

Environmental Audit Committee

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

Health Committee

Transport Committee

Oral evidence: Improving Air Quality, HC 433

Thursday 30 November 2017

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 30 November 2017.

Watch the meeting

Members present:

Environmental Audit Committee: Mary Creagh (Chair); Zac Goldsmith; John McNally; Dr Matthew Offord.

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee: Neil Parish (Chair); Dr Caroline Johnson (also a member of the Health Committee); Sandy Martin; Mrs Sheryll Murray.

Health Committee: Mr Ben Bradshaw; Andrew Selous; Maggie Throup.

Transport Committee: Lilian Greenwood (Chair); Iain Stewart; Graham Stringer.

Questions 130-298

Witnesses

I: Dr Thérèse Coffey MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Jesse Norman MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport; Mr Marcus Jones MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government; and Andrew Jones MP, Exchequer Secretary, HM Treasury.

Written evidence from witnesses:

– [Dr Thérèse Coffey MP](#)

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Dr Thérèse Coffey MP, Jesse Norman MP, Mr Marcus Jones MP and Andrew Jones MP.

Neil Parish took the Chair.

Q130 **Chair:** Good morning, Ministers. It is very good to have you all here this morning at our joint air quality inquiry. Could the panel briefly introduce themselves?

Andrew Jones: Thank you very much, Mr Parish. My name is Andrew Jones. I am the Member of Parliament for Harrogate and Knaresborough and Exchequer Secretary.

Jesse Norman: I'm Jesse Norman. I'm the Member of Parliament for Hereford and South Herefordshire, and I am the Roads Minister.

Dr Coffey: Thérèse Coffey, Environment Minister.

Mr Marcus Jones: Marcus Jones, Minister for Local Government.

Q131 **Chair:** Good morning. I am going to start the questioning. First, I imagine you will tell me how complex this all is, but why has it taken the Government so long to get to grips with air quality? There have been various court cases and there have been lots of problems along the way. It is complex, but why has it taken so long and what are you actually doing about it now? It is a very simple question.

Dr Coffey: The good news is that air quality is actually improving. It is not improving as quickly as we would like, and we fully recognise that we are in breach in one element of the air quality directive, but I don't think you should underestimate the amount of improvements that have happened, even since 2010. Nitrogen oxide elements have fallen by 20%. We recognise completely that we are still in breach of the 2010 directive. That was signed up to by a former Transport Minister at a time when they believed that certain technological innovations and standards would help to deliver quicker improvements to vehicles in supporting our ambitions on air quality, but overall on the different pollutants that we have and we monitor, it is that one breach. We will continue to work on improving air quality.

We specifically have the air quality plan concerning roadside vehicles and NOx. As you are aware, that was rejected by the Court for two particular reasons. That is why we produced a new plan in July and is why we are actively working with councils, as we have been for some time, but we now have a greater urgency that has led us to be working to direct councils to work closer together on that plan.

Q132 **Chair:** Minister, you say that there is greater urgency, but this has been going on for five or six years and before that. The argument is very much that, yes, local government needs to make its own decisions, but if local



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government does not sign up as well as Government, we will not deliver air quality improvements, especially in the hotspots. We want to generally improve air quality, but we have a real problem in our inner cities, where there are definitely premature deaths due to poor air quality. Minister for Local Government, how are you bringing the local authorities along with you? They need help and some support. How are you actually bringing them along with you?

Mr Marcus Jones: It would help if I clarify the role of DCLG in relation to these matters. Ostensibly the implementation and development of policy is dealt with by DEFRA. In that sense, there are other areas of policy that are dealt with by other Departments, such as the Department for Transport and the Department of Health. We are responsible for elements of policy making in relation to building regulations and planning. We are involved in a number of pieces of work that are being done by the various Departments that are here.

Q133 **Chair:** But how are you co-ordinating that? That is what we are interested in as a joint Committee. We are not really interested in what your Department is doing and where it finishes. The question I asked you was: how are you dealing with local authorities to get them to join up with what we and everybody wants, which is cleaner air?

Dr Coffey: We have 28 councils that were named, in addition to London, the five cities that were named in the 2015 plan, and since then 23 further ones that we have identified, which specifically need to take significant action. Those individual authorities each have a dedicated account manager—a civil servant—who has fortnightly conversations, or weekly conversations where necessary, to help them with their plan. I have issued ministerial directions to the 23.

