Holgate: Correct, but you and I drive cars; we have a choice.



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Mr Bradshaw: Seldom. I usually go by bike.

Professor Holgate: I am very pleased to hear that.

Mr Bradshaw: I put my bike on the train to Exeter. The figure you gave about the danger inside a car is very interesting. It seems quite counter-intuitive that you breathe in around 10 times more—

Professor Holgate: Up to 10 times. It varies, obviously.

Q14 **Mr Bradshaw:** You breathe in up to 10 times more if you are sitting in a car than you do if you are, like me, cycling behind or walking along the street, breathing in the fumes. Explain how that works.

Professor Holgate: This is research done not only in this country; it has now been shown in other parts of the world. Of course, in all modern cars we have these ventilators that draw in air. As your vehicle stops right in front of an exhaust pipe, you just vent the freshest, most toxic pollutants—the fumes coming right out of the tailpipe—straight into the car, to your child sitting in the back seat. It is the same in buses and taxis, where they have done similar measurements—not 10 times higher, but two or three times higher than walking on the street.

Q15 **Mr Bradshaw:** So the parent who drives their child to school thinking they are protecting them in this nice clean, enclosed environment is actually poisoning their child 10 times worse than they would if they walked or cycled with them to school.

Professor Holgate: Correct.

Q16 **Iain Stewart:** A supplementary to Mr Bradshaw's question: in the manufacture of private cars and other vehicles, is there a fix that could be put into their design—better filters or something of that nature—that would reduce the accumulation of pollution inside the vehicle?

Professor Holgate: Potentially, yes. There are mechanical fixes to all of this. The question is how efficient they are in doing the job. You often see cyclists with masks on, which are incredibly inefficient at filtering out particles. They may start looking good, but they end up not working. It is the same when you have people trying to clean up the air inside their house: they have these filters, but the filters start to fail, and then the pollution builds up. This is all a relative issue, really. My suggestion is: why try to mitigate when you can actually stop it? It seems a ridiculous way of dealing with the situation, especially now we have alternative forms of transport, such as electric and hybrid vehicles, coming on, and public transport that does not rely on the burning of fossil fuels like this. It is a fix, but it is not the solution, if I may use that terminology.

Q17 **Alan Brown:** To move on slightly but continue with transport, I want to try to quantify how significant transport is to pollution. Can you give an assessment of the extent to which the health impacts of poor air quality can be blamed on transport emissions? On the back of that, is the Government focusing too much on transport, given the contribution of other factors such as energy production?



Professor Holgate: A very good question. This will vary in different parts of the country. In London, transport is an issue. The case has been made, and you will have had lots of evidence for that. It is certainly not the only contributor. Industrial and building sites—machinery and vehicles coming and going from building sites, for example—contribute about 7% of the pollution in London, for example. Where I live in Southampton, shipping is a big issue. Massive, great ships are pouring out filthy smoke, and air with the most toxic pollution is blowing off the Solent over the city. Our big problem is shipping, and we have no solutions to that. In Liverpool, go to Lime Street station, stand there for a few minutes and think about what you are breathing in, with these massive diesel trains pouring out diesel fumes into that station—and the housing around that is all the deprived housing. So depending where you are in the country, there are going to be differences in the contribution to the pollution.

In large part, vehicles—by that, I mean cars, vans and goods transport—are contributing between 40% and 60% of the pollution. Then there are contributions coming across from Europe, and other trans-boundary sources that add to that.

- Q18 **Alan Brown:** On that, if you are saying 40% to 60% is the contribution from transport, is the Government tackling this in the right manner, or could it do more? You are saying there are clearly localised effects. If you look at the direction of travel—another pun, unfortunately—ultra-low emission vehicles and electric vehicles specifically are almost deemed to be the silver bullet at the moment, but is that the right approach, given the variables that need to be considered?

Professor Holgate: It is all linked to how we provide energy in this country anyway. Obviously, we have to move away from fossil fuels; we all realise that that has to happen. This is part of that argument—moving away from fossil fuels to alternative forms of energy. I think we had in the Budget yesterday incentives for people to move to the electrification of the transport fleet.

I think the big issue here, from the health point of view, is that it is not just about breathing particles and nitrogen oxides; it is about sitting in a car for three to four hours a day, in a position where you are not using any energy and where the adverse health effects of little movement are causing a problem. We want to see more active travel, as Mr Bradshaw was saying a few minutes ago. We want to see more access on bicycles, walking, and freeways where people can move around.

In London, they are making a real effort to do that, and we are all aware of that. It is inconveniencing people. Well, too bad! If you are protecting the health of the public, that is one thing you are probably going to have to pay for. In Southampton, where I live, the efforts to do something like that are just not happening, and they need to happen. We need to make sure that local authorities take this sufficiently seriously to encourage the good health of their populace. That is not just about air pollution but about encouraging activity, as it is about encouraging a good diet. These things



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all interact, and that is what we have emphasised in our Royal College report.

Alan Brown: Can I follow on, Chair?

Chair: Briefly, and then we will move on to Lilian.

Q19 **Alan Brown:** You have touched on the Budget. Do you have any view on the Chancellor explicitly heralding the fact that he is not going to target white van man or white van woman, as if that was a really good thing in the long term? On the movement of goods, there are also transport refrigeration units, with a secondary unit that controls the chill and the refrigeration. They are unregulated and cause emissions problems as well. Do any of you have a view on that?

Professor Holgate: That is a lost opportunity, I am afraid. If you look at our graph here, Mr White Van is the one area that is going on increasing as people do more of their shopping through the internet. It is a big issue and needs to be dealt with. No one is criticising vans; we are criticising what they are burning while they are delivering their goods, not the van itself. Why don't we have electric white vans, just as in London they are moving towards the electric taxis? That would be very nice.

Q20 **Lilian Greenwood:** I wanted to follow up on two of the answers you have given. One was on encouraging walking and cycling. Obviously, that has huge benefits in getting people out of polluting vehicles and choosing a more environmentally friendly mode, but of course it also has wider health benefits. Do you think there is enough in the Government's plan that encourages or enables local authorities to take on those wider impacts? Tackling obesity is also a huge issue. Do you think they are doing enough to incentivise active travel?

Professor Holgate: I am so pleased that you asked that question, because the simple answer is no. As a Royal College, that is something on which we are very keen to see more activity. It is not just about obesity and lung and heart disease, but about fitness, wellbeing, mental health, socialisation and the way a community functions. Living increasingly in our homes with our computers and driving in our cars, the fragmentation of society is a big issue.

Cycling and walking—moving around a community on your legs—are a good way to start forming bonds. Children going to school in groups and being able to socialise is very important. If their parents take just one child to a school in the back of a tractor, it is not in any way encouraging that individual to be able to function as a growing youngster within an integrated society. We need more emphasis on active travel, and local authorities need to do more to make use of the fantastic green spaces in the United Kingdom, not only in London but elsewhere, and to make walking and cycling safer. That is basically the issue here.

Q21 **Lilian Greenwood:** I think we were all struck by the figures yesterday: £46 billion is being spent on a fuel duty freeze and £1.2 billion was promised on cycling and walking. The focus is rightly on diesel cars, but



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outside London, many cities are served by diesel trains. You mentioned Liverpool Lime Street. The Government are about to procure new bi-mode trains that will operate in diesel mode in cities such as Nottingham and Sheffield. Do you think they should not be doing that? What is the evidence on pollution effects around stations? Is there anything?

Professor Holgate: Again, this comes back to the evidence base. Because the evidence has not been collected, there is an assumption that it does not exist. That is what I am talking about on the research and why we have not invested properly in collecting that sort of evidence, because it is absolutely crucial. There is evidence now around railway stations. The best evidence is not in this country but out in Europe, where they have done really good measurements, not only on overground but also on underground, where the metal particles created by the friction of wheels on the tracks causes a massive load of particle pollution whenever we take the underground. Those metal particles are very reactive when they get inside the lung, and some are absorbed and end up in the brain.

That is important, but because we have not measured it or studied the health effects, it is not talked about. We need to. I would suggest that we need some proper research in this area, and the companies involved—Railtrack or the individual train companies—have a responsibility here. As we repeatedly say in our report, the polluter should pay. The polluter should actually be driving the studies that need to be done to actually make these judgments.

Chair: You have made your research point very well and we have noted it.

Q22 **Zac Goldsmith:** I have a question for Alan Andrews from ClientEarth. My understanding is that you have taken the Government to court twice already on air quality and you have won both times, and that you are in the process of taking the Government to court again over their 2017 plans. My first question is: can you outline what you think is wrong with those plans? What are the deficiencies and where are the gaps?

Alan Andrews: Sure. Let me start by explaining the basic grounds of our latest challenge. There are essentially three elements to it. First, the five local authorities that were supposed to be mandated to introduce clean air zones under the 2015 plan are no longer being told to introduce clean air zones. That raises major alarm bells with us as to whether those clean air zones will actually happen by 2020, as we are told they will.

Secondly, we are concerned that, for 45 local authorities that have clear and ongoing breaches of the nitrogen dioxide limits, the plan really doesn't require them to do anything at all. It just relies on gradual fleet turnover to deliver compliance—not until 2021 in some cases. Thirdly, the plan for Wales is pitiful. There are no real commitments to taking any action, and we want to see a clear commitment to do so.

Q23 **Zac Goldsmith:** Can I take you back to the second point? Can you explain to us why you believe those 45 local authorities have effectively been exempted from the requirement to take action? What does that



actually mean, and what are the Government doing on that?

Alan Andrews: What the Government are doing in this plan is basically trying to focus all their energies on where the problem is worst, which makes a certain amount of sense but ignores the harsh legal realities of there being legal breaches in these other local authorities.

Q24 **Zac Goldsmith:** Is that true of all 45?

Alan Andrews: Yes. They are currently in breach of the nitrogen dioxide limits, and for some of them those are serious breaches that will continue for many years to come. I should explain that our claim does not directly relate to 23 local authorities that have been directed to go away and conduct feasibility studies. The aim of those feasibility studies is to look into various measures in order to achieve compliance with the court order as soon as possible.

Q25 **Zac Goldsmith:** So what would you include, then? What would need to be in the plan for you to decide, as an organisation, not to take the Government to court?

Alan Andrews: First, we would need to see measures for all zones that are currently in non-compliance that would achieve compliance as soon as possible. It might be helpful to take you back to the 2016 judgment in ClientEarth (No. 2). Mr Justice Garnham gave a very clear guide to what the legal obligations on Government were. He finally explained what "as soon as possible" means, in the context of the legislation.

Where there is a breach of the nitrogen dioxide limits, the Government must prepare a plan that must achieve compliance as soon as possible. As soon as possible means exactly that. It is not "as soon as it is not too difficult" or "as soon as it is politically expedient". Protection of public health has to be the top priority.

He also explained that the Government must choose a path to compliance that minimises human exposure, and that compliance by the required date must not only be possible but likely. He was very critical of the Government's approach in the previous plans, which was based on very optimistic assumptions around the real-world emissions from diesel vehicles. They were basically assuming that the new generation of diesel cars would deliver compliance without the Government having to do very much at all.

That was the legal context. Based on that, we were hoping that the Government would mandate a national network of clean air zones. As they had for the five cities that were in breach until 2020 under the old plan, we assumed that, by applying that logic nationally, we would have a national network. Unfortunately, despite their own evidence telling them that a national network of clean air zones is the most effective way to deliver compliance as soon as possible, they have not had the political courage to take that step and have instead passed it down to local authorities to decide.

