

CABINET – 11 OCTOBER 2018

Written Question from Tanya Rebel of Cowes to Cllr Ian Ward - Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Transport

QUESTION

Recently the Isle of Wight Council stated that they strongly oppose a Southampton Clean Air Zone as it will "harm tourism and business on the Isle of Wight" (Onthewight, 8 September 2018).

Apart from the bizarre situation where the Island Council seems to think it is OK for polluting vehicles coming to the Island to continue endangering Southampton's residents' health, am I right in concluding that the Island Council - despite all the nice words at its Environmental Conference - is still putting Economy before Environment and If not, then can it make sure that the following action is urgently implemented?

1. A comprehensive Island wide, separate, commutable Cycle Network
2. An Island Clean Air Zone, including car free town centres
3. Chemical and pesticide free + less frequent verge and grass cutting enshrined in the PFI contract
4. A change to warm (maximum 2700K) lighting across the Island, also enshrined in the contract
5. Declaration of Frack/Acidation and Drill Free Island
6. Encouragement of local Food Production up to 70% - or beyond
7. Encouragement of Hemp growing for plastic, paper, clothes and food as well as house building material
8. Energy Conservation and insulation in the form of carbon neutral housing stock with compulsory green roofs and/or solar panels

(The above would show that the Council walks its environmental talk and that it starts putting the Economy in an ecological context, where it belongs. It would also finally make David Green's Eco Island Dream come true. We owe it not only to him, but to future generations and non-human beings)

RESPONSE

"It is not the case that the council "strongly opposes a Southampton Clean air Zone". The council has objected to the consultation on a proposed clean air zone. It has done this because the Island had had virtually no say in a proposal that could affect it greatly. No assessment had taken place on the effect of the proposal on the islands economy and its communities.

The council is committed to improving and protecting the environment. There are many examples of this including the recent national news story highlighting that we recycle more plastics than most places in the mainland.

The Environment Conference staged by IWC in the summer demonstrated the council's desire to bring together a wider range of groups, individuals and businesses engaged in the environmental agenda and made a commitment to set out a list of priority proposals put forward by the workshop groups at the conference.

We have a strong cycle network and will look for opportunities to enhance it further.

Air quality on the Island is good; there are no breaches of air quality standards so there is no need for a Clean Air Zone.

We only use pesticides that are safe to use.

We have recently replaced all of our street lights with low energy LEDs.

Any proposal for exploration for oil or gas would have to go through a local planning process as well as other authorisations.

We support the protection and development of the rural economy and will help this wherever we can.

We encourage energy efficient housing wherever that is possible. Carbon neutral housing cannot be made compulsory under current legislation."