

Twyford Parish Council Air Quality Meeting Minutes

A meeting hosted by Twyford Parish Council held at 10.30am on Thursday 13th February 2020.

Attendees: Bridget Ditcham (Twyford Parish Council), Charlie Fielder (Environmental Health Officer, West Berks), Andrew Chugg (Planning Development Management Officer), Ray Sunley (Twyford Resident & Neighbourhood Plan Working Group Member).

Apologies: Cllr Parry Batth (WBC Executive Member), Mike Corker (Twyford Resident).

Minutes: Lynn Povey (Assistant Clerk).

1. Introductions were made.

2. Report from Charlie Fielder (Environmental Health Officer).

Charlie Fielder reported that the data is continuously being collated from the tube monitors located around the centre of the village and the monitor located on Bell Corner. The results are collected at the beginning of each month. The monitor will provide more accurate data, recording levels every 15 minutes, 24 hours a day, and collection of this data has been contracted out to TRL. Monitoring and reporting to DEFRA will continue until such a time the air quality is satisfactory. Charlie confirmed the following relating to the reports:

- The 2019 Air Quality Report shows the data from 2018 & only one location (test tube near the Duke of Wellington) exceeded the 40 limits by 2 points.
- The 2020 Air Quality Report (due by October) will show the data from 2019. The data will be sent to DEFRA in June for approval.

3. Questions/statements from attendees

Mr Ray Sunley suggested having double-link lights within the village to cut down the pollution levels at the crossroads.

Charlie Fielder & Andrew Chugg confirmed that Intelligent Traffic Lights (detects the number of vehicles waiting at the lights) or NO₂ Traffic Lights (nitrogen dioxide detecting smart lights) are being investigated for the village.

Mrs Bridget Ditcham raised concerns for the future following the expansion of Twyford Station due to the increase in traffic that this would bring to the village. This is something that will need to be addressed.

Mr Ray Sunley queried speed bumps especially outside schools.

Charlie Fielder stated that Crowthorne have changed their speed-humps to speed-cushions and that this has had a profound difference to the air quality. This is something that can be investigated.

Mrs Bridget Ditcham stated that air-quality will be included within the response to WBC on the Local Plan as part of the consultation.

Mr Andrew Chugg confirmed that it should be included. As a Parish, we can promote the code as part of building regulations (Building efficiency).

Things to tie in with the air quality action plan:

- Alternative routes of travel
- Review of cycle paths
- Monitor of traffic lights
- Low emission zones

- Bus review
- Pollution signs

Mrs Bridget Ditcham stated that we currently have one living lamppost, but we should hopefully be receiving more.

Charlie Fielder ask for further information as to locations so she can conduct before and after air quality readings – Mrs Bridget Ditcham to investigate.

4. Questions from Mr Mike Corker (Twyford Resident)

Charlie Fielder wished to thank Mr Corker for his questions and will ensure that he receives a response.

Mr Corker's email correspondence is as shown below:

1. What is so dangerous about the only accurate pollution data obtained from the only true monitoring station equipment cabinet at the Twyford west traffic lights, that no member of the public subjected to the pollution there, is allowed to see it?

2. Why is the diffusion tube data wrongly referred to as monthly and annual averages?

The published monthly averages are not averages, as 100mm tubes with an ab(d)sorbent cannot produce averages or even account for ab(d)sorption fade due to what is already ab(d)sorbed, preventing full, true ab(d)sorption.

The tubes are not even accurately changed by the month.

The highest pollution is produced presumably during the 5-6 working days, but only for two 90-minute maximum rush hour periods. I guess, as WBC refuses to release more accurate data to the public who elected them.

The current diffusion tube information should more correctly be referred to as periodic indications of possible pollutant levels.

3. The action plan is ludicrous. It is copied from a standard generic example. How can councillors read it and keep a straight face?

The only meaningful part is the new request for drivers to switch off engines, when idling. Shamefully even this action took 6 elapsed years of monitoring and complete inaction, before it was initiated.

The idea of trying to persuade bus companies to change their fleet buses is silly, because it would cost millions and have only a negligible effect on pollution as bus use is limited to a maximum of 4/hour compared with hundreds of other vehicles. The example report meant this for city centres only.

There has been no known WBC attempt to measure traffic numbers or main destinations of crossroads driver use at various times.

Despite not knowing destinations, the silly action plan calls for a park and ride scheme (from where, to where?).

The idea of encouraging cycle use would only cause more threat to pedestrians as during busy periods, cyclists use footpaths. This was a major concern of pedestrians in previous police surveys of Twyford concerns.

Twyford's bridges restrict cycle crossroad approaches from the west and south to main road routes. The generic example from which WBC copied the idea of different routes had not considered this snag, or the narrowness of Twyford's roads and footpaths.

At the moment the second major deadly pollutant i.e. PM 2.5 particles is ignored by WBC, awaiting an WBC environmental health assessment. The EU (25) and WHO (10) limits and NHS recommendations are disregarded and not mentioned. It seems crazy that WBC investigations should rank above many more qualified opinions, but that is the current position.

The true reason is that PM 2.5 and PM 10 testing is difficult and expensive. It is though possible and should not be disregarded by anyone serious about air quality. Honesty is better than deliberately misleading drivel.

Overall, there needs to be more openness from local government and a genuine commitment to action in a faster timescale than an apparently ineffectual approach after 6 years or more.

This, of course, assumes that the idea is to actually achieve a reduction in pollution, rather merely looking as though something is being done. The hope of many residents and crossroads users is that my assumption is correct or changing to correct.

