

Cabinet 23rd September 2019

Davies, Gareth J

Agenda Item 5 - Supplementary Information

Subject: FW: Basic Faults in LAQM report to Cabinet today, item 5

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From: BarryVale FOE <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 23 September 2019 08:37
To: Thomas, Rob <DRThomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>; Cabinet <Cabinet@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>; Williams, Edward (Cllr) <EdWilliams@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]; Craig.Lewis@cardiff.gov.uk
Subject: Basic Faults in LAQM report to Cabinet today, item 5

Rob Thomas
Managing Director, VoG Council

Report of the Cabinet Member for Legal, Regulatory and Planning Services -
5. Local Air Quality Management Annual Progress Report 2019.

While this report proposes revoking the legal AQMA for Cogan, it fails to meet the LAQM requirements in two respects.

1. no regard to impending development of the 'Wellbeing hub' at Cogan, with the extra traffic emissions expected and use by vulnerable groups, and
2. wrong disregard of the breach of the legal limit for NO2 on Cogan Hill, as shown by the Council's monitoring results (point 79, 'Marine Scene') for the last 3 years.

The current 2017 LAQM guidance used in the report to Cabinet requires for revoking AQMAs that

The review should clearly demonstrate national air quality objectives are being met and **will continue to be met (s.4.14)**.

The proposal fails under Point 1; unless and until current plans for the Wellbeing hub are abandoned.

The review fails under Point 2; under the 2017 LAQM, the Council can no longer restrict sensitive receptors to adjacent to residential properties.

I put both these points to the responsible SRS officer (Craig Lewis) 2 weeks ago, but he has not (in the short time) taken them on board.

The Cabinet should therefore not approve submission of this report without amendment to the Welsh Government by 30 Sept. as intended.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Friends of the Earth Barry&Vale

SUPPORTING DETAIL

The Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) report fails to give an update on relevant developments likely to affect local air quality as required:

This report must include monitoring results for the previous calendar year, a progress report on action plan implementation and an **update on any new policies or developments likely to affect local air quality**.

These are the Transport interchange at Cogan Station, including intensified use by diesel buses and taxis, and the Cogan “Wellbeing Hub” attached to the Leisure Centre.

For revoking AQMAs, paragraph 4.14 requires:

The review should clearly demonstrate national air quality objectives are being met and **will continue to be met**.

The transport consultants *Bureau Veritas* have not used ‘best practice’ but done a primitive study, that assumes traffic is moving steadily at some 30 or 40 km/hr; in fact for much of the time, traffic is congested with much starting and stopping, particularly at the Haven roundabout and at the Andrew Rd junction. The steep slopes also cause much higher traffic pollution. TG16 gives guidance on covering congested traffic and junctions, which the consultants failed to follow.

It omits to cover emissions from the Leisure Centre car park (contrary to TG16) which would significantly increase under the Wellbeing Hub. The traffic increases for this development were ignored – the officer says because planning consent is not finalised – yet the 2017 LAQM guidance s.1.3 requires looking to the long term and acting to prevent problems from occurring or getting worse. S.1.5 says Welsh LAQM in should look out in particular for areas where the national air quality objectives might be at risk of being breached at some point in the future and act pre-emptively.

The *Bureau Veritas* modelling assumed local winds that disperse the pollution are the same as winds at Rhose airport, with no account of local information and the quite different topography. Prevailing westerlies are strongly changed by the position in the lee of the Redlands hill and circulating pattern in Cardiff Bay. The Met Office model is the best available method to model winds in such complex topography.

Table 5.1 shows model predicted 2018 levels at all receptors R1-R16 are far below the limit (31.6 highest compared with 40). Appendix 1 explains “model adjustment” to attempt to overcome the poor performance of the model, which predicts levels at the Cogan Hill site as 17.7 compared with the 37.9 observed in 2018 (Table A2; over 50% underestimate). The *Bureau Veritas* ‘adjustment’ of the traffic emissions by a large factor (over 4x, for Table 4.1) shows the emission modelling to be very poor.

The LAQM guidance (s.4.15-16) says ‘vulnerable groups’ as make use of medical centres should be given special consideration for appraising risks of exposure to air pollution.

The annual progress report has to indicate if the AQMA should be **amended or revoked**. It omits to consider the first even though it reports breaches of NO₂ on the adjacent Cogan Hill (‘Marine Scene’ monitoring point). This breach has been omitted in the past on the basis that no-one lives there, following previous guidance (Table 2.1). The 2017 Welsh LAQM guidance drops that, so returns to defining breaches in relation to open air places *everywhere with the exception of the carriageway and central reservation of roads and any location where the public do not have access* (s.2.1 of *Bureau Veritas*). The *Bureau Veritas* modelling similarly omits this whole section from Andrew Road to the Windsor roundabout as without ‘sensitive receptors’, s.4.3 (see Fig. 4.3).

Cogan Hill has retail premises and a frequented walking route to the close-by Tesco store. It is also defined as an active-travel route for walking and cycling, which is classed in the LAQM s.4.16 as a “sensitive receptor location”. Note the LAQM guidance says s.2.7 *Air just barely compliant with the objectives is not ‘clean’ and still carries long-term health risks. Nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter currently have no safe threshold.*

Marine Scene = point 79 Table A.1 for 2018 gives 31.6 but this is using a false reduction due to distance to the Cogan housing. The actual figures (reduced by a bias adjustment factor) are given in Table 3 over 2016, 2017, 2018 as **44.4 38.3 37.9**

These average over the limit 40 and, on the face of it, there’s quite a chance of exceeding the 40 limit in future years.

That the limit **will continue to be met** in future years is not demonstrated (requirement in LAQM s.4.14). The Council is therefore obliged for this year’s LAQM Progress Report to consider amending the AQMA action area to include the Cogan Hill stretch.