

Motion – To Support the Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill

Submitted by Councillor Francomb

Preamble:

Poor air quality is the greatest environmental risk to public health in the UK. It is known to exacerbate the impact of pre-existing health conditions, such as respiratory and cardio-vascular illnesses, especially for the elderly and infants¹. Each year in the UK, around 40,000 deaths are attributable to outdoor air pollution². According to the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health air pollution has a significant impact on child development, and is linked to widening inequalities³

The main pollutants of concern in Sussex are nitrogen dioxide, particulates, and ground level ozone. The main local source of pollution is traffic. In East Sussex approximately 3,000 life years are lost to particulate pollution each year⁴.

The Clean Air (Human Rights) Bill (known as Ella's law) would establish a human right to clean air and require the government to limit the concentration of air pollutants to World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines (more stringent than most UK limits). Action would be delivered via the UK Health Security Agency setting and reviewing pollutants and their limits: enhancing the powers, duties and functions of national and local authorities and establishing a Citizens' Commission for Clean Air.

Reading of the Bill has been postponed from 24 February 2023 to 15 December 2023.

Motion:

In line with the Council's 4 year goal to achieve cleaner air we call on the Council to

Lend its support to the Clear Air Bill (Human Rights) Bill as follows:

1. To welcome and support the principles of the Bill and ask the Leader of the Council to write to local MPs asking them to support the Clean Air Bill in Parliament and in public;
2. To call on the Government to bring forward publication of an Air Quality Strategy and provide funding to local authorities in line with identified local Air Quality requirements to ensure local air quality plans can be carried on year on year; and
3. To ask the Policy and Performance Committee to consider and review the Council's Air Quality Status Report on an annual basis.

¹ DEFRA Air Pollution in the UK 2019 – published September 2020

² . The Royal College of Physicians report "Every Breath We Take" published in 2016

³ <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/news-events/news/rcpch-launches-action-support-clean-air-human-rights-bill>

⁴ [air-quality-local-briefing-december-2017-final \(1\).pdf](#)