

P-05-825 Protect children's lungs from harmful pollution whilst at school – Correspondence from the petitioner to the Committee, 19.12.18



Dear David John Rowlands AM,

We are grateful to the Minister for her response dated 20th November and apologise for the delay in responding to the committee's call for a further response from the BLF.

We welcome the Minister's commitment to improving air quality and hope that the loss of the post of Minister for the Environment does not impact on the work of the Welsh Government in bringing forward new measures to tackle poor air quality.

With reference to the Local Air Quality Management regime, we note that extensive guidance has been published for Local Authorities and that this was revised in the summer of 2017 which makes explicit reference to sensitive receptors. We welcome this and the focus that Welsh Government has placed on engaging with schools to inform children about air pollution and to take local action. It is also interesting to hear that the Government has undertaken some work on individual exposure assessment, and we hope to see more of this work undertaken as part of the Clean Air Plan.

We would like to see further work done to move from a risk-based approach of siting monitors to individual exposure model as part of the new Clean Air Plan, including an increase in the funding to local authorities to ensure that all local authorities can carry out their functions effectively and adequately monitor and take action to tackle localised challenges with air quality. We have received anecdotal evidence that some local authorities are struggling to continue to fund ARUN sites, for example. We would therefore encourage a review of funding to local authorities to ensure that air quality teams have the resources necessary to take the renewed action expected of local authorities to achieve threshold levels in the shortest time possible. Furthermore, we would welcome the opportunity to be involved with any future review of the LAQM regime.

Finally, we are aware that there is a growing call from parents to take forward 'buffer' zones around schools and introduce anti-idling zones around schools. We are aware that currently Local Authorities have to apply to Welsh Government to devolve the necessary powers to local authorities to take forward these measures. We would welcome consideration to be given for devolving these powers to all local authorities

in order for councils to take a proactive approach to protecting children from harmful emissions at school.

Yours sincerely,

Rhys Taylor
Policy and Public Affairs Officer, BLF Wales

