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Air Quality Action Plan Team
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Dear Sir/Madam,

I write as part of the public consultation on the Council's draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2020-2025, which I understand closes today.

From the outset, I think it is worth stressing the significant increase in casework I have received in recent years on the issue of air quality, a clear sign of the growing public awareness of the dangers of air pollution and the importance the majority of the Borough's residents attach to addressing it. I therefore welcome this exercise and the Council's eagerness to engage with external stakeholders to identify and implement practical means of improving air quality across Bromley. I also support the Council's recognition that this is a rapidly evolving area of public policy and that mitigating measures between 2020 and 2025 will not be limited to those included in the matrix, with further steps considered as other opportunities arise.

The draft AQAP rightly recognises the particular dangers of PM2.5 and the Council is to be commended on its commitment to be compliant with WHO guidelines in this area. However, I would urge the AQAP to go further, setting a clear timeframe of when the Borough hopes to meet this ambition. As you will know, the WHO guidelines on particulate pollution identify 2030 as a target date, an aim echoed in the London Environmental Strategy. Although this timeframe has not been enshrined in law – something I continue to lobby the Government on – I believe setting a firm target in the AQAP would complement the ambitious national strategy envisaged by the Environment Bill 2019-21.

Of the other measures included in the draft AQAP, I especially welcome further consideration of how some of the excellent initiatives at Valley Primary School could be introduced at other schools within the Borough (Action 14); the commitment to tackle unnecessary idling by vehicles (Action 21) - a particular problem outside schools and public transport hubs, namely Bromley South station; and the continued expansion of Bromley's electric vehicle charging infrastructure (Action 24), which must keep pace with growing demand. I also strongly support the development of new cycle routes and the provision of high-quality cycle hubs (Action 25), something that should be taken forward, with the support of TfL and the Department for Transport, as a priority over the coming years.

I am, of course, happy to work with the Council on any of the measures included in the draft AQAP.

Yours faithfully,

Sir Bob Neill MP

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