We have already made progress with the five cities and I have already written to those councils recently, because one in particular really concerns me regarding their sense of urgency, and that is Derby. I have indicated to those five cities that, if necessary, I will have to issue further directions to them to accelerate their work. So we are working with the joint air quality unit, which was set up between the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for Transport; it is that kind of work that happens there.

In terms of ministerial oversight, I have regular updates with my team to assess progress in that regard, and we have introduced quarterly ministerial oversight boards of the programme boards. So that is how we are working with local councils to achieve this aim.

Q134 **Chair:** Who oversees? I ask that because at last we are getting Government to work together; Governments of all colours seem to find it very difficult to work on a cross-departmental basis. So who is it that actually oversees the joint working? Is there anybody, or do you just sort of all get together when you fancy a chat? How does it actually work?

Dr Coffey: DEFRA is the responsible body for air quality and strategy, and that is why we co-ordinate across Government. We work closely with our



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colleagues in the Departments that are represented and with the Department of Health. The formal Inter-Ministerial Group on Clean Growth was where this work originally started, as the cross-ministerial group. Since then and since the production of the latest plan, we have been working together to focus our efforts on delivery of this NOx plan.

However, we have this wider issue of our air quality strategy. We will be updating our clean air strategy next year, for consultation, and that will cover more than just the basis of NOx; it will cover other pollutants. Again, we will work across Government in a co-ordinated way to make sure that we pool that strategy together and delivery plans for it.

Q135 Chair: I have a question for the Transport Minister. At one time we told everybody to drive diesels, because we were drilling down on carbon. Now we have decided that we cannot do that; we have got to deal with the diesel. I do not want you to talk directly about diesel, but how will you make sure that we will have virtually all electric cars, because I do not think that it is any good converting people back to petrol? There might be hydrogen—who knows? But are you moving fast enough and do you feel you are getting co-operation across the piece?

Jesse Norman: Thank you, Mr Chairman, and thanks to the Committee; I have been a Committee Chair, so I can recognise the difficulty of pulling together four Committees into one, and I salute you all for doing it. It is a sign of joined-up Parliament, which I like very much.

Chair: What we want is joined-up Government, as well, you see. *[Laughter.]*

Jesse Norman: I thought—

Chair: That was too easy a ball, that one.

Jesse Norman: I think it's the other way round, actually, Chair, since we have a Chair who is running the process, in my colleague from DEFRA, and the rest of us are working very closely with her across the joint air quality unit.

The point is that within the DFT we take an approach that is designed to stimulate and improve the development of new technologies as fast as we possibly can in this different area. We take a technology-neutral approach. We are very supportive of electric; we are also supportive of hydrogen technologies. Of course we recognise that the issues of air quality are a very important part of a wider transition, where we move to what is likely to be a completely different set of technology options over the next few years.

So what will happen? We are already seeing astonishing change in the different modes of transport, as you know, and we are spending a great deal of money to try to improve that. Let me pick some examples. On ultra-low emission vehicles, or ULEVs, we support plug-in car grants and lots of different technology developments for different styles of vehicle, including buses. We are looking at—

Q136 Chair: I am glad you are supporting that, but don't you feel this is all rather too late? Couldn't you have all these points out there, charging and doing it now?

Jesse Norman: It is absolutely not too late. Just look at our charging network, which is one of the largest in Europe. We are actually at the forefront of this process across the EU.

Of course, the key question is where will it end? I think it has been clear that we want to see an end to the sale of new conventional cars by 2040. I think that might happen faster than that, because we are seeing radical changes already in the market in the transition towards electric, and the new model vehicles will address many of the issues about range anxiety and other things like that.

Chair: There will be some detailed questions on that, so I will leave my questions there, now, and hand over to Lilian.

Q137 Lilian Greenwood: I think we are concerned about mixed messages from Government to consumers, and I particularly want to ask a question of the Treasury. Last week we saw that fuel duty was frozen for the eighth year in a row, and we know that that cost an estimated £46 billion in total. Why are you allocating only small funding increases for air quality initiatives but sacrificing many times that amount by failing to deliver on plans to raise fuel duty levels, particularly on polluting diesel? What message does that send to consumers?