Q26 **Zac Goldsmith:** But without mandating those authorities to do it?



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Alan Andrews: Exactly.

Zac Goldsmith: Chair, may I ask one follow-up question? Then I will hand over to Sheryll.

Chair: Sure.

Q27 **Zac Goldsmith:** You have covered some of this already in your answer, but how much of your complaint about the Government's 2017 plans is about the lack of ambition in those plans in terms of the targets and aspirations, and how much is about the lack of evidence that the policies in place will enable us to achieve and meet those targets?

Alan Andrews: That's quite a difficult question, because the new plan does not actually commit to doing much at all. It is really a plan for plans, in most cases by local authorities. The only real evidence base we have on the effectiveness of measures is around these clean air zones, but they are not taking them; they are encouraging local authorities to do something else that will achieve compliance as soon, despite the fact that their evidence has been unable to unearth such measures. It bears all the hallmarks of a hospital pass to local authorities, which are now scratching around for alternatives to clean air zones, when everyone knows that that is the only way to address the problem. We need to get the most polluting diesel vehicles off the roads as soon as possible. That will be politically difficult and unpopular—there is no getting around that—but the public health context and the legal context demand it. The Government now need to focus on ensuring that people are given a helping hand in moving away from their dirty diesel vehicles towards cleaner alternatives.

Q28 **Mrs Murray:** You have already answered one of my questions in saying you believe that the Government should mandate a national network of clean air zones, but how do you think the Government should ensure that local authorities can tailor their plans effectively to local areas? Not every area is exactly the same. What is your solution to how the Government can ensure that local authorities tailor their plans?

Alan Andrews: You are absolutely right. Local authorities have a very important role to play. Generally speaking, they have a better understanding of the particular local problems they face around air quality, transport and so on. We really need a balance between clear direction from the national Government, a clear mandation to introduce clean air zones, and a national framework that sets consistent standards, and local authorities feeding into that process and determining the exact locations of clean air zones, the exact vehicle classes that should be included, and so on. It needs to be a partnership between local authorities and national Government.

Unfortunately, we are not yet seeing that clear leadership from the national Government. In many cases, they seem to have left local authorities high and dry. If I can give one example of that, it does not seem that the message has really percolated down to local authorities following the 2016 High Court judgment. Local authorities do not seem to have realised that we are in a whole new world now; they can no longer



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take cost as being one of the main considerations when they prepare local plans. We would like to see a really clear message from national Government to local authorities that that is the legal test that should be applied.

- Q29 **Mrs Murray:** To follow up very quickly, in my constituency the local authority is carrying out monitoring in certain areas, but it does not seem to appreciate how important that monitoring is and how important it is to follow it up. Do you think the responsibility all lies with Government to cause local authorities to take this seriously, or do some local authorities not appreciate it and are not prepared to look at it themselves and think, "We need to take this seriously and take action"?

Alan Andrews: This absolutely requires action at all levels of Government, including local authorities. The issue of monitoring is a very important one. Unfortunately, we have seen a decline in monitoring in recent years. Budget cuts have led local authorities to make local air quality officers redundant and to scale down their monitoring. That is a great shame, because to deliver effective solutions we need to have a granular understanding of local air quality problems. What we are seeing now is that local authorities do not have that evidence base, and that is part of the reason why we are scrabbling around for solutions when really we should be taking action.

Mrs Murray: Thank you very much.

- Q30 **Alan Brown:** You say that local authorities haven't understood that, in your phrase, it's a different world since the 2016 judgment. Is that linked to your concern that the current plan mandates local authorities just to do feasibility studies? Feasibility studies in themselves are clearly not a means to an end. Does that perhaps send a mixed message?

Alan Andrews: Yes. A mixed message is exactly what is happening here. We have got this—how should I put it?—double-speak going on. The Government's evidence says, "This is what is needed," but at the same time they are saying, "Go and do something else." That is sending a real mixed message and causing confusion when we need clarity. In terms of the legal ruling, absolutely—it is very clear that the old approach of balancing health against cost no longer applies. Health has to take absolute priority, and unfortunately I don't think local authorities have really understood that yet.

- Q31 **Neil Parish:** Do you see a disconnect between the Government and local authorities? What do they need to do about it?

Alan Andrews: I would say—this is quite unusual for me—that some positive things are happening in that respect. If you look at the 23 local authorities plus the five that are formally mandated—let's take those 28—there is a process now where national Government and local authorities are sitting down together, looking at local data and the national modelling, trying to address those issues and really working together. It is long overdue, but it is definitely a step in the right direction. We need more of



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the same. Unfortunately, that doesn't help the 45 local authorities that have been left out in the cold.

Q32 **Neil Parish:** Yes, so we need to deal with it in the round.

Alan Andrews: Absolutely. There needs to be a clear division of responsibility. National Government needs to do the things that only national Government can do. The quid pro quo is that local authorities must do everything in their power to resolve the issue.

Q33 **Maggie Throup:** Do you think we are missing an opportunity here? Public health is now being devolved to local government, but the focus is still on the transport side of it, rather than the health side of it. If we had more emphasis on public health at a local authority level, we would be addressing the situation.

Professor Holgate: I could not agree with you more. Absolutely spot on; in fact, the national health service employs 9.5% of our population, so the NHS should be taking a lead here, and it is not. If people walk into a general practice, for example, they should see evidence of where the public can get information about air pollution, what to do about it and so on. The health community—if I can use that as a broad descriptor—are not engaged in this discussion, and they need to be for all the reasons you have just set out. If the health people stood up and started to demand the changes from their local authorities, things would happen.

Q34 **Sandy Martin:** You are talking about local authorities—working with local authorities and local authorities taking a lead—but in this country they have a very wide range of powers, from the Mayor of London right down to district councils in two-tier shire counties, where the district council has the power to set the price of car parking spaces, and that's about it. It is quite difficult—I was county councillor for 20 years before coming to this place—for local authorities in much of this country to do anything at all. Have you done any work on which of the target areas have local authorities that are actually capable of making some of the moves that you think they should be making, and which of them don't? I bet that some of them actually are not able to.

Alan Andrews: That analysis would be a rather difficult task, given the scale of this problem. It really is a national problem. I have mentioned 28 plus 45 local authorities. You are right that they are not a homogenous group. There are big metropolitan areas and smaller local authorities that have the county/district problem that you referred to. Again, that suggests—I am sorry to keep banging the same drum—the need for national leadership. Local authorities can't solve all these problems themselves. Another example is the strategic road network, run by the Highways Agency, over which local authorities have no control. One of the most disappointing aspects of the latest plan is that the Highways Agency, we are told, is going away to investigate the feasibility of some measures that will address the problem, which is absolutely baffling. It is nearly 2018. These limits have been in force since 2010. Why is the Highways Agency only just starting to investigate the problem?



Q35 Mr Bradshaw: I have a couple of questions on Brexit. It is arguable that we are only all here because you took a legal case through the ECJ, hauling the Government through the courts. If Brexit happens, how will we enforce any of this stuff?

Alan Andrews: You have hit on a very important point and one that keeps me awake at night. At the moment, the understanding is that the current standards under the ambient air quality directive and the transposing regulations will transfer across through the withdrawal Bill but—and it is a big but—we are very concerned that the enforceability of standards will decline post-Brexit.

There are a few aspects to that. The first is that we are unsure of the role of the European Commission in the future. It, alongside the ClientEarth case, has been an important factor—the Commission has the big stick of hundreds of millions of pounds in fines that can potentially come to land. The Commission could well disappear out of the picture and then we are totally reliant on national enforcement by organisations like ClientEarth. Our concern is that in the future, with some very slight amendments to the current legislation, the Government could gut those standards of all their legal effect. In particular, the ECJ judgment, which we fought for years to get and is the real root beneath the strength of these standards, could disappear.

Q36 Mr Bradshaw: The Government seem to have avoided addressing this problem, and you have had to take them to court. If there is no enforcement, isn't the fear—the fear that I have—that this will just be used as an excuse for continuing inaction? Some people have mentioned the Environment Agency perhaps operating as an enforcer. Can anyone seriously imagine a publicly funded body fining the Government—who are in charge of it—millions of pounds as an incentive to take action? Is there any model that could work, if we are not under the jurisdiction of the ECJ?

Alan Andrews: I think we need to look around the world at examples of best practice. It might surprise some people that the US is in some respects quite good on this. In terms of enforcement, the US EPA does a lot of things well. Let us remember that the VW scandal broke in the US, and VW has now paid billions and billions of dollars in fines in the US and not a penny in the UK. If we are to have an independent enforcement agency—let's call it the UK EPA—it is fundamentally important for it to be independent from Government, or as independent as possible for a publicly funded body. Crucially, the public—civil society—must always have a role in enforcement. Where our Governments fail us, we should have the right to go before the courts and demand that action is taken.

Q37 Mary Creagh: To follow up on that, when the Secretary of State appeared in front of my Committee—I am sure you were watching—he talked about a strong overarching body, but also said that it could be four bodies. What do you think are the problems with setting these standards at the nation level, rather than in an overarching framework?

Alan Andrews: The main problem is that air pollution doesn't respect national boundaries. It has this annoying habit of blowing around. Particulate matter, which we have talked a lot about, can travel thousands of kilometres. So air pollution really needs to be addressed at a European and global level. Similarly, the vehicles that we drive on our roads are exported and imported across European borders, so that requires us to remain—whatever the role of Brexit—as part of this European legal framework.

Q38 **Mary Creagh:** What is your understanding of the law as it is currently composed? What do you understand for Brexit day, whenever that may be? Do you want to see the framework in place before Brexit day? What are the dangers of having a period of legal uncertainty? This is what we are discussing in the withdrawal Bill at the moment. Will the ECJ apply during any transitional period? Will our own legislation be ready by the end of March 2019? What is your analysis of the risks around readiness, transition and certainty?

Alan Andrews: First and foremost, it is absolutely critical that the current legal framework transfers across at the point of Brexit in its entirety, including, critically, the judgments of the ECJ. Without the ECJ judgment in *ClientEarth* (No. 1) in 2014, we would not be in the position we are in today. For all the problems I have identified with the current plan, we are starting to see signs of progress. The fact we are all here today in this room is some evidence of that. Yes, we are very concerned about the future, but our hope is at the moment that the current legislation will transfer in its entirety, but we need absolute clarity from the Government on that.

Zac Goldsmith: This is almost a micro-point of order. Michael Gove has identified the governance gap that Alan has identified. It is publicly acknowledged that there will be a gap. Michael Gove has also committed to creating not a new branch of the Environment Agency or an existing body—that is not strong enough or independent enough from Government to hold Government to account—but instead a body that is resourced by Government but answerable to Parliament. That is the commitment we have. Obviously we need to go through the details, and that will be the job of our respective Committees, but that commitment is there, and that goes some way to filling the gap that Alan has rightly identified.

Chair: Thank you for that.

Q39 **Neil Parish:** Further to that point, I do not see this as a role for the Environment Agency because it actually does some direct plans in cleaning up our environment, so it cannot hold itself to account. The key to this is how we set up this truly independent body that has teeth but is not too massively bureaucratic and costly. You probably do not have time to answer that question, but is the American system hugely costly, or can it be done at a reasonable price?