As I wrote earlier, I still hope that Cllr Jorgenson will deliver on her promise to meet me in early 2020 to discuss the current position and glacial progress rate, explain exactly how tests are carried out, why serious pollutants are ignored and why it takes over 6 years to do anything and then so little. I would also appreciate someone trying to explain the ludicrous action plan (a challenge for some poor WBC officer and a little light relief for others).

As yet my request and the WBC promise seem to have been forgotten.

I intend to take up the matter with Cllr Jorgenson, if no meeting is mentioned by the end of March, as over four months seems to be sufficient to arrange such a meeting, if indeed one was ever intended.

5. What long- and short-term goals can WBC and Twyford work towards – actions with dates.

Who?	Action
TPC	Local Plan Consultation Response.
Charlie Fielder	To provide speed cushion information and data.
Charlie Fielder	To ensure Mr Corker gets a response to his questions/concerns.
Bridget Ditcham	To liaise with Mr Barfield regarding the locations of further living posts to enable before & after air quality readings.

Bridget Ditcham thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting closed at 12:00pm

For reference, please find below the response from the Environmental Health team (in blue) to Mr Corker's air quality questions:

- 1. What is so dangerous about the only accurate pollution data obtained from the only true monitoring station equipment cabinet at the Twyford west traffic lights, that no member of the public subjected to the pollution there, is allowed to see it?**

The results will be made available to the public once they have been ratified by TRL, this is to ensure that the public see the correct values, we are also looking at calculating the annual mean, as this is what the AQMA was declared on.

- 2. Why is the diffusion tube data wrongly referred to as monthly and annual averages?**

The annual mean/averages, according to DEFRA should represent a calendar year of results.

The tubes are exposed the pollutants during monthly exposure periods. The tubes are changed in line with a national timetable set in place by DEFRA this is to ensure that all Councils are monitoring for the same period each month. We are using the national guidance set by DEFRA.

The published monthly averages are not averages, as 100mm tubes with an ab(d)sorbent cannot produce averages or even account for ab(d)sorption fade due to what is already ab(d)sorbed, preventing full, true ab(d)sorption.

The tubes are not even accurately changed by the month.

The current diffusion tube information should more correctly be referred to as periodic indications of possible pollutant levels.

- 3. The highest pollution is produced presumably during the 5-6 working days, but only for two 90-minute maximum rush hour periods. I guess, as WBC refuses to release more accurate data to the public who elected them.**

The Air Quality Management Area in Twyford Village has been declared on the Annual Mean, therefore when working out the results we are looking at the mean results for the whole year. This is the information which is made available in the report as required by DEFRA.

- 4. The action plan is ludicrous. It is copied from a standard generic example. How can councillors read it and keep a straight face?**

Your comments are noted.

The only meaningful part is the new request for drivers to switch off engines, when idling.

Shamefully even this action took 6 elapsed years of monitoring and complete inaction, before it was initiated.

The idea of trying to persuade bus companies to change their fleet buses is silly, because it would cost millions and have only a negligible effect on pollution as bus use is limited to a maximum of 4/hour compared with hundreds of other vehicles. The example report meant this for city centres only.

There has been no known WBC attempt to measure traffic numbers or main destinations of crossroads driver use at various times.

The highways section I believe may have this information for you?

Despite not knowing destinations, the silly action plan calls for a park and ride scheme (from where, to where?).

The idea of encouraging cycle use would only cause more threat to pedestrians as during busy periods, cyclists use footpaths. This was a major concern of pedestrians in previous police surveys of Twyford concerns.

Twyford's bridges restrict cycle crossroad approaches from the west and south to main road routes. The generic example from which WBC copied the idea of different routes had not considered this snag, or the narrowness of Twyford's roads and footpaths.

All your points have been noted.

- 5. At the moment the second major deadly pollutant i.e. PM 2.5 particles is ignored by WBC, awaiting an WBC environmental health assessment. The EU (25) and WHO (10) limits and NHS recommendations are disregarded and not mentioned. It seems crazy that WBC investigations should rank above many more qualified opinions, but that is the current position.**

Currently monitoring equipment is being looked into, along with pricing, and feasible locations.

The true reason is that PM 2.5 and PM 10 testing is difficult and expensive. It is though possible and should not be disregarded by anyone serious about air quality.

Honesty is better than deliberately misleading drivel.

Overall, there needs to be more openness from local government and a genuine commitment to action in a faster timescale than an apparently ineffectual approach after 6 years or more.

This, of course, assumes that the idea is to actually achieve a reduction in pollution, rather merely looking as though something is being done. The hope of many residents and crossroads users is that my assumption is correct or changing to correct.

- 6. I have been advised the information is difficult to obtain and I believe only deals with NO2. We have CO, NO and other gases to be concerned about. (Cllr Ferris)**

[Benzene, 1,3-butadiene, lead and carbon monoxide \(no requirement to report\)](#)

The objectives for pollutants: benzene, 1,3-butadiene, lead and carbon monoxide have been met for several years and are well below limit values. Government accepts that, in the absence of any particular concerns in a local area, national monitoring is currently providing a sufficient basis for the review of these four pollutants under LAQM. On this basis, local authorities are not expected to report annually on these pollutants in their ASRs. Should a local authority choose to include one or more of these pollutants in their annual report due to local reasons or circumstances, they are free to do so. [Where national monitoring or modelling indicates a significant deterioration in any of these pollutants either nationally or in a particular area, Government will inform affected local authorities of any changes in expectations around reporting. To date we have not been contacted to carry out any monitoring of these pollutants. In 2003 we monitoring them all and the results stated objectives are unlikely to be exceeded and no further action is required.](#)

[Sulphur Dioxide](#)

In 2003 no significant industrial sources of SO2 were identified, therefore the SO2 objectives are unlikely to be exceeded and no further action is required. [As our industry in the borough has not significantly changed since 2003 we will not need to measure this pollutant.](#)