



Cross Party Group Clean Air Act for Wales

Grwp Trawsbleidiol Deddf Aer Glan Gymru

11:00 – 12:00

26.01.2022

Virtual Meeting using Teams

Cyfarfod ar-lein dros Timau

Attendees

Huw Irranca-Davies MS (Chair)

Llyr Gruffydd MS

Heledd Fychan MS

Delyth Jewell MS

Janet Finch-Saunders MS

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah

Joseph Carter

Annie Fabian

Liz Williams

Charlotte Morgan

Ryland Doyle

Rylan Ellis

Gwenda Owen

Haf Elgar

Joe Rossiter

Neil Lewis

Paul Lewis

Dan Rose

Tomos Rowley

Ruth Billingham

Rhys Taylor

Paul Willis

Olwen Spillar

Callum Shaw

Huw Brunt

Oliver John

Apologies

Rhun ap Iorwerth MS

Councillor Mark Thomas

Actions

- Set time and date of next meeting
- Circulate minutes from meeting
- MSs and collective to suggest topic areas and circulate thoughts to discuss in the next meeting

1. **Chair, Huw Irranca-Davies MS:** Minutes of the last meeting
Cadeirydd, Huw Irranca-Davies AS: Cofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol

Minutes approved

2. **Presentation by Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:** On the impact of air pollution on children's lungs
Cyflwyniad gan Rosamund Kissi-Debrah: Ar effaith llygredd aer ar ysgyfaint plant

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: Introduction to Rosamund Kissi-Debrah and welcome to the group

- Joseph Carter and Rosamund Kissi-Debrah to do a Q and A session

Joseph Carter: I have a few questions to ask Rosamund Kissi-Debrah, and thank you for being here today

- Tell us about your daughter Ella and the work you've Done through the Ella Roberta Family Foundation

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- Ella was my 1st born and would've been 18 now, she wasn't dissimilar to other children
- 1.1 million children have asthma in the UK, there are many other illnesses linked to air pollution but we will focus on asthma
- Ella was born healthy with no respiratory issues, in October 2010 we knew something wrong, she was almost 7 and what happened to her can happen to any other child
- Ella was very healthy until she wasn't and asthma can be linked to many things but the doctor ruled out smoking or other viral causes
- Ella suffered from a rare form of severe asthma
- We set up the charity with Dr Wallis from Great Ormond Street Hospital, we were keen to learn why her asthma was so severe and to use what we learnt to help other children
- The coroner ruled that air pollution contributed to Ella's death and started her asthma, if we lived with lower levels of air pollution she probably wouldn't have had asthma
- There is an astounding number of children who have asthma in Wales (59000), 3 in every class, this is a huge cause of concern and is not acceptable

- My (Rosamund Kissi-Debrah) role is Breathe Life Ambassador for WHO and Climate Composition
- I go round and speak to mayors in cities and industrial places encouraging them to bear air pollution in mind when making legislation (will send 1st recommendation of what concerned the coroner which needs to be addressed to inform legislation)
- I'm surprised that legislation has taken two years and I ask the CPG to come to some consensus and put legislation through (on air pollution)
- Covid has highlighted what it means for people to be struggling to breathe and there was no difference between seeing a covid patient in ICU struggling to breathe and Ella
- There is also a link between covid and air pollution

Joseph Carter: As you've touched on it, what is your message to Policy makers?

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- Disappointed that PM2.5 didn't get into the Environment Act
- Number of children dying from asthma has not gone down, there are 24-26 deaths in the UK, these numbers haven't changed
- Respiratory consultants have meetings every month to find out why
- Our aim is no child will die from asthma, this can only be achieved if the air is clean
- We know where the pollution is from, for example wood burning, which is carcinogenic
- Want to point out that politicians make the case for jobs but must look at health too, not just economy
- Air pollution has been linked to many health issues, which cost a lot of money
- We will have a healthier nation with more people in work and less health budget spend if the air is clean
- It's not just about air pollution it is about quality of life
- There is a 12 year gap in life expectancy between wealthy and poor, covid has highlighted the inequalities in health which air pollution is one of
- Pollution hotspots tend to be in areas of deprivation
- Asked covid enquiry to include air pollution in terms of reference
- Air pollution weakens people's immune systems
- I believe there will be studies to show that air pollution is a major factor in covid
- 91% of us are breathing illegal air