Alan Andrews: I could not answer the question on the cost of the US EPA. I am sure it is pretty large. The main point is that the organisation



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needs to be as independent as possible. It needs to be transparent in its dealings. We need to avoid the situation where the regulator enjoys too cosy a relationship with those it is regulating. Again, that harks back to the whole dieselgate scandal. The problem we have had not just in this country, but across Europe is that we have seen regulators soft-peddalling against the car industry.

Q40 **Neil Parish:** You do not see it as an Ofcom or an Ofwat-type organisation.

Alan Andrews: No.

Q41 **John Mc Nally:** Good morning, gentlemen. There has been a clear message sent to all of us from both of you this morning that political will from the UK Government is absolutely required and that we need to get rid of these mixed messages that have been sent out. You have also been making a strong case that the focus of policy should be on protecting people's health, rather than just meeting the legal requirements of the European directive.

You probably know that Scotland was the first country in Europe to adopt the more stringent World Health Organisation targets. Why have those not been extended across the UK? To go back to your earlier point, we have had 40 key actions progressed as part of the "Cleaner Air for Scotland" strategy, but we engaged with local authorities, the NHS, Transport Scotland and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Is that what you said needs to be done more? Does more of that work need to be carried out in engaging with our local communities?

Professor Holgate: Absolutely. Scotland is taking a lead in this area. It is fantastic, and I think that is what we need really. It is a much less complicated environment with four big cities. In the whole of England, we have much more complex structures to take account of. The other thing that Scotland has been able to do is keep the relationships between the public, health and local authorities intact. In this country they have drifted apart, unfortunately, so we have lost the connectiveness and we need to bring that back.

The regulatory body, if it happens—I would welcome it—needs to have a strong health dominance within it, because health is the driver here. I look back at 1956 and the Clean Air Act, which was a fantastic piece of legislation. Look at how long that took to get through. One Prime Minister had to step down and another had to come in to be able to deliver that, but its impact on public health in this country has been massive. If there are lead areas—London is one and Scotland is another—we should learn from what is going on in those and try to extend it broadly.

Q42 **John Mc Nally:** Following on from Mary's point, how will the divergences that are emerging between the air quality standards of the UK countries be managed? Are we going to end up with a lot of challenges with what is happening in Scotland and what is not happening somewhere else, if we are going to bring all of this down? We have a totally different set of standards that we are aiming for.

Alan Andrews: It is important to remember that the current EU standards, at least, will remain common both in Scotland and in England. The issue you identified is that Scotland has gone further on its particulate standards under local air quality management. What needs to happen is that England needs to raise the bar and join Scotland in imposing a higher health standard in line with World Health Organisation guidelines.

Q43 **John Mc Nally:** Needing to and doing it are entirely different things.

Alan Andrews: Absolutely. It is a risk and it would be a great shame if we had divergent standards north and south of the border. That would make no sense at all. To take the example of the clean air zone initiative, we are now seeing Scotland proposing the introduction of low emission zones in four cities. We hope that they will set the standard and go a lot further and be a lot better than the ones in England, but that creates a problem for businesses. If you are a haulage company operating in Scotland and England, you could face different standards to drive into Scottish cities.

John Mc Nally: It is about the practicalities for the white van man. I also want to raise one more thing. We are very involved locally—the Scottish Government brought in the green bus fund and we have contributed £14.8 million in my Falkirk constituency to the local bus builders. To make a very parochial point, when I get on a bus occasionally down here, it is very gratifying to get on a green bus that has been built in Falkirk, so I am grateful to the London transport people for supplying those.

Q44 **Maggie Throup:** Coming back to the new enforcement body that will be consulted on, we all agree that the existing EU powers need to be replicated, but we have the opportunity to enhance some powers. What enhancement would you like to see in the new body?

Alan Andrews: Maybe I will start on that and then you can pitch in, Stephen. Inspection powers are one of the most important things that I would like to see. Let us stick with the road traffic example, but it does not end there. We need bodies that regularly inspect vehicles to check that they are meeting emission standards when they are driving on the road, not just in discredited laboratory tests. We also need regulators who are armed with real enforcement powers and harsh penalties—financial penalties, critically. What you have seen with the ClientEarth judicial review cases is that they have been very effective up to a point, but ultimately all we are trying to do is get the Government to do something that they should have done eight years ago. They are just profiting from their own delay. There is no real effective and dissuasive penalty for that delay, so that is why it is critical that regulators can hit companies or Governments with financial penalties. That is what the European Commission can do, but national regulators cannot.

Professor Holgate: At the moment we have the EU limits, which are not health-driven. We are exceeding the WHO health-driven limits for all the pollutants, not just particles, so if we really want to make this a health-

based movement, we have to aspire to achieve those, where the evidence base is huge. If we ignore them, we are compromising.

Alan Andrews: I would echo that but perhaps go a bit further. Rather than aspire towards them, we need clear and binding standards to be enforced with effective mechanisms.

Q45 **Neil Parish:** There is a conspiracy theory in Brussels that the European car industry is so heavily involved with the European Commission that the targets are not tight enough on transport anyway. Would you like to comment on that?

Alan Andrews: Do you mean the air quality standards?

Neil Parish: Yes.

Alan Andrews: Certainly politicians in Brussels and in national Ministries have been equally to blame for having too cosy a relationship with the car industry and allowing the car industry to set the regulatory agenda.

Neil Parish: That was the answer I wanted, thank you.

Q46 **Mr Bradshaw:** Why have the Commission not fined the UK, Germany, Spain and all the other countries that are in breach?

Alan Andrews: They haven't yet.

Q47 **Mr Bradshaw:** Would you urge them to? Do you think they should? What is the point of having these powers if they are not used to force Governments to do the right thing?

Alan Andrews: The Commission has taken legal action against many member states in relation to their air quality. The problem is that it takes years for them to get those cases in front of the European Court and many more years before fines can be imposed. It just takes too long. That is partly because of a lack of political will—they prefer to resolve problems behind closed doors, rather than by issuing big fines—but it is also partly due to their institutions being unable to cope with the sheer number of infringement cases.

Q48 **Mr Bradshaw:** Could you not take them to court and get them to fine us?

Alan Andrews: No, and you have hit on a very important point. We cannot take the European Commission to court. We do not have direct access to the European courts to challenge decisions or inactions by the European institutions.

Q49 **Iain Stewart:** Following on from that, you mentioned earlier the effectiveness of the US body both in identifying Volkswagen's breach and then fining them. Does the Brexit process not give us an opportunity to have a much more effective body than the European one, both to identify and then to fine those who breach our targets?

Alan Andrews: I think there is an opportunity to improve on the European system. It is by no means perfect, but we need to be very



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careful that we do not throw the baby out with the bathwater and lose all the elements of the European framework, which are very good. The one that I have repeated, ad nauseam perhaps, is legally binding standards—the idea that the right to breathe clean air comes first and is more important than political and financial considerations. That needs to be an element of any post-Brexit settlement.

Q50 Paul Girvan: Just on reading through, it does state that our air quality has improved from the 1990s dramatically. There is evidence to back that up. The EPA, which is the American body, undertook a study of the effects of ground level ozone, associated with fuel and fossil fuels and how they were being burnt. I appreciate that everyone has put their focus upon diesel, but that report put more of an emphasis on the benzene and additional carcinogens that come from the burning of petrol and are associated with it, creating a greater risk than even the PM10s associated with diesel in particular and AdBlue, which is an additive used in diesel. Can I have some medical evidence to back up how these additives are not being addressed or reduced?

I appreciate that everyone has focused on diesel, but why has all the focus been on diesel, steering away from petrol, which was identified in an EPA report conducted in 2015? That report talked about the benzene associated with ground level ozone. I am not a scientist, but I know that a few years ago we heard about this hole in the ozone. We are not hearing about it very much at the moment for some reason—I don't know—but is there a major difference between ground level ozone and what is happening in the upper atmosphere?

Professor Holgate: Those are two questions. Let me come to the second one first. The ozone up in the stratosphere is obviously a completely different issue from ozone at ground level. That is to do with the chlorinated and fluorinated aerosols that were using up the ozone at that level and ultra-violet light that was penetrating and causing an increase in skin cancer in various parts of the world, including this country. That hole is closing; it is improving. It is not closed, but it is improving—because of the legislation that was introduced—which is fantastic.

Ground-level ozone is a big issue in the United States in its own right, because of the climate there, which is much more favourable, especially in California and some other warm parts of the States, for converting the air pollution into ozone through the photo-oxidation chemical reactions in the atmosphere. In this country, we do have ozone problems, but they are not of the magnitude that they have in the United States.

As for the individual chemicals—you mentioned additives to petroleum fuel—this is the point I was really trying to make. There are something like 4,000 different chemicals on an air pollution particle—different chemical substances. To be able to understand which of those chemical substances is causing the issue is almost an impossible task. That is why I keep coming back to the argument that it is the mixture that is important here. In fact, the solutions will come from controlling the source, rather than fiddling around on the margins with any particular chemical substance.



Lung cancer, which has come forward in a lot of the studies in the United States and is now also coming forward in this country, is being revealed, as our smoking rates start to drop in the UK. We are beginning to see lung cancer increasing in relation to non-smoking. There is an argument now being put forward—for which there is not yet sufficient health evidence but it is an interesting argument and you have touched on it—that maybe environmental pollution out there is driving or contributing to this non-smoking-related increase in lung cancer, which occurs in women and is much less amenable to treatment. It is a big issue and, if you do not mind Chairman, I want to emphasise the importance of doing research on these topics in this area, so that we can get more clarity.

As for the EPA, which of course is a marvellous organisation that has done all this work, you know what is happening over in the United States with the EPA and the Government over there. There is a big issue about the EPA and its future in the United States, let alone what we can do over here, so I think we really need to try and set an example here.

Q51 **Mr Bradshaw:** Is Trump trying to get rid of it?

Professor Holgate: Well, he has cut the funding back. He has not cut it back as much as he said he would, but he has cut the funding quite severely.

Q52 **Chair:** I have two final questions, because time is against us; we have another panel of witnesses. Can I just be clear that you are advocating UK adoption of World Health Organisation standards? We talked about it earlier, but research—is that the view of both of you?

Professor Holgate: Yes.

Alan Andrews: Yes.

Q53 **Chair:** Finally from me, on the Volkswagen issue—perhaps I can put this to Mr Andrews—is there anything you are aware of that the UK Government have not done that could have led to a payment to the UK in the way there has been a payment in the United States?

Alan Andrews: That is the million euro/dollar question. There are several things that the UK Government have not done; I don't fully understand the reasons why they have not been done. First, how has Angela Merkel managed to secure €250 million out of the car industry in Germany to pay for a clean air fund, whereas yesterday's announcement secured £220 million, which is only going to be paid for by the taxpayer?

Secondly, why are a third of the vehicles on Britain's roads that VW has admitted are using defeat devices still driving around on our roads? It is absolutely insane.

Thirdly, why has there not been a full investigation into whether the VW scandal goes further? We suspect that VW is really only the tip of the iceberg. Many other manufacturers are using very dubious strategies, which are defeat devices by any other name. Why have the Government not conducted a proper investigation into what are being used, told us



what strategies are being used and, where those strategies do not comply with the letter and the spirit of the law, why do we not get those cars off the roads as quickly as possible?

