

Notes of Meeting Held on Monday 26 September 2022 in Chideock Village Hall (Committee Room) between the Chideock Parish Council Air Quality Action Group and Dorset Council Environmental Health.

Present:

Dorset Council (DC)

Graham Duggan - Head of Community Protection

Janet Moore - Service Manager Environmental Protection

Ben Frost-Jones - Environmental Health Officer

Chideock Parish Council (CPC) - Air Quality Action Group

Cllr Vanessa McAra - Chair CPC

Cllr Anna Dunn

Cllr George Dunn

1. DC reported that they are hoping for approval of the amended AQAP at Cabinet next week (4th October) it follows liaison with National Highways (NH) and will then be subject to annual updates via the Annual Status Report (ASR).
2. DC stated that it had only been amended slightly since its earlier submission to the Scrutiny Committee in April 2022 and reflected comments from DEFRA
3. DC stated that the only "Chideock specific" item in the AQAP was with reference to the Chideock speed cameras. Although DC said that this gave them a chance to be general in the report e.g. they could incorporate measures possible by working with Planners; the proposal for the "roll-out" of electric vehicle points; road signage; and cycleways etc.
4. DC commented that in some ways the AQAP could have benefitted by being held back still further since new Government legislation should be announced in October 2022 with new levels for Particulate Matter (PM) pollution and methods for setting / measuring and modelling pollution.
5. DC stated that there are reductions in pollution partially through lower traffic figures relative to 2019. For instance 2020 -32% and 2021 -16% although this was largely due to the impact of lockdowns. DC added that they believe there are also some "behavioural changes" to car usage (more people working from home) and also growth in electric vehicles.
6. CPC would like to see the correlation between the new traffic figures and NO2 monitoring results.
7. CPC pointed out that although NO2 has been measured within the AQAP since 2007 there has yet to be proper measurement and monitoring of PM pollution. DC stated that they are awaiting Government guidance on how to measure; what to measure and where to measure this pollution which they are expecting to receive from DEFRA early next year. DC added that Government may be setting a new "Baseline".
8. CPC stated that they have been investigating the possibility of installing "Zephyr" Monitors themselves to measure PM pollution in two locations in the Village. However the cost of installing these is beyond the PC Precept and so financial support would be necessary. DC said that they would not be able to give financial support at present but would re-look at Government sources for such grant assistance, especially AQ Grants for PM Monitoring. DC advised CPC to wait until next year before installing any such monitoring as DEFRA are about to issue new guidelines on how this monitoring should be carried out.

9. DC stated that they have 10 “AQ Mesh Pods” in use, six of which are specifically measuring PM pollution in 3 locations arising from wood/coal burning stoves trying to determine the impact of recent legislation which is attempting to “clean up” the smoke arising from such appliances (use of smokeless coal and kiln dried logs etc.). DC said that when this monitoring has been completed (later in 2023) they may move some of the monitors to Chideock to start measuring the PM pollution in the village.
10. CPC expressed the Village frustration that nothing has actually been done to improve the excessive pollution in the village asserting that it had recorded the worst figures ever in 2018 / 2019. DC partially rejected this assertion saying that NO2 pollution figures were showing some improvement in some parts of the village. DC confirmed that the pollution figures in the 2022 ASR up to December 2021 were final figures and could be used for comparisons.
11. CPC said that the limited measures that had been considered had all been discarded for practical reasons. DC said that there were no straightforward solutions to the pollution problems in Chideock and that “realistic measures (such as a bypass and full conversion to electric vehicles) were out of the Local Authority’s gift” making any resolution really difficult.
12. DC stated that National Highways (NH) were now “Responsible Partners” with DC for AQ Action Plans and that NH must now fully engage with DC in attempting to resolve the air pollution problems.
13. There was discussion about other measures and DC would raise with the relevant stakeholders;
 1. Diverting traffic away from Chideock especially at times of accidents or heavy traffic congestion accepting that to be effective this would have to be implemented from at least Monkey Jump Roundabout for westbound traffic and Hunters Lodge for eastbound traffic and would need full cooperation from National Highways (NH)
 2. Re-introduction of a local weight testing station to capture overloaded HGVs
14. CPC asked DC whether they would provide the pollution figures from the NH 30mph trial on Chideock Hill. DC said they would try and obtain these figures and submit to CPC if possible.
15. CPC stated that the Bristol University study into PM pollution was still being finalised but were hopeful that their report would be available later this year.
16. CPC expressed concern at the continuing Public Health impact on villagers arising from the excessive pollution (NO2 and PM). DC said that they were now re-engaging with the Public Health Dorset to determine any trends in related health issues. It was agreed that we take a partnership approach and that DC will take the lead in bringing public health and NH to the table regarding their dual responsibility regarding pollution and its impact.
17. DC / CPC agreed to schedule a “Follow-up Meeting” for January 2023 by which time actions with an agreed Timeline could have been established. This is based on the Government's new environmental controls re levels of pollution being signed in October - and may have to be reviewed if there is a delay. Additionally, this proposed meeting would be the opportunity to work with DC on creating a two-year timetable alongside a framework of measures against specific agreed targets.