Andrew Jones: The message that we have sent to consumers in this Budget is that we are aware of the challenges they face in the cost of living increases that have taken place across the country, and that we seek to help them with that. Fuel is a significant part of household expenditure. It is also a significant part of business expenditure. Are we sending a mixed message? No, I don't think we are, because we have allocated since 2010 £3.5 billion on air quality and clean transport initiatives.

Q138 Lilian Greenwood: As against £46 billion on a fuel duty freeze.

Andrew Jones: Perhaps it is the Labour policy to increase fuel duty. We are very keen that we represent greater value for taxpayers.

Q139 Lilian Greenwood: I am not making a party political point. I am asking you about the Government's policies in relation to mixed messages.

Andrew Jones: I don't think it is a mixed message. We have allocated a significant amount of money to promote air quality and the move to electric vehicles, but we are doing this at the same time as recognising the challenges that households and businesses are facing with inflation, and are working, therefore, to keep the two things together.

Q140 Lilian Greenwood: I accept the point about wanting to protect households from costs, but let me just remind you that over the last 10 years rail and bus fares have risen far faster than prices or wages, while motoring costs have remained stable, or even fallen slightly. Over the



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coming 10 years the Government's own forecasts are for rail fares to rise 6.4% in real terms, and bus and coach fares by 12.3%, while the cost of car use is set to fall by 10.6%. So do you accept, and does the panel accept, that unless they take action the Government's policies will not deliver any financial incentive to encourage modal shift?

Andrew Jones: I don't accept that at all. We are providing financial incentive on modal shift. Look at the £1 billion which has been committed to supporting take-up of ULEVs. I do not accept the premise of the question.

Q141 **Lilian Greenwood:** Modal shift to public transport, or to walking and cycling.

Andrew Jones: Well, let's take that then: we just published, earlier this summer, the UK's first ever cycling and walking strategy. We are looking at the biggest period of rail investment since the Victorian era. So I don't accept the premise of the question.

Jesse Norman: Can I just add to that, people seem to forget that the amount of money that is being spent per capita on cycling and walking has trebled over the last seven years. That is not a small commitment, and I think there is more to be done in future.

Q142 **Lilian Greenwood:** And what about the modal shift to public transport? Why are you protecting motorists from rising costs, but not protecting bus and train users from rising costs? Why does that not matter, particularly when we want to encourage modal shift and encourage people to leave their car at home and use public transport?

Andrew Jones: We are encouraging people to use public transport with the greatest period of investment in public transport in generations, so I don't think that is entirely right. We are seeing people move into greater rail use. The challenge that the rail industry has is to cope with the growth of demand.

Q143 **Lilian Greenwood:** Three times as many people travel by bus as travel by rail and we know that over the last few years thousands of bus routes have been lost. How are you encouraging people to travel on the bus rather than use their car, when we know that their costs are rising and the provision of services is generally, outside London, falling?

Andrew Jones: We have protected the bus service operators grant, which is paid out to bus companies up and down the country, so again I don't accept that question. We are seeing huge growth in public transport use and huge growth in the support going to public transport, in capital terms particularly.

Q144 **Lilian Greenwood:** What is the evidence that there is a huge growth in bus use outside London, or even inside London in recent years?

Andrew Jones: There isn't evidence of bus growth. What we are seeing is fairly flat or gently declining bus use, and that has been taking place for



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several decades across the UK. I have not brought with me all the data on bus usage.

Jesse Norman: It is fair to say that there has been significant investment—the focus of this inquiry is air quality—in trying to retrofit buses and to improve the quality of air affected by bus emissions. Of course, there are much wider factors in why people are shifting modes in different ways. Our job in this regard is to make sure that when they shift mode, they do so in a way that keeps air quality as high as it possibly can be and meets all the targets.

Q145 **Lilian Greenwood:** But what are your specific measures to encourage people to shift mode? I accept that some buses in some parts of the country are now greener, but what other measures are there to encourage people to move out of their cars and on to buses?

Jesse Norman: The truth of the matter is that what we are going to see is a whole bunch of different measures being taken at a local level that will be about the reconfiguration of local transport. I defer to other colleagues who will be more familiar with the specific plans being undertaken in each different part of the country and each different city, but I expect those plans, which we are funding at a very significant rate thanks to the arrangements made by the Chancellor—£450-odd million worth of clean air funding—to include supporting new, cleaner modes of transport, and I expect that to include dedicated buses in many cases.