Chair: Thank you very much. That concludes our first panel. Thank you to our witnesses.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Martin Adams, the right hon. Sadiq Khan and Councillor Adele Morris.

Lilian Greenwood took the Chair.

Q54 **Chair:** I begin by welcoming our witnesses. Thank you for joining us this morning. For the record, would you state your name and introduce the organisation you represent?

Sadiq Khan: I am Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London.

Councillor Morris: I am Adele Morris, a councillor in the London Borough of Southwark, but I am here today representing the Local Government Association; I am the deputy chair of its environment, economy, housing and transport board.

Martin Adams: Good morning. My name is Martin Adams, and I work at the European Environment Agency. We have a mandate very much as an environment information and knowledge provider in Europe.

Q55 **Chair:** Thank you. We have a number of questions to ask, and I will begin. Adele, why have nitrogen dioxide limits still not been met? It has been a local authority responsibility for some time now. What is needed to drive action? Is it a question of powers, duties or resources, or does it come down to political will?

Councillor Morris: Probably all of those. There is no single solution for any of this. Funding, of course, is a big thing for local authorities at the moment. Our social care budgets are being really squeezed, and that is what a lot of councils are having to focus on. Funding is a very, very important part of the problem—funding and resources, because funding reductions to local authorities mean that resources across the piece, in terms of physical human resources, are limited.

On political will, it is difficult to get the message across to the local communities that we serve that it is a serious problem that needs to be dealt with. Getting people to change attitudes is very hard. I would say that it is absolutely a combination of all those things. Local authorities will do the best that they can, but they absolutely need support from national Government, not just in terms of funding but in terms of a cohesive strategy, so that we all understand what we need to do.

The Local Government Association's role is to support local authorities to achieve this. That is really what we do. We do not direct local authorities



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in any way, but we absolutely support them and encourage them to meet whatever they need to meet.

- Q56 **Chair:** Does any of you think that a specific air quality Act is needed to embed central and local government responsibilities to cut air pollution? If so, what specific new measures would need to be encompassed in that legislation to support local government action?

Sadiq Khan: Yes, we need a new clean air Act fit for purpose for the 21st century. If you look at the origins of the Clean Air Act 1956, it was brought about because of the great smog. The situation in the 1950s in London was that factories and power stations were churning out smoke and sulphur dioxide, leading to thousands of people dying as a consequence. You could see it. Brave politicians in the 1950s passed the Clean Air Act 1956.

We are now 60 or 70 years on, and you cannot see the stuff that is killing us prematurely, causing children to have underdeveloped lungs and causing adults to have dementia, asthma and other illnesses. A Clean Air Act for the 21st century would do a number of things. You will know that one of the reasons the Government is acting is in response to legal cases brought using EU law. You heard from ClientEarth just now. We are leaving the EU, so we need a Clean Air Act to replicate what the EU was doing in relation to enforcement, regulation, monitoring and compliance. We need a new Act to set a right to clean air for people across the country.

If we compare and contrast the UK and the USA in relation to Volkswagen, the USA has a Clean Air Act and the US Environmental Protection Agency, and they made Volkswagen pay £27 billion in compensation, plus a swap deal. The Germans managed to get a deal from Volkswagen, BMW and Mercedes-Benz for €250 million. Our Government has got just above a million quid, which demonstrates the different approaches.

We talked about the rise in nitrogen dioxide. Half of the NO_x and particulate matter in London comes from transport. We are taking bold action in London to try to ameliorate that. The other half comes from construction, the river and buildings. I have no locus and no powers in relation to that.

- Q57 **Chair:** If there were new legislation of the type you describe, what are you asking for it to include?

Sadiq Khan: We hope the new Clean Air Act would give mayors and regions the powers and resources to tackle the other half, over which they have no locus, in relation to new emission standards, regulation and who is in charge of it. I don't see how, without a new Clean Air Act, we can move forward and have the clean air that we desperately need.

- Q58 **Chair:** Adele, do you agree, or are local authorities asking for different things?

Councillor Morris: No, I think local authorities would broadly support that. Local authorities are asking that some of the powers that London is



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able to use—things like the lane rental scheme being trialled in London—are rolled out as powers they can use locally. Currently they can't. Obviously a lot of the congestion, as we heard earlier, is from stationary traffic. A lot of it is about keeping traffic moving. Taking away the police's powers to enforce moving traffic offences and putting it in the hands of local councils, as has happened in London with the Mayor, would be very helpful indeed.

Q59 **Chair:** Martin, do you have anything to add from your perspective?

Martin Adams: Yes. Regardless of whether a country is in the EU or not, it is important to have very clear, focused legislation. What we have seen, certainly at the European level, is that many countries are struggling with implementation. We have had directives in the European Union since 1997 on air quality; that was a major one. It was not working. A new one was introduced in 2008, and in 2017 we are still struggling with implementation. I very much agree with the messages we have heard this morning.

Q60 **Dr Offord:** Councillor Morris, you are the voice of local government. You said you don't represent local authorities, but when the LGA was established in 1997 as the Central Local Information Partnership, it was designed to do that.

Councillor Morris: I didn't say I don't represent local authorities. Did you misunderstand?

Dr Offord: I certainly misunderstood something. I am saying that you are the voice of local authorities. Through the CLIP remit, you are there to voice the view of local authorities. What representations have you made in the last eight years, since the UK has been failing at this, about addressing air quality at the local authority level? I have never heard anything.

Councillor Morris: First, the message I wanted to give is that we support local authorities—that is the role—and we represent local authorities and make responses. I have to admit that I became the deputy chair of this board in September this year, so I can't give you information about everything that has been submitted in the past, but I am very happy to provide that in writing after the Committee.

Q61 **Dr Offord:** That would be useful. While this is not an exercise in attacking you, I am trying to establish what action the LGA has taken over the years. I am not aware of anything, so that would be very helpful.

Councillor Morris: Very recently, we produced a report on tackling congestion that contains a whole host of good practice that local authorities are carrying out across the country and shows different ways that people are approaching tackling congestion. One of the main messages coming back from local government is that it is absolutely about responding to the local communities, both their needs and the geographical make-up of an area. For some areas, it is about having more cycle lanes; for others, it is about clearing away congestion so that buses can move more freely. So we have authorities that have got bus use up.



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All those good examples are in there, and I think we have forwarded those examples to Government.

Q62 Dr Offord: As a local councillor myself from 2002 onwards, I know we were doing that years ago. We were removing speed bumps, and it was having an effect. We were looking at accident blackspots and removing dangerous junctions. We were already doing that. You are saying this is a piece of work you have recently done, but I am asking what has happened in the last eight to 10 years.

Councillor Morris: As I said, I am very happy to go back and dig out all of the responses that we have made to Government and send those to you.

Dr Offord: Thank you.

Q63 Iain Stewart: On whether we need a new air quality Act, which would mandate the responsibilities of authorities to take action to improve air quality, do we need to take a step before that as well and look at how we will measure air quality accurately? In the research I have done for this, and particularly from the National Audit Office report that we had a briefing on yesterday, there are a lot of uncertainties about sources of air pollution. The Mayor said that 50% comes from transport sources—

Sadiq Khan: In London.

Iain Stewart: In London. But there is low confidence in what comes from the tailpipe, what might come from diesel trains, so on and so forth. So before we start mandating what local authorities and central Government should do to tackle it, do we not need to enshrine in legislation a need to get accurate sources of where the pollution is coming from?

Chair: Can we have fairly brief answers? I am conscious that we are not going to make time.

Sadiq Khan: The short answer is yes. We need to have more confidence in the data we are receiving. You have seen the controversy around dieselgate and car manufacturers' data not being trusted. That is why we have set up an independent vehicle checker website with independent analysis. You will be aware of the suspicion around Government data—not necessarily this Government but Governments generally, because it is a case of poacher/gamekeeper, marking your own homework.

You are right, there needs to be independence in relation to the data, which will be really important in relation to making sure we are complying with the requirements; but there is no reason why a new Clean Air Act cannot ensure there is that independence. The Secretary of State this week has finally moved and talked about an environment watchdog, recognising that there needs to be independence, and that includes data as well.

Q64 Mr Bradshaw: Ms Morris, you said a moment ago that you need more powers and more resources, but local authorities have had the power



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since the last Labour Government to introduce workplace charging and congestion charging. I am not aware that any apart from London have used any of it, even though this would raise money for your people to tackle what is a major public health disaster. There doesn't seem to be any sense of urgency.

Councillor Morris: Nottingham have introduced a workplace levy and they have raised £9.3 million, I believe in a year, which they have put into the tram system in Nottingham. So that is definitely being used.

Q65 **Mr Bradshaw:** But this should be standard practice across all of these areas where we have this public health disaster.

Councillor Morris: Absolutely, and I think local authorities do need to think more carefully and clearly about using those. The whole plastic bottles situation is in the media, we have got sea life being destroyed by plastic bottles, and suddenly everybody understands why plastic bottles are an issue. I think getting people—

Q66 **Chair:** Are you suggesting that local authorities did not understand that air quality is an issue and that is why they haven't tackled it?

Councillor Morris: No. If you will let me speak, I am saying that for communities, getting the message across that what they are doing is contributing to it is a much harder message to sell for local authorities—and getting communities to understand charges, because they are very difficult. Nobody likes having to pay more. Nobody likes being told that they suddenly can't use the diesel car that they bought, which they thought was better, and that they are going to be punished. For local authorities, although they do have these powers, selling them to their communities is quite hard. That may be why they have been slow to introduce them.

Q67 **Mary Creagh:** Sadiq Khan, I want to come back to your point about not having locus to do anything on the construction and the shipping side on the Thames. I know TfL introduced the fleet operator recognition scheme and that has spread cycling safety standards so that pedestrians and cyclists cannot go under HGV wheels. That has spread almost across the country now; I see those stickers up in Yorkshire. Every construction vehicle has to travel to a site before it can be established and then do its work. Have you considered some sort of voluntary scheme? Have you not looked at that? Sometimes encouragement, standard setting and saying, "This is something we're going to bring in," can change behaviour without you necessarily having to enforce the powers. You can create those signals, can't you?

Sadiq Khan: On construction, we are, and we actually have powers. Part of planning conditions can be around being air quality neutral. We are now moving towards air quality plus. We are moving towards making sure that non-mobile machinery is better. What we would like to do is have low-emission zones on construction sites and on the River Thames. The River Thames has five different bodies in charge of it. Good news: the two new Woolwich ferries we are buying are going to be hybrid. That shows our

commitment to this. We are also talking to Thames Clippers about making sure that those are energy efficient and that we do not churn out this stuff if we can. We are using the bully pulpit of City Hall to persuade people and bring people together.

Ben's question is a fair one, and we have to put our hands up. Local authorities, Mayors and the national Government have not done enough, even though they have had the knowledge in the past 10 or 15 years. Local authorities are now moving forward. We have a couple talking to us about workplace levies in London. We are moving towards having construction so it is not simply neutral but can be positive, but when construction sites have generators that are churning out stuff because they are powered by diesel, that is not good. If we had the powers, we could make sure there were low-emission zones, we could go in and inspect and we could talk to local authorities. We are paying for enforcement officers for local authorities during construction, but we have no locus over existing buildings. We could help retrofit, and we would be able to do far, far more if we were given assistance by central Government.