Delyth Jewell MS: I wanted to say how moving what you're saying is and that you're speaking to people who want to help

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- I meet with respiratory doctors once an month and ask them to tell me when a child does die, it will keep me on my toes and pushes me further
- This is why I am bold when I ask of you what I want as children are dying
- We shouldn't bring up a whole generation of children on asthma pumps

Joseph Carter: Just on healthcare professionals, what steps do you think healthcare professionals should be doing to protect children from air pollution and how do we help parents to make good choices?

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- Please make sure every child with asthma has a care plan and an annual review and if they continue to go to hospital bring the review forward
- An asthma plan is crucial otherwise they slip through the net
- The coroner realised that healthcare professionals aren't aware of air pollution and need to be educated on this
- Boards need to be educated
- Doctors need to be giving information to their patients, GP surgeries need to have information about air pollution
- There's a divide between public health and medical doctors, we need to remove the barriers
- The answer needs to be education, doctors, everyone in health, and the general public
- This is a very good place to start and is in the coroners' recommendations

Joseph Carter: Final question, what's your key take away message to Welsh politicians to improve air pollution in Wales?

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- The WHO's new guidelines - the last ones were written in 2005 and were updated last year
- 7 million people's lives globally are cut short due to air pollution
- They (the guidelines) are tough but every single life is worth it, they will save lives and improve quality of life
- Wales needs to focus on WHO guidelines
- There are 17,000 ONS stats on covid deaths, what has contributed? Cleaning the air will be good for the people of Wales
- Asthma is a life-long condition, people in 40s and 50s are getting asthma again
- People near busy roads have 10% chance of lung cancer and 1 in 2 people will get lung cancer
- Covid can shut down the economy and air pollution doesn't, but look at all the illnesses I've mentioned
- Consider a public health campaign to educate the people of Wales
- People will respond well, they don't know what to do and will need leadership in form of a public health campaign backed by government
- Make sure idling is outlawed, have proper signs to warn people
- In 2022 no child should die from asthma,
- So I would recommend the WHO targets, definitely a public health campaign to get people on board, definitely idling, and if I can I will slip in wood burning, if you ban it PM2.5 will go down

Joseph Carter: thank you

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: thank you, Rosamund you have given us passion, inspiration, and insight focusing on practical measures

- Let me open to MS for questions or comments
- Open to all groups for questions or comments

Gwenda Owen: One of the most powerful speeches I've heard, people need to hear the reality and the urgency. Thank you for sharing the message

Paul Willis: I run the air quality database for WG, I think it's amazing what you're doing to bring issue to light, in short term we need to get warnings out for high air pollution, what is your view on keeping it simple for the likes of families to know when its not safe?

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- Use a traffic light system for air pollution
- In high air pollution there are more cardiac arrests and asthma attacks
- In London there are warnings on bus stop signs when there's a high air pollution day. Its not great and the air should be cleaner, but warn people
- Put it on maps after the weather, make it really simple
- It needs to be clear and concise and people will come on board
- Idling around schools should be banned.
- We have school streets where just before dropping and picking up no cars are allowed to go there
- Its also about encouraging parents to walk their children to school rather than driving, I don't know your situation but in London most people go to their local school so we're encouraging them to walk to school

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: We're doing parallel work, trying to shift school transport to walking and cycling but it's an uphill struggle to persuade parents. This is an ongoing piece of work.

Oliver John: Thank you for presentation. Particularly interested in public engagement and campaigns and messaging. What's your reflection on awareness in young people?

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah: when it comes to climate change young people are more engaged.

- Mistake was that climate wasn't linked to health, we should see the whole thing as a public health crisis.
- When we talk about air pollution we talk about health, we the want department of health to take this on
- For some people they switch off about the environment, this was the first time that health made it onto COP agenda
- Young people are very easy to talk to, they get the climate thing. They are not the problem. They were very shocked when they found out my daughter died from Asthma
- I'm used to talking to young people, they accept it well and are hugely engaged, we need to mention health more. It is the older generation which are a bit stuck in their ways.

