



Cross Party Group Clean Air Act for Wales
Grwp Trawsbleidiol Deddf Aer Glan Gymru

13:00 – 14:00

09.06.2022

Teams

Attendees:

MSs

Huw Irranca-Davies MS

David Rees MS

Hefin David MS (represented by Alexander Still)

Non-MSs

Daisy Noott

Joseph Carter

Oliver John

Gwenda Owen

Neil Lewis

Ruth Billingham

Paul Lewis

Mark Wolstencroft

Haf Elgar

Huw Brunt

Jason Bale

Paul Lewis

CLlr Caro Wild

CLlr Dan De'Ath

David Thornley

Graeme Robson

Charlotte Morgan

Agenda:

1. **Chair, Huw Irranca-Davies MS:** Welcome, introductions and apologies.
Cadeirydd, Huw Irranca-Davies AS: Croeso, cyflwyniadau ac ymddiheuriadau.
2. **Chair, Huw Irranca-Davies MS:** Minutes of the last meeting
Cadeirydd, Huw Irranca-Davies AS: Cofnodion y cyfarfod blaenorol
3. **Mark Wolstencroft, Birmingham Council – Clean Air Zones**
Mark Wolstencroft, Cyngor Birmingham – Parthau Aer Glân
4. **Joseph Carter, Healthy Air Cymru:** Matters arising
Joseph Carter, Healthy Air Cymru: Materion sy'n codi
5. **Any other business / Unrhyw fusnes arall**



1. **Chair, Huw Irranca-Davies MS: Welcome, introductions and apologies.**
No formal apologies
2. **Chair, Huw Irranca-Davies MS: Minutes of the last meeting**
Minutes from the last meeting will be confirmed over email correspondence
3. **Presentation from Mark Wolstencroft, Birmingham Council – Clean Air Zones**
 - Mark is the Operations Manager for Environmental Protection at Birmingham City Council and oversees the Monitoring and Evaluation of the Clean Air Zone (CAZ)
 - Birmingham City Council created several infographics around the impact of poor air quality on public health. These have been important in explaining the rationale for the CAZ to the public.
 - In 2011 Birmingham launched second air quality action plan. The first action was to look at a technical feasibility study on a low emissions zone.
 - A cross-authority working group formed a Low Emissions Towns and Cities Programme, bringing air quality experts together to combine expertise. Utilised Defra grant funding to launch this group and deliver work packages.
 - An assessment report of a low emissions zone in Birmingham City Centre was published in 2014/15, and in 2015/16 the government started to engage with Birmingham City Council to discuss a trial of a CAZ.
 - In 2019 submitted business case and gained approval
 - The pandemic delayed the launch until June 2021
 - There are similar schemes either in operation or development across the UK and whilst the CAZ is one model, there are other variations that other Local Authorities are exploring.
 - Birmingham CAZ sits just inside city's ring road and is a type D zone, which covers all vehicles.
 - There are many major arterial roads leading into the city which has led to the air quality problems.
 - The daily charge for cars is £8 and for HGVs, coaches and buses is £50, and the charge applies 24 hours a day.
 - Initially there was a soft enforcement period of 2 weeks to support the transition – notification letters were sent out, but no penalty charges were issued.
 - Daily average of unique vehicles entering the zone hasn't dropped off very significantly, although there has been a reduction – various events have impacted such as working from home guidance and Covid-19 restrictions
 - Increased number of compliant vehicles
 - Traffic flow on the A38 and ring road has decreased
 - There was a concern that the CAZ would shift traffic from the centre onto the ring road – this hasn't happened which is a positive
 - All this data is available for public viewing on the website - [Clean Air Zone data | Brum Breathes](#)
 - Mark stressed the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation, especially for larger zones.



- A baseline report that captures data from prior to the CAZ has been published, as well as an interim report which was published in February covering the first 6 months of the CAZ, and a report on the first 12 months of the CAZ which will be published shortly.
- Businesses and citizens have been supported by £35m total grants package, offering 3 different schemes:
 - 1) £10m Scrappage Scheme and Mobility Credits (available to those working in the CAZ and earning less than £30,000 per annum – in return for scrapping a non-compliant vehicle, individuals can receive £2000 towards a compliant vehicle or receive travel credits. Around 25% of applicants chose travel credit)
 - 2) £10m Upgrade and Replace (Open to SMEs with HGVs and coaches, applicable for a grant between £15,000-£150k. This will soon will be expanded to LGVs)
 - 3) £15m Upgrade and Replace (Open to Birmingham-licensed hackney carriages and private hire drivers. £3 million in grants delivered so far)
- Clean Air Strategy for the city of Birmingham was launched in February 2022. Alongside this launched an air quality monitoring programme in schools.

Q&A and discussion

Huw Irranca-Davies MS – the interactive data on the website will increase the public’s confidence in the scheme

David Rees MS – raised a question about the motorways outside of the city centre and CAZ, thinking about the M4’s impact on Newport. Are there any assessments of the air quality in those areas?
Mark responded that the arterial roads are a bigger problem and most of the focus has been on the city centre as that is where the identified problem is. Moving forward there will be more looking at the surrounding areas now that the CAZ is in place.

Huw Brunt – asked about the public health outcomes and how these are being evaluated and monitored. *Mark responded that health-related data underpins the clean air study. They work with University of Birmingham and are part of a group called West Midlands Air, and have secured £5 million through Natural Environment Research Council to do work around air quality and health related practical implementations.*

Joseph Carter - highlighted the topographical element and how this would impact on air dispersal in particular related to the M4, some of which is elevated but may be impacted by the surrounding hills.

Haf Elgar – asked if any measures were introduced in parallel with the launch of the CAZ to address public transport improvements and considerations of inequality. *Mark said that they have been engaging with public transport operators, for example National Express, to upgrade fleets. They are also working on the development of the metro line through the centre.*

David Thornley – how does the charging mechanism work? *Mark explained that there is an online vehicle checker. If you enter with a non-compliant vehicle you can pay the charge six days in advance of the day of your visit, the day of your visit, or six days after the day of your visit. If you do not pay you will receive a penalty charge.*

Cllr Caro Wild – praised the clear communication of Birmingham’s CAZ to the public. Asked whether BCC have thought about long-term end date to the scheme. *Mark explained that they are working*



with Defra who have produced a formal decommissioning scheme, which provides a number of steps the Local Authority has to go through. Need a number of years of confirmed compliance.

Cllr Caro Wild – is particulate matter getting picked up in dataset? *No, they are only recording NO2. The duty to comply is with central government. Birmingham is however trying to increase their understanding of PM2.5.*

Huw Irranca-Davies MS - raised the differences between England and Wales, for example the WFH guidance from Welsh vs. UK government. We will wait and see if this is a longer-term trend that will impact travel habits.

4. Joseph Carter, Healthy Air Cymru: Matters arising

- On 31st May Low Emission Zones (LEZs) were be launched in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow.
- These will be very different model to the Birmingham model, in that anyone with a vehicle that breaches the limits is at risk of being fined.
- There will be a long grace period for this scheme - Glasgow won't issues fines for 1 year and the other cities 2 years.
- You can learn more about the Scottish scheme at <https://www.lowemissionzones.scot/>
- He also gave an update from the last meeting. The deputy Minister formally wrote to opposition parties to ask for their views on the Bill, but only 1 out of 3 parties had responded.
- Healthy Air Cymru will be hosting a drop-in event at the Senedd on Tuesday 14th June 09.00-13.30 to celebrate Clean Air Day