Q68 Mary Creagh: How do you measure air quality neutrality? Do you have mobile monitoring, or is it just that someone does the maths and tells you?

Sadiq Khan: Local authorities have enforcement officers—not enough, for the reasons Adele said, because of the cuts over the last seven years. We are supplementing local authority enforcement officers to go in and measure. A new building is air quality neutral if it is neutral versus what was there before. You are air quality plus if you can add to and improve the air quality in your building but also in surrounding environments. This is in the draft London plan, which is out in a couple of weeks. It is a draft plan; it will really start kicking in in 2020. For the reasons you have all alluded to, we really want action now, and I think yesterday was a missed opportunity.

Q69 Mary Creagh: Does that cover the construction of the building or just the behaviour after it is built by the residents who live there?

Sadiq Khan: We have no locus over buildings, construction or the river, so we are trying to use planning in an innovative way to influence how construction is done so it is environmentally friendly.

Q70 Sandy Martin: I just have a point of clarification about Mr Stewart's question. I ask his forgiveness if I misunderstood his question, but there seemed to be an implication that, somehow or other, there is more we do not know than we have been prepared to admit, and that maybe we should be putting things on hold until we know more. That was certainly one of the issues that came out from the previous set of evidence. You don't believe that's the case, do you?

Sadiq Khan: No, not at all. We can argue and quibble about whether it is 9,000 premature deaths in London or 6,000, or whether it is 40,000 premature deaths in the country or 35,000. We can quibble about whether



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it is the case that one out of 10 under-18s in London have asthma or one out of 11. But we know that NOx particulate matter is bad, and we know that not enough action is being taken to remove it.

Q71 **Sandy Martin:** So we should have the action anyway, even when we do not have the full facts. We have enough facts to move forward now.

Sadiq Khan: Absolutely. We had a requirement to be legally compliant in 2010. It is now 2017 and we are talking about being legally compliant in 2025 or 2030.

Iain Stewart: For the record, that wasn't my intention. My intention was to try to ensure that we have a better understanding of the sources so we can most effectively direct the action, not to delay it.

Q72 **Neil Parish:** A lot of my questions have been asked. I first say to the Mayor that I think you are absolutely right that we need to get more money out of the car manufacturers; perhaps we still have time to get it out of them. I think we can do that, because it is a resource.

In local government in this country—many of us have come up through local government—we like to have autonomy. That is a great virtue in some ways, but in other ways, as in this instance, it may not be. It can be about resources, but it can also be about political will to actually do something. The points being made this morning—"You don't actually see this pollution. How bad is it really? Can we argue that it's not quite as bad for health as some say?"—show that local government sometimes does not make the right political decisions, whichever party is in control. How can the LGA perhaps not coerce but encourage councils across the country? Do you need more powers?

We had Professor Holgate here this morning saying there are huge problems in Southampton; Oxford has done much more; and London, under the previous and current Mayor, has done a lot to alleviate problems but has a lot more to do. How do you concentrate the political will in those local authorities that perhaps do not have the political will? It is always easy to say, "We haven't got resources; we'll target them." That may be the reason, or it may be that, politically, they do not want to make those decisions. How can you do more to encourage local authorities to do that?

Councillor Morris: You are right: sometimes it is absolutely about political will. As the LGA, all we can do with those authorities is support them where we know that there is an issue. We have a peer programme within the LGA that sends in representatives from other authorities to work with authorities that need help.

Of course, one of the difficulties is that, for us, it is quite hard for us to go storming in and telling another authority what they need to do. A lot of it is reliant on them coming to us and asking for help. Obviously, if the Government identify areas where something absolutely has to be done and the political will is not making that happen, we have a role to play in facilitating.



Q73 Neil Parish: Can you not have a sort of best practice, where you can say what local authority best practice is and ask others why they are not following it? I think you have to be a little bit more proactive than you are at the moment, if I may be so bold. Can you do that?

Councillor Morris: The publication that we released earlier in the year about tackling congestion has examples of authorities that are solving some of the congestion problems. We heard earlier on that idling vehicles is one of the biggest problems. We have that report, which is available, and we work as much as we can with local authorities. Ultimately, if there is a stand-off, there is not a lot we can do. We do our best.

Neil Parish: You don't have enough teeth.

Sadiq Khan: If there was a legal right to clean air in a new Clean Air Act, there would be bottom-up pressure and also top-down pressure from the Government. Some local authorities are doing a great job, and it would be unfair—I know you are not doing this—to caricature all local authorities as not doing enough.

Neil Parish: I am not doing that. It is how you get better practice.

Q74 Mary Creagh: We know that the Government have a joint air quality unit. We had a briefing from the NAO yesterday. Despite the Government talking about £2.5 billion of spend on clean air, the joint air quality unit actually only oversees £330 million of Government spend on air quality and has no locus to look across at what other Departments are doing.

We also found out that there is no local authority representation in the joint air quality unit. It happens at inter-ministerial level, but there are no local authorities or the LGA present and involved in that unit. Councillor Morris, could you just tell us what specific actions that unit is taking to support local authorities and the LGA, and if there is any evidence that it is having a measurable impact on air quality?

Councillor Morris: I am not aware of what actions have been taken and what has been happening with those, but I can certainly find out.

Mary Creagh: Okay. Thank you.

Q75 Chair: I would like to come back to the Mayor about the issues around the actions being taken in London. We know that the Government seem wary of charging, but charging has obviously been an important part of the picture in London. What impact have non-charging air quality initiatives had to date, and what are the biggest barriers to progress on the non-charging side?

Sadiq Khan: In London?

Chair: Yes.

Sadiq Khan: It is worth reminding colleagues that 40% of the country's roads that exceed legal limits are in London. Forty per cent. You know the numbers and the impacts in London.



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We have a package of measures. We are investing roughly £800 million to clean up the air in London. The major part of that is what was alluded to: moving people away from polluting vehicles to walking, cycling and clean public transport; and where people have to use cars, other things such as electric vehicles and car sharing. We have appointed the first walking and cycling commissioner, who is working with local authorities.

Most of the roads are not TfL roads but local authority roads, and there are 32 local authorities plus the City of London. We are working with them and persuading them, but also giving them some financial support to move away from polluting vehicles. We have given moneys to local authorities to work with schools. Fifty audits are taking place around schools. There are simple things such as greening routes to school, changing the playground from the front to the back and no idling, to change behaviour around schools. We are also retrofitting our buses, in the biggest retrofit in history: 5,000 buses will be retrofitted.

We now have low-emission bus zones. In the space of seven or eight months, Putney High Street has gone from a situation where on a regular basis there was illegal air, to now having far better air, as a consequence of it being the first low-emission bus zone. Basically, the worst parts of London have the cleanest buses. We are not buying any diesel buses anymore; only electric, hybrid or hydrogen-powered buses. We are not licensing new diesel black taxis any more, but we are giving them some assistance to move away from diesel to zero-emission capable taxis.

The charge is something that we can talk about, surely. The idea is to encourage people to make a modal shift. Currently, 64% of Londoners either walk, cycle or use public transport. We need to move that to above 80% by 2040. That is the scale of our ambition. There is a separate package of charging measures that we can talk about shortly: the world's first T-charge, the world's first ultra-low emission zone and other measures that we need to take to change behaviour.

Q76 Chair: Do the non-charging initiatives require funding from the charge to make them work? Can the two work separately?

Sadiq Khan: Yes and no. We managed to find moneys from efficiency savings in Transport for London to invest in communities. We need help, though, from central Government. Local authorities cannot do it by themselves. We cannot do it by ourselves. At the moment, there has been no real support from Government. By the way, we were told overnight that London cannot bid for the £220 million announced yesterday—the so-called clean air fund. So 40% of the most polluting roads in the country are in London, the Government say there is £220 million—and Londoners contribute towards that by the increase in road tax—but we cannot receive any of that £220 million.

It is not sustainable to expect a London Mayor to make the investment to help local authorities without help from central Government. That is why charging is part of that. The T-charge costs us; it does not bring in revenues—it is not a profit. The T-charge will cost us until 2019, but it is



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changing behaviour: we have seen a reduction in diesel sales and more people changing behaviour. The ultra-low emission zone will initially cost us. Over a period of time it will bring in revenues, but we will ring-fence that money for clean air. We will not divert that money anywhere else.

Q77 Chair: You gave the figure for the proportion of Londoners who now travel by active travel or public transport. What has that moved from to reach that current figure?

Sadiq Khan: It is 64% now and it has been going upwards since the first Mayor. That is one of the differences that devolution makes. Alluding to Matthew's question about local authorities, local leadership can lead to a change in behaviour—having a Mayor, Ken, Boris and me. Both Ken and Boris deserve credit because it has moved upwards; at no period since 2000 has it gone downwards. You will be aware of both Ken's and Boris's interest in cycling. But we have to go far quicker. We are still not compliant in relation to air quality and that is why we are making rapid progress now.

Q78 Zac Goldsmith: I very strongly agree with your comments on the need for a new Clean Air Act, but in the absence of that and given that that is not immediately on the cards, do you currently have the power as Mayor to determine that no new licences could be issued to ordinary cabs, unless those cars meet a very high standard? I know what you have already said on black cabs, but in relation to other cabs. That would also have the effect of slowing down the growth of a sector that is growing out of all proportion and causing disproportionate air pollution and congestion. Is that something that you can do now?

Sadiq Khan: You mean private hire vehicles?

Zac Goldsmith: Yes.

Sadiq Khan: Parliament delegates to Transport for London the regulation around private hire vehicles. We are looking at what we can do in relation to the congestion charge on PHVs. Initially, the congestion charge was about congestion, but with the T-charge and ULEVs we are moving towards good quality air. We are looking into that in relation to what powers we have. What we cannot do is, by the back door, use it as a way of capping PHVs. That would not be allowed.

Q79 Zac Goldsmith: I will resist asking about Heathrow, but you might be tempted at some point to confirm that Heathrow's expansion is irreconcilable with any of these air quality standards. I will leave that to you to comment on.

You or someone on the panel has talked about the contribution of works vehicles to air pollution—I think about 15% of the particulates that we breathe in are from works vehicles. Could local authorities and City Hall both commit—do you have the power to commit—at some point to only awarding contracts to those construction companies whose vehicles meet a certain standard or at least to setting a date after which that would no longer be possible? That would have an immediate impact, surely.



Sadiq Khan: Yes, to the first part of your question. The irony is this: Heathrow expansion—the requirements that they have got to meet in relation to environmental considerations—is benefitting from the progress we have made as an additional headroom. That is the irony. The more we clean up the air in London, the more Heathrow benefits because it means that their requirements are less. But you are right: we cannot meet the air quality requirements in London with new runway 3. That is just not possible.

Secondly, in relation to procurement, procurement is crucial here. We are using good procurement to try to increase the quality of vehicles used. Mary referred to construction—really important—but we are also working towards the emergency services having a clean fleet as well. Also logistics: more and more of us are ordering things through the internet to be delivered to work; many of us work in central London. Question: can we use our convenient power to have mini consolidation centres, so they go to a consolidation centre and you cycle from there to places of work? They are not levers we can pull and powers we have, but it is persuasion and convenient powers.

Q80 Dr Offord: The Mayor said quite rightly that the amount of journeys have increased, but I suspect that that is in central London. As an outer London MP, I recognise that there are not opportunities for people. We have heard that my colleague is fortunate enough to be able to ride his bike and take his bike on a train when he goes to his constituency, but it is not really possible for me to cycle from Hendon, not realistically.