Gwenda Owen: Do you think we need to be more hard hitting? Sometimes we're too nice and afraid to offend people. Especially idling, do we need to say 'do you know what you're doing'?

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- Shocking is not always the best way, yes we need to be more hard hitting but we don't need to shock them.
- We don't need to show children dying. We need to enforce things - idling is against the law, if you start issuing tickets word will get out

- Shocking will switch some people off, we don't need to put people off. Over all it wont be great to do that
- Where there is legislation already there we need to use that, it will get that message across.
- We do need to enforce that more, during school rush hour air pollution goes up 50-60%. I think head teachers would like us to be tougher. We should get tougher through legislation we already have.

Huw Irranca-Davies MS : I noticed a temporary exclusion zone around school because of congestion. But it was temporary, why not make it a permanent exclusion and look at working with governors to encourage parents to walk and cycle to school?

Professor Paul Lewis: There is enough evidence that (pollution) exposure in idling car is higher inside than outside. So being picked up is even higher exposure levels to those children

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah:

- Even with electric cars we even have tyre and brake wear dust
- They are better but will not be the solution, if you replace every diesel and petrol engine you wont' solve issue of congestion. It will be better but you'll still have tyre and brake wear
- Maybe cycling proficiency needs to be encouraged in school, but need to remember there are very poor families which cant afford bicycles.
- We need to remember the poorest people do not have cars yet they are getting most of the brunt of the air pollution
- The poorest people take busses. I'm a big fan of busses, if were encouraging people to leave cars
- What is your infrastructure like? People still need to get to places on time. Public transport is subsidised in many parts of Europe
- If we want to encourage people to take public transport we need to make sure it's accessible.
- People in rural areas may only have one bus an hour.
- A lot of air pollution comes from shipping too, so many things for legislators to consider.

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: your knowledge and passion is extensive and you're touching on areas live in Wales which are under policy development

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah: We're here to make a point about health, not the economy

- Focusing on children and young people's health and people's health in general
- Thank you for the opportunity

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: in the last few days it would've been Ella's birthday, you've done wonderful work with the foundation

Rosamund Kissi-Debrah: it's the Ella-Roberta foundation, www.ellaroberta.org

- For me it summed it up that when you have a drive you just do things. It really hit me when Sadiq Khan said his condolences for your family but in turn she will save hundreds of lives
- Thank you so much for having me

- I just want to stress that all parties should work together for the future of everyone in Wales

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: thank you so much it's been inspiring

Joseph Carter – Presentation on party commitments around a Clean Air Act for Wales

Joseph Carter – Cyflwyniad ar ymrwymiadau'r pleidiau ynghylch Deddf Aer Glân i Gymru

- Parties have given information about priorities in a clean air act
- All parties gave commitment to endorse a clean air act, we've been mapping out what that means
- The white paper is a base line of what Welsh labour government wants to achieve
- Consensus on having clean air act and need for future targets
- Less consensus on other aspects

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: It is helpful to be shown graphically and some of the gaps may be that it hasn't been put down in party policy, this could be an opportunity to go back to parties and say where are we on this?

Any comments?

Joseph Carter: happy to take questions after meeting and will share presentation

- Thank you to Liz

4. Huw Irranca Davies MS: Discussion around 2022 workplan

Huw Irranca Davies AS: Trafodaeth ynghylch cynllun gwaith 2022

Huw Irranca-Davies MS: Into final minute but have discussion to work out the plan going forward

Joseph Carter: Could MS come back with things which are important for future meetings?

- Next meeting to focus on education in schools
- Happy for any ideas which you, chair, and vice chair have for meetings
- Next one to be just before or after easter break

Huw Irranca Davies MS: can I suggest that, if we circulate thoughts, we can get your ideas back in, both from MS and collective, then we can get some thoughts of programme going forwards to June/ July

- Absolutely keep focus on clean air legislation and other things we can do now without legislation

5. Any other business

Unrhyw fusnes arall

Huw Irranca Davies MS: Any final comments before close?

No comments

Huw Irranca-Davies: Thank you very much, and to those helping to organise this meeting