Q146 **Lilian Greenwood:** Can you tell me what the specific measures are to encourage people to leave their car at home and travel on buses? What are you seeing?

Dr Coffey: Mrs Greenwood, it is not just about encouraging people to use buses. The local sustainable transport fund, which your own city—

Q147 **Lilian Greenwood:** I appreciate that, but what are the specific things on that?

Dr Coffey: I am trying to answer your question. The local sustainable transport fund was established, and Nottingham benefited from, I think, £6.5 million. That was designed to increase the use of public transport. It has resulted in upgrades to rail stations, about 200 better bus services, improved bus stops and information for people and travel planning support. That is estimated to have helped about 400,000 people—that is the population coverage. In addition, there are over 500 miles of new cycle routes.

That is what has happened so far. The £1.2 billion set aside for the cycling and walking strategy over the next five years is another way for people to shift mode of transport. That might not be to buses, which I appreciate you love. Of course, you also have the fantastic tram in Nottingham. Nottingham is one of the places that has seen an increase in bus provision.

Q148 **Lilian Greenwood:** I am very well aware of what is happening in Nottingham; I am interested in what is happening in the rest of the country.



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Dr Coffey: I just want to give you an example—Manchester City Council. Now that they have this devolved element, they are considering using the powers in the Bus Services Act 2017 to franchise services, in the same way that TfL can. They are considering actively as part of their proposals how to reconfigure. In one way, they have too many buses, and too many old buses. That is part of their challenge. They want to be able to plan their transport more effectively to match demand with actual supply. We have powers, thanks to this Government putting them back in control, and we are seeing that coming through.

Q149 **Mr Bradshaw:** Mr Jones, do you know how much air pollution costs the Exchequer?

Andrew Jones: Off the top of my head, I do not know, but I can write to the Committee—

Q150 **Mr Bradshaw:** We heard last week that this is the second biggest public health disaster that this country faces after smoking. It is completely avoidable, and unlike smoking the ordinary citizen cannot avoid it, so the state needs to act, and you as the Treasury Minister do not know how much this public health disaster costs the Exchequer?

Andrew Jones: I will need to check the data and write back to the Committee.

Q151 **Mr Bradshaw:** Do you know whether you have done a cost-benefit analysis of the sorts of measure that my colleague was just talking about, and of the benefits of reducing pollution to public health and to the Exchequer?

Andrew Jones: It is DEFRA, of course, who lead on that issue. The role of the Treasury has been to protect the—

Chair: We also really need a Health Minister here as well, which we haven't got this morning.

Dr Coffey: I was under the impression that the Committee had not invited Health.

Chair: I think we had, didn't we? I am not sure about that.

Q152 **Mr Bradshaw:** Sorry, but you are the Treasury Minister, and you do not know if there is a cost-benefit analysis inside Government on the benefits of taking measures to tackle air pollution on public health?

Dr Coffey: But Mr Bradshaw, you are almost suggesting that we would only want to take action on the basis of cost-benefit. That is not the case. We recognise the public health challenge; that is why we have been working on it. The Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants is revising their figures. We are actually seeing a downward projection in the medical statistics on avoidable deaths. Nevertheless, we are very keen to work on air quality, because we know that poor air quality affects—

Mr Bradshaw: The question was to the Treasury Minister.



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Chair: Exactly. Mr Bradshaw makes a very fair point. Could we very quickly have that information on the cost analysis of the impact of air quality, or lack of it, on health? We will want it to make part of our final recommendations in our report, so please let us not have weeks of delay. Can we make sure we that that quickly?

Q153 **Mrs Murray:** My question is directed initially at Dr Coffey. DEFRA's own cost-benefit analysis for the 2017 plan shows that charging for clean air zones is the best option to reduce nitrous oxides concentrations as quickly as possible. Why does the 2017 plan not mandate, or even prioritise, clean air zones?

Dr Coffey: When the councils have come forward with their plans, they use that as the benchmark. I have been out speaking to council cabinet members and officers, and they are very anxious about the prospect of this because, if I take a city, for example, they want to encourage people to still come into the city centre. They don't want the charging the put off the shoppers into going out of town, and therefore losing out on business.