Mary Creagh: Oh, you can do it!

Dr Offord: I can certainly do it and I have done it, but it is not realistic for me to do that along some of the strategic road network. I wanted to ask the Mayor if that is correct, that it tends to be more in central London where people are more likely to use the tube, walk or cycle?

Sadiq Khan: Our ambition is to encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport across London. Our population, when the first Mayor was elected in 2000, was roughly 7 million. It is now 8.8 million. It will be 9 million in 2020 and 10 million in 2030. There is no other show in town to move us around quicker: walking, cycling, clean public transport. If you cannot do those for a variety of reasons: car club, electric vehicles. That is the only future we can have as a city that is successful in the 21st century.

Actually, there is an opportunity in relation to jobs creation—high-skill jobs—and being a world leader. Last year, I had a conference in City Hall. I invited manufacturers of buses from all round the world and mayors and their teams from all round the world to come to City Hall because we unveiled the world's first double decker bus powered by hydrogen. It is a British company from Northern Ireland. We can be a world leader in relation to this area—hydrogen, electric and hybrid—and also how we get people to walk and cycle around our cities. One of things we are looking into is the next generation of non-docking bicycles to encourage people to walk around.



Q81 **Dr Offord:** These are in central London?

Sadiq Khan: No, outer London. We are talking to local authorities and doing deals with non-docking bicycle companies to have these cycles available across London. One of the reasons why we are encouraging people to use public transport—and by the way, freezing TfL fares has led to the situation where, unlike the rest of the country where public transport use has gone down, it has stopped going down in London. That is because we are encouraging people to use public transport. You are right though, there are challenges in outer London, but Will Norman, the new walking and cycling commissioner, has new routes in outer London so we are not simply focused on central London.

Chair: We are going to have to make questions and answers a little shorter. It is interesting stuff, but there is a lot we want to ask.

Q82 **Maggie Throup:** I will ask my second question first, because we have already touched on the subject of charging zones. How effective are London's charging zones at cutting air pollution?

Sadiq Khan: Do you mean the T-charge and the ULEZ?

Maggie Throup: Can you go through them both?

Sadiq Khan: Sure. Half of the bad-quality air in London comes from transport, and 88% of that comes from diesel. The T-charge is the precursor to the ultra-low emission zone. The T-charge, which began in October, is targeted towards the most polluting vehicles—roughly speaking, pre-2006 diesels, so anything below Euro 4.

We have noticed a number of things. First, people have changed behaviour. They are using public transport, walking or cycling, or they have invested in a non-diesel vehicle. We have also noticed that the number of vehicles has gone down, which is good. That does not make us money. Roughly speaking, 34,000 vehicles a month would be caught by the T-charge. Not all of them are coming to London every day and paying the additional fee, which is good—we are not trying to make money; we are trying to change behaviour.

The first part of the ultra-low emission zone comes in in April 2019. That will be for the C-charge area, and basically speaking, a vehicle will need to be Euro 6 or better if you don't want to pay a fee. We think that in 2019, the amount of NOx will be 20% less. In 2020, we think there will be 45% less NOx than currently. That shows the huge benefit of ULEZ and the T-charge.

Q83 **Maggie Throup:** Have you gone down that route because some data show that particulate matter has decreased a lot more, percentage-wise, than nitrogen dioxide, which has not reduced as much as we would expect?

Sadiq Khan: Particulate matter comes from a number of different sources—from vehicles braking, construction and wood-burning stoves. A number of different factors cause particulate matter. NOx is mainly from

vehicles. The T-charge, the ULEZ and some of the things we are doing are dealing with both. One of the reasons I am keen for a new Clean Air Act is that it will hopefully give local authorities, mayors and regions powers over, for example, making sure we can deal with the new emissions standards.

I will give you an example. The current wood-burning stoves rely upon regulations that are 40 to 50 years old and well out of date. We want to make sure that those who have wood-burning stoves have better information, maintain them better and use the right sorts of fuel. The next generation of wood-burning stoves should follow new emissions standards, which need to be set, and a Clean Air Act would allow us to do that.

Q84 Maggie Throup: You have brought forward the date when the ultra-low emission zones will come in. That could have an impact on business, which London is dependent on, and also residents who have recently changed their cars before you made that announcement. Do you have any measures in place to support businesses and residents caught up in that date being changed?

Sadiq Khan: You are right; we have brought forward the ULEZ by 17 months. We consulted widely before we did that, for the reasons you said. If you are a business, you may have made plans to buy a new fleet. You may have just bought a new fleet, and lo and behold, this is brought forward by 17 months. We consulted very carefully. The good news is that businesses support the air being clean in London. A number of business improvement districts—I think 11—wrote to the *Evening Standard* recently supporting our plans. A number of businesses have written in to our consultation to support our plans.

We have separate memorandums of understanding with the emergency services. The police, the fire service and the London ambulance service, not unreasonably, have big fleets and may need more time. With them, we have a separate MOU, so we can make sure we are not inadvertently making them speed up their procurement to meet an artificial deadline and/or pay fines when they should not. So we have a separate deal with them.

As far as the first ULEZ is concerned for April 2019, we have consulted widely. We are consulting later on this year in relation to a London-wide ULEZ for coaches, buses and lorries, and we are also consulting later on this year in relation to extending the ULEZ up to the north and south circular in 2021.

Q85 Maggie Throup: What about residents who have just changed their cars?

Sadiq Khan: This is one of the reasons why I have been lobbying for the last year for the Government to introduce a diesel scrappage fund. It is crucial. Poor families in particular invested in diesel. Businesses invested in diesel. Charities invested in diesel, because politicians and experts were saying 10 years ago, "Diesel is good. Petrol is bad." So far as greenhouse emissions are concerned, diesel is clearly better than petrol, but so far as particulate matter and NOx is concerned, it is worse, so the Government



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need a diesel scrappage fund—I know Neil has talked about this previously—because we do not want poor families and businesses being hit with a double whammy.

- Q86 **Maggie Throup:** My point was more that, because you have brought that date forward by 17 months, people will fall into that trap. They may have just changed their car while looking towards the later date, so bringing that date forward concerns me.

Sadiq Khan: If they had bought a new vehicle and they are a business, they should not be caught forward by the ULEZ being brought forward 17 months. Under ULEZ, if you are Euro6 compliant or more, you will not be caught by paying the fee.

- Q87 **Maggie Throup:** But not everyone can afford to buy a new vehicle. They may have thought that they were okay for a bit longer.

Sadiq Khan: That is why it does not make sense for the Government to have a clean air fund of £220 million—including, by the way, the possibility of a targeted vehicle scrappage scheme—that does not apply to London, when so much of the growth and prosperity for the country is generated in London. That is why I have lobbied the Government for a diesel scrappage fund.

We have costed it, and we have worked out that 130,000 vehicles in London owned by the poorest families could benefit from a diesel scrappage fund, as well as 70,000 vans from businesses. It would cost the Government £500 million over two years, meaning that the businesses that you are worried about could get the assistance that they need to move away from the most polluting vehicles to other forms of transport.

Chair: I am keen that we move on; we have a lot of questions to get through. Useful though it is, we will have to move on. Can you take us on to question 7, Sandy?

Maggie Throup: Can I just ask question 5? It is quite relevant. I am just following the theme.

Chair: I honestly think we need to move on to the next section.

- Q88 **Neil Parish:** Can I quickly have one on the scrappage and what was mentioned by the Mayor? It very much has to be targeted. You were a Transport Minister back in 2009, and in that time, those diesels that people now know about were seen as perfectly okay. The poorest people in parts of London are getting this charge, and I think we are just not doing enough to give them a carrot instead of a stick.

Would you suggest that a scrappage scheme is entirely done on income? Otherwise it becomes a middle class thing—“Let’s change our vehicle”—and the poorer people will not have the ability to buy a less polluting vehicle. That is what I worry about.

Sadiq Khan: I have been following what you have been saying and agree with most of it. It has to be a targeted scheme. The scheme we have worked up is targeted, and it is the poorest families, the smallest



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businesses and charities that would benefit. Nobody wants to give a windfall that we can't afford to somebody who would move away from diesel anyway.

- Q89 **Sandy Martin:** Adele, we have heard a lot about what is happening in London. I am sort of presuming that, with the same sort of governance structures, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham and other big cities ought to be able to do the same sort of thing. However, it becomes far more difficult when you come down to counties and unitary authorities and districts in two-tier authority areas.

What do you think are the hurdles to local councils actually following some of the things that are being done in London, and what is the LGA doing to try to deal with some of those hurdles?

Councillor Morris: It is all about the powers that local authorities can use to solve some of these issues and rolling those out to other local authorities. The LGA is supporting authorities. It is an important issue, and we work with local authorities and look at what they are doing. The difficulty is that congestion is more obvious in cities, so it feels like a more urgent problem to deal with.

- Q90 **Sandy Martin:** It is pretty blindingly obvious in Ipswich and it is fairly obvious in Hereford. It is obvious in quite a lot of towns, actually.

Councillor Morris: Yes, actually in towns—

Sandy Martin: And air pollution as well.

Councillor Morris: Yes. I think the most important thing the LGA has done is lobby the Government for more funding, and for a clearer understanding and support for local authorities, so that all local authorities can look at what they can do and what powers they need, and the Government and the LGA can support them to make the changes that they need to make.

- Q91 **Sandy Martin:** But as you said, it is not just about the funding; it is about the powers. My question to you is: what is the LGA doing to identify which additional powers it needs, or to identify the ways in which the Highways Agency, county councils and district councils can be enabled, or possibly in some cases mandated, to work more closely together to do the sorts of things that are being done in London, Manchester and Liverpool? It seems to me that at the moment people are making a lot of the right noises, but when it comes to actually doing something about it in two-tier authority areas, people have split responsibilities and are unable to do the whole job themselves.

Councillor Morris: I agree, and in our response to the Government's consultation we said that it is important to look at all the different bodies that are working in an area, such as the Highways Agency, and at how we can support authorities to work collectively with the different agencies that are doing different things, and get them together. We can approach local authorities and offer them support. We cannot force them to do anything, but we can certainly talk about good practice. There are certain things,



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such as the lane rental scheme in London and Kent, that are proving to be quite successful. We will ask the Government if that can be rolled out, so that all local authorities can use those sorts of powers. London also has moving traffic offences to keep traffic moving. There is a whole range of different initiatives.

If a local authority comes to the Local Government Association and asks for help, we will provide help and tell them about good practice. We will continue to lobby the Government to allow local authorities to have some discretion over what they need to do to make their communities places where people can live healthily.

Q92 Sandy Martin: Would you welcome a suggestion that the Local Government Association prepares a paper for the Government, laying out the areas where it is difficult for authorities to fulfil their requirements, given that this is the second biggest avoidable cause of death in the country?

Councillor Morris: Yes we would be happy to lay out the specifics for those authorities.

Q93 Mr Bradshaw: Ms Morris, you started talking about powers again. We have already ascertained that local authorities have powers that only Nottingham and London have used, so I think your plea for greater powers would carry greater credibility if local authorities actually used the powers they already have. I wanted ask Mayor Khan a question about his powers. You have powers to direct boroughs when it comes to air quality. Progress has been made on walking and cycling, but it has been very frustrating, and it has been blocked in some cases by recalcitrant boroughs like Kensington and Chelsea. Why don't you just direct Kensington and Chelsea to provide a western cycle route, for example, which we still do not have in London?

Sadiq Khan: We cannot direct them on their roads; we can on TfL roads.

Q94 Mr Bradshaw: Even using your air quality powers?

Sadiq Khan: We cannot force a council to have a segregated super-highway on a local authority road. The good news is that local authorities are starting to work with us, and we are making progress. The key is consultation and getting the public on side.

There are number of different things we are doing, Ben. One is the segregated super-highway. Secondly, we are working with local authorities on what are called Quietways, diverting people away from the main roads to side roads and other roads that are less busy. Thirdly, we are working with local authorities to help them to make sure that it is easy for people to walk around. You do not want a war between cyclists and pedestrians, and in the past there has been a concern that that has been going on.

We are making progress, but you are right: sometimes it is frustrating, because the local authority may be against a certain scheme. We have found that it is best to get them involved early on, at the design stage, to try to persuade them. The good news, in answer to the question Matthew

asked, is that we are talking to outer London authorities as well, because we cannot have a situation where zone 1 is okay to cycle around, but people who want to cycle around zone 4 or 5—from school to home, to church or the community centre—cannot cycle around there as well. We are working with them across London.

My experience over the last 18 months has been that there is an appetite, partly helped by public opinion. Do not underestimate how public opinion has changed in the last year or two. There is an appetite for change, from parents in the playground seeing kids coughing and kids having an asthma pump, to people's mum and dad having dementia linked to poor-quality air, and adults getting asthma for the first time. Public opinion is putting pressure on local authorities, and they are working with me.

Q95 **Mr Bradshaw:** Can you assure this Committee that your plans will no longer be delayed or blocked by recalcitrant boroughs?

Sadiq Khan: We will carry on working with them. Of course there will be reluctance. If you're a local elected councillor with a majority of 200 and people in your ward are against the scheme, you will be understandably nervous. My job is to find leadership and persuade them as to why it is the right thing to do, through a combination of carrots and sticks. That includes us giving them what is called TIF money—tax increment financing—to help them with transport improvements locally, and part of that is me persuading them that it is the right thing to do. Getting the consultation right is crucial. I think we have done that now, and I am not sure it has always been the case in the past.

Q96 **Mr Bradshaw:** Ms Morris, are you confident that the 28 areas that are now required to produce air improvement plans by March will do so?

Councillor Morris: I hope so, yes.

Q97 **Mr Bradshaw:** You only hope? You don't know?

Councillor Morris: Well, I think the problem—

Q98 **Mr Bradshaw:** This is a requirement.

Councillor Morris: It is a requirement. We as the LGA will be doing everything we can to support those authorities to meet the requirements. The Government has set out the requirement; the local authorities will use whatever powers they can, in all senses of the word, to meet those requirements.

Q99 **Mr Bradshaw:** This isn't even about powers. It is just about having a plan.

Councillor Morris: I don't mean powers as in legal powers; I mean the resources that are available to them. I have to stress that local government is really suffering from resource pressures across all areas. It may well be that they need additional support and help from the Government to make these work.

Q100 **Mr Bradshaw:** You mean money, not additional support.



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Councillor Morris: I mean capacity and expertise. They may have to employ consultants to help them draw up their plans and look at the best ways of solving the issue. It is quite a big task, in a way, and they will need the appropriate resources to do that.

Dr Offord: That is where the LGA should show a lead.

Q101 **Neil Parish:** Yes, and surely share resources, as well, between councils. Isn't that a role for you?

Councillor Morris: We do, and we will do the best we can, but it is down to the local authorities and the Government. It is a partnership, and it should be a partnership. The Government has a role in this as well. This isn't just about local authorities not doing what they are supposed to do or not trying hard enough. We have the technology to move towards electric vehicles; it is the Government's responsibility to make sure that electric vehicle production increases and the prices come down for people. The local authorities are not the creators of the problem. In terms of cars, they are trying to solve the problem. *[Interruption.]*

Chair: Can we have one at a time? Mary, I think you were trying to get in.

Q102 **Mary Creagh:** Thank you, Chair. Councillor Morris, the Government has issued a direction to 23 English local authorities to develop these plans. The deadline for those plans is March 2018. Are those plans going to be done on time by those 23 local authorities—yes or no?

Councillor Morris: I cannot answer that question on behalf of all those authorities.

Q103 **Mary Creagh:** As the person responsible on the LGA, are you not in touch with them, offering any help or advice? The Government is giving them support, guidance and funding to produce those plans, but do you not have oversight, from the body that represents local authorities, to know whether those plans will be ready?

Councillor Morris: I personally do not, but it is not wholly my responsibility. I am not the chair of that committee; I am a deputy chair. It is not a—

Q104 **Mary Creagh:** You have officers working on this, and they didn't brief you?

Councillor Morris: We do have officers working on this.

Q105 **Mary Creagh:** You say that it is not local authorities' responsibility, but local authorities give planning permission for out-of-town developments with no buses. That then creates congestion going in and out of our cities. They allow conurbations and out-of-town shopping centres to develop with no electric vehicle charging points. You say it is not created by local authorities, but there is a lack of workplace charging zones, or of willingness even to introduce 20 mph zones to make walking and cycling safer for pedestrians and schoolchildren. There is a problem in local government, isn't there, in some areas?



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Councillor Morris: Exactly. There may be in some areas. There are a lot of local authorities that are doing good things. I can give you a whole list of authorities that have made very specific steps to improve. Bristol has massively improved cycling. There are two authorities that have increased the number of people using buses. In fact, there is one authority where bus use has increased, whereas bus use is decreasing in other parts of the country.

Q106 **Mary Creagh:** One authority outside London has increased bus use. Doesn't that—

Councillor Morris: There are two, actually. Well, there are two that we know of, which we have written about in our report. That doesn't mean other authorities aren't doing anything. Maybe we have not captured absolutely everything that every authority is doing, because there is a lot of good work happening out there.

Q107 **Mary Creagh:** Can I come to Mayor Khan? Local authorities in London have introduced 20 mph zones—Westminster, Islington, Camden. Is there any evidence about the impact of those zones on air quality? There is quite a lot of rhetoric about speed humps being bad. Is there any emerging research?

Sadiq Khan: There are speed bumps and there is having a holistic approach towards our roads. I am in the latter camp. That means making sure that we can get rid of congestion and deal with the issue of roads being dug up, which has been referred to. There is making sure that we think about walking and cycling. There is Ben's point that designing in cycle lanes at an early stage, rather than later on, is better than a year of bad construction. That is our approach. The idea that simply getting rid of speed humps will solve the air problem is just pie in the sky. It may be popular with some people, but it doesn't really work. Sure, we know that speeding up and slowing down is a nuisance, causes problems, damages cars and all the rest of it, but we do need to reduce the speed of vehicles in London. Look at road safety. The number of deaths by vehicles in London is still too high. We have a separate vision—a separate strategy—for getting there.

One of the things you mentioned about local authorities is really important. There is something that Parliament could do very swiftly. The electric vehicles Bill is currently going through Parliament. If you gave us permitted development powers for rapid charging points—you mentioned planning with respect to electric vehicles—we could speed up charging points without going to committees who refuse permission because residents complained about rapid charging points. You could also say that electric charging points are part of the critical infrastructure, and that a local authority cannot not put in charging points in a development. You are absolutely right that we thinking about the environment is critical when it comes to infrastructure and planning, so that we can design into developments ways to stop the air getting bad in the future. Having charging points as critical infrastructure—doing it via PD rather than going via planning—is really important.



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Chair: I suggest we move on to question 10, otherwise we are not going to be able to get through the range of topics we want to cover.

Neil Parish: I am quite happy to move on again, because most of question 10 has been asked, hasn't it?

Chair: We have not heard about the European element.

Q108 **Neil Parish:** Right. We have dealt with charging zones. What about the charging or non-charging clean air zones mandated by central Governments elsewhere in the EU? Which of those have been effective?

Martin Adams: There have been mixed experiences. Germany is a great fan of low-emission zones, particularly to target particulate matter. Let me give you a short anecdote. Last week, we were at a large meeting in Paris on air quality. The Transport Minister from one of the regions in Germany was picking up the point that they didn't have enough powers devolved to the particular Länder, because policy is set at the national level. They want to go above and beyond what has been agreed at the national level in Germany when it comes to low-emission zones.

Q109 **Neil Parish:** How does a non-charging zone work, then?

Martin Adams: It is very much like the T-zone here: the cleaner the vehicle, the more freedom you have to move through the city. Older vehicle generations are banned. Particularly interestingly, as I say, the Transport Minister from Stuttgart wanted to go to the very latest Euro 6 vehicles. They know from their modelling that that is the only solution that will work for them.

Q110 **Neil Parish:** How do they physically stop a car? Are you just stopped if you go into that zone? How do you physically stop people going in and out of a zone if there is not a charging area or whatever? How does it work?

Martin Adams: I am not sure of the detail. It either will be cameras or fines, but generally they have plaques—the sticker-based system that has been used in many countries.

Q111 **Neil Parish:** I see. So you are just fined if you go into that area.

Martin Adams: Exactly. If your vehicle is not one of the ones permitted in a certain zone, you will be fined.

Sadiq Khan: This is a good example of lack of joined-upness. If, for example, the DVLA or the Treasury was to share with local authorities data on number plates, with automatic number plate recognition, you don't need to spend lots of money on charging systems. You could recognise those vehicles that were not environmentally friendly, and if they were in an area they should not be, you could make them pay the requisite fine.

Q112 **Chair:** Ms Morris, do local authorities want to be mandated by Government to introduce charging?



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Councillor Morris: No, they don't. Local authorities like to have guidance from Government and to have options, but they like to be able to find local solutions that work for them. If that works for them, that is what they will use. They do not want to be mandated.

Q113 **Neil Parish:** At what stage do Government then take action to say, "You haven't fulfilled your objectives"? In one instance, you want to have independence, which I can understand. On the other hand, the Government and the population want to get the air quality right. You seem to largely want to have your cake and eat it, if I may say so. Do you need extra powers to get councils to deliver it? What do you need? It is no good just saying, "We haven't got enough resources, so we can't do it." Is it a political priority? We don't know that. Is it Government's responsibility to say to local authorities that it is?

Councillor Morris: I think it is the Government's responsibility to set out an overarching, "This is what we need to achieve, and these are the ways that it can be achieved," and it is for the local authority to choose which of those things that they can do will work best to achieve it. Absolutely, we all have to be aiming to achieve the clean air that we all need for our communities, but local authorities want to find the most appropriate way for their communities. They need to know what they have to achieve. That needs to be very clearly set out by Government.

Chair: It is clear that we have a number of questions that we will not have a chance to put to you today, so we will write to you with those questions, if that is okay. I will move on to Zac's question on diesel.

Q114 **Zac Goldsmith:** I'll be quick. This question is to the Mayor. You have already talked about calling for a scrappage scheme. I think you said that TfL has done some work on what it would cost. Presumably that is in a London context. I have two questions. First, what would it cost for London—what would the Treasury have to fork out for it? Secondly, is it possible to do it in a geographically distinct way, focusing on areas like London, where the problem is acute?