We recognise that concern, which is why we are working with them, but we are clear that we have to get these plans in place, so that we achieve better air quality as quickly as possible. If it turns out that the charging zone is the only way that they can achieve that, we will work with them on that, but I strongly believe that most councils I know are desperate to try to find other ways to improve the air quality, which is why we are working with them on that, too.

Q154 **Mrs Murray:** Could I ask you specifically about Derby? You said that you had concerns about Derby's pace in adopting their clean air measures, which were mentioned in the 2015 plan. Could you say why you think they are not acting? Is it that DEFRA's plan isn't strong enough?

Dr Coffey: I don't know quite how much I want to reveal of, in effect, private conversations, but I will give a basis for why I have said what I have said. Derby were initially not willing to engage in the process; they were one of the five councils that didn't come to Whitehall for a meeting. That was before my time. I am very keen that we make sure that we work with local government, because I recognise that this is a big challenge for them, so I went with the local MP to see the council leader and officers to talk and be constructive about the way forward.

I'm afraid that the initial plan we have received from them is just not up to scratch, and I am really worried that it is not quite getting the traction it should. I am sure that the council leader would say it is absolutely a priority, but the substance is not quite there. That is why I am worried and why I'll be asking the council leader to come to Whitehall, and if necessary I'll go back up there again.

However, other cities are making good progress. We want to make faster progress with some of the plans that have been outlined so far. I will not name the cities, because I haven't had that direct conversation with them, but Derby know I am worried. I wrote to them again just this week, and I will be following that up.



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Q155 Mrs Murray: Do you think it may be the case that Government are delegating responsibility for potentially unpopular policies? Could you also tell us how you are addressing concerns about the impact of clean air zones on small businesses and local communities?

Dr Coffey: On the day of the Budget, we announced our consultation on the clean air fund, which is specifically targeted at options for where we could deploy the £220 million announced in the Budget on ways to mitigate some of the actions. On whether we are delegating too much to local councils, we are using our civil servants to work with local authorities, but the challenge with all this is that the issues are really different in different parts of the country.

If I think of Southampton, it is essentially one roundabout and a flyover at the end of the M271 and the joining of the A35; I know Hampshire quite well, because I used to live there. It is also the route into the docks. That is why we have engaged—Highways England are also involved—in finding a solution to that. The solution will be quite different from the challenge in Nottingham, where the issue is around the hospital. Again, Highways England needs to be involved, but the challenge is different to what is happening in Birmingham and Leeds. That is why the local plan and the local authority taking the lead—they know their community best, by the way—are absolutely critical to making it work.

Q156 Mrs Murray: Thank you. Following up on the Derby question, I am sorry, but they need to implement the clean air zone by the end of 2019. How likely is that?

Dr Coffey: I genuinely hope that we can work with them to make good progress. They have not put forward a preferred option. That is concerning. Other places have, and that is why we need to step up our action with them. I have signalled that to them.

Q157 Chair: Ministers Coffey and Jones, we had the LGA in last week. I have to say, we were not terribly impressed, to say the least. Who actually encourages local government in a positive way to do more? Like with Derby, if they don't do it, what are you going to do about it? Are you just going to sit back, wring your hands and say, "Well, it's all down to local government. We got it right in Government."? I do think there is a bit of buck passing here. When are you going to get to grips with this? The LGA certainly didn't appear to be going to.

Mr Marcus Jones: We have regular discussions with the LGA as our partners. The LGA provide a number of services to central Government.

Q158 Chair: The issue is not whether they provide services, but whether they provide a strong lead in getting local authorities to do more. Some are doing a good job, but for the ones that aren't, we didn't have any confidence that anybody was leading the local authorities. Perhaps it was just the presentation—I don't know—but it was certainly very, very weak, and I think you as Ministers have to do more about it. I came up through local government, like many did, and I don't want you to dictate to local government, but you also have to drive them forward. Somebody must



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do it, and it didn't appear to be the LGA. What is your view?

Mr Marcus Jones: Mr Parish, I was just coming on to that point. We work very closely with the LGA. When we have concerns about a particular council, we ask the LGA quite often to look into those concerns and assist our Department in making sure that some of the functions of local government are being carried through properly.

Q159 **Chair:** Do you have a file