Sadiq Khan: We have done this piece of work and shared it with the Treasury and the DFT. We are happy to share it with the Committees, if that helps. It is targeted, time-limited and urban-centred. Over two years, it costs £515 million. It is targeted towards the poorest families and the smallest businesses and charities. Roughly speaking, 130,000 vehicles will benefit, and 70,000 vans. For a car, the contribution is about £2,000; for a van, £3,500; and for black taxis, £1,000. The idea is to get rid of the most polluting vehicles by giving people assistance to move away from those polluting vehicles to other forms—if it is possible, to walk, cycle, take public transport or car-share, and if not, to use an electric or hybrid.

We think that that would not have the same problems as the previous scheme you are referring to. In 2009, it was for a different reason; that was an interventionist industrial strategy to help car manufacturing. The argument was that people got a windfall to move away from a car to a new car. This is targeted towards the poorest families—roughly speaking,



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those on 60% of the median income—and the smallest businesses. This way, we think people who need the help the most will receive it. The good news is that from the Government saying a year ago, “We’re not in favour of a targeted scrappage scheme,” they are now talking about it in relation to the clean air fund they announced yesterday. The bad news is that it doesn’t benefit London.

Q115 **Zac Goldsmith:** As a quick follow-up, is that data public? If it is not, could you share it with the Committee none the less?

Sadiq Khan: We will certainly share it with the Select Committee. I am not sure whether it is public. I do not think it is. We have shared it with the Treasury and the DFT already.

Q116 **Zac Goldsmith:** At the very top level, if you were to win that campaign and that money was put aside, and you did what you want to do and had a two-year scheme, how big a part of the solution is that? More broadly, how significant is that?

Sadiq Khan: It helps the poorest families and businesses that need it most. In previous questions, people have talked about charging. That is important, but let’s not forget those who have got to pay the charge. It is about helping those people to make the transition. Some people will still have to use their old vehicle, for the reason the previous questioner asked about. If you are a business and you have bought a second-hand vehicle and you cannot move, this will help you move. We have quantified the benefits, and I can disaggregate the benefits from a charging scheme or not, which we can send to you. The key thing is that we will only change people’s behaviour with carrots and sticks. My concern is that the impression we are giving is that there are only sticks and no carrots.

Chair: Can we move on to look at alternative vehicles? That is an important part of the behaviour we are trying to change.

Q117 **Mrs Murray:** Ms Morris, what specific challenges do local authorities face in promoting electric vehicle uptake? Is that something they would want the Government to provide support with?

Councillor Morris: Yes, we absolutely need Government to provide it.

Q118 **Mrs Murray:** Do your member constituent authorities consider that support to be enough?

Councillor Morris: No. They will never say it is enough financially, but also in terms of getting the message across. We need to get the message across really clearly about the importance of making the change to electric vehicles. The feeling from local government is that national Government has to do more, much more quickly, with the car manufacturers and enable them to move on to different ways of manufacturing and producing more electric vehicles more quickly than they do at the moment. Electric vehicles are expensive at the moment. We have heard about the diesel scrappage, which will—

Q119 **Mrs Murray:** I am conscious of time, so can I also ask whether you think



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local authorities, as the local highway authorities, should look at incorporating more charging points when they look at road improvements?

Councillor Morris: Yes, we absolutely should be looking at making it as easy as possible for people to make the transition that we need to make over time to using electric vehicles. Obviously, there are competing needs on the highway and we do not want to find that we just have cluttered-up streets. It has to be part of a whole strategic approach to how we make the change. On planning, as was mentioned earlier, having electric charging points in new developments when we are approving planning permissions would also help. They do not all have to be on the highway.

Mrs Murray: Thank you very much.

Q120 **Neil Parish:** On that point, surely it is not just having enough fast charging points, but ensuring that there are not massive queues to get to them? Today we have said, "Is it petrol? Is it diesel?" It's got to be electric. There is no point taking somebody from diesel to cleaner diesel or cleaner petrol. It's got to be electric if you're going to spend that money. If we are going down the electric route, do we have those charging points? There are already people queuing at charging points. Are they fast enough? Vans, in particular, are not going to hang around all day to be charged up. If we went down this route, are we ready and can we get ready fast enough?

Sadiq Khan: Councillor Morris used the word "clutter" to describe it. That is the response from councils when we apply for permission for rapid charging points. That is why I have said we have to speed this up. In answer to Mary, I said that we need to use the Bill to have permitted development of critical infrastructure. That is crucial, because we are applying for rapid charging points, and councils are saying no because it is clutter. Some people will charge their vehicles overnight. Some people can afford to top up using standard charging points. The commercial fleet will need rapid charging points, 50 kW in 30 minutes. It is fine to have 7 kW in four hours and 3 kW overnight, but if you are a taxi or van driver you do not have that time. Infrastructure is crucial. We are talking to UK Power Networks to ensure the electricity grids can meet that.

Q121 **Neil Parish:** Yes—that we have enough power for everyone.

Sadiq Khan: That is why it needs joined-upness. That is why I am saying it is really important. What we do not want to do is inadvertently move people away from diesel and petrol but have no charging points or facilities there. It has got to be joined up. That is why it is crucial.

Neil Parish: That will put people off converting as well, the moment they see that.

Chair: I am sorry, colleagues, but I am conscious of time and I would like to talk a little about public transport and active travel. Ben, I would like to come to you for question No. 20, if that's okay.

Q122 **Mr Bradshaw:** This is to Ms Morris. How is the claimed £1.2 billion of



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Government money for walking and cycling being accessed and spent by local authorities? What is your assessment of that?

Councillor Morris: I don't have a precise breakdown of how it is being spent, but I am very happy to get that information to you after this Committee. In terms of how it is being spent—

Q123 **Mr Bradshaw:** Does the LGA not have some sort of overview of how that scheme is going and whether it has been making a difference?

Councillor Morris: It is making a difference. As I mentioned earlier, we did a report on traffic congestion and there were authorities accessing and using that fund to increase walking and cycling—to build cycle lanes and to promote active travel. If you want, I am very happy to get you a breakdown of what local authorities are doing specifically with that money, because I cannot answer it now.

Q124 **Mr Bradshaw:** You have said repeatedly this morning that the LGA's role is to support local government to do things, but you will not be able to support local government if you do not have the first idea as to what is going on on the ground and you are not doing any monitoring, pulling together statistics. It would have been helpful had the LGA managed to pull together some statistics for this hearing, but if you write to me about this and about whether you are confident that these local authorities will have their plans in place by March, that would be very helpful—and anything else you feel you haven't been able to answer here this morning.

Councillor Morris: I thought that I was coming to talk about the response that we had made to the consultation, so that is what I have been briefed on. My role is an ask—what local government is asking of central Government in terms of how they can support local authorities.

Q125 **Mr Bradshaw:** But we are also interested in what local authorities can do—

Councillor Morris: Of course.

Mr Bradshaw: And your role here is also to represent local authorities.

Chair: I am going to come to Caroline to follow up on public transport other than active travel.

Q126 **Dr Johnson:** Thank you. We have talked a lot about how public transport can be increased in highly and densely populated urban centres, but the LGA represents local government in the country as a whole. In my constituency, a very large rural area, public transport is much more difficult to encourage people to take part in, and walking children to school if that is over three or four miles is equally not necessarily a very practical solution. But we still have problems with air quality, as I understand it, so what do you think can be done in the more rural areas—geographically most of the country—in order to improve air quality?



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Councillor Morris: Make sure that the buses are cleaner buses, for one thing. I know that it is difficult in rural areas for buses to increase their capacity, because the very nature of rural areas means that buses cannot be filled, so they become expensive and so on. Where possible, encourage people to cycle, to get them out of cars. That involves making the roads safer and particularly encouraging young people to cycle to school. Also offer concessionary fares for young people on the buses—obviously in London we have free travel for schoolchildren—and roll out something like that, so that young people use the buses more instead of having their parents drive them to school if they need to travel any distance.

Q127 **Dr Johnson:** We certainly have supported school transport in Lincolnshire financially, but equally we have a situation where, essentially, if you are an adult not a child and want to go on the bus, you cannot. There may be only one bus that leaves your village all day. Public transport options for the elderly are unavailable for most of the day.

I have one other quick question, about the electrical infrastructure. We have talked about electric charging points in the cities, but electric charging points in rural areas where journeys are longer are even more of a challenge. The Greater Lincolnshire local enterprise partnership has recently been working on a report looking at the electric utility provision and infrastructure in our county as it is now. It is already creaking under the strain. If we roll out electric vehicles throughout the country, there physically will not be the capacity. How do you think we can meet that challenge?

Councillor Morris: The Government absolutely have to help meet that challenge. It is not the responsibility of local authorities to provide something that is a replacement for petrol stations. It is something that Government absolutely have to invest in to make it happen.

Q128 **Chair:** Returning to the point about what local authorities are asking for in terms of assistance from central Government and encouraging modal shift and getting people on to buses—there is no point having a cleaner bus if no one is going to find it useful to use or is willing to make that change—do Government policies provide the right financial incentives to encourage modal shift? If not, what should they be doing differently?

Councillor Morris: Do they provide the right financial incentives to encourage modal shift? I think—

Chair: Or other measures to help local authorities?

Councillor Morris: As we said, local authorities have different needs and there are different ways of solving the problem. I cannot answer that question, I am sorry.

Q129 **Mr Bradshaw:** Mr Adams, I feel very conscious that you have been excluded from most of this conversation. How do we compare with other countries on everything we have covered, from modal shift to the alternatives to everything else? Now is your chance to shine.



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Martin Adams: I do appreciate that there is a lot of interest at the national and local level as part of your discussions. I do not know whether it is any consolation, but you are not alone in Europe. What we have seen is that the UK is one of the worst when it comes to NO₂ pollution, together with the other big countries—Germany, France, Spain and Italy.

What I can see from the data we get from our member countries—the member states and the other countries that have joined the agency—is that unfortunately some of the highest measurements across all of Europe are in London. I know that is an issue that is being tackled very strongly. Many of the points I have heard today we see as issues in other countries. There is the need to encourage behavioural change, modal shift and also the struggles with implementation. That is a word I used before.

A couple of years ago we did a study working with 12 different cities across Europe. There were three key challenges that they identified and that I keep hearing today. One is on evaluating the effectiveness of measures that you are putting in. It is very difficult for councils and local authorities to know whether a certain action will deliver or not. Again, information-sharing and the examples of best practice we have heard about this morning are very important.

The second key point is about costs and benefits and whether things stand up when you talk to the Treasuries in the different countries. The third key point I would like to mention is around implementation on the ground. Partly, as we have heard from the Mayor, it is about whether they have the powers necessary to target, for example, traffic coming into their cities. The city itself cannot put in place high-occupancy lanes or speed limits on motorways coming in and the feeder areas, and that is a source of high pollution for some countries.

A second thing that came up from the cities is public opposition. This is a personal observation, but in the past 10 years the public have picked up on this issue of air pollution. There is a much stronger drive for action now, but at the local level there is still this feeling of “not in my backyard” when it comes to charging people to access city areas. That is a challenge. As I say, from our perspective, there are some common stories. That is what I have been hearing today.

Chair: Mr Adams, you only got in at the end, but I think we had a lot of quality, even if we did not have a lot of quantity. I am really sorry, colleagues. I know other people wanted to get in, but we have definitely run out of time. I thank the panel for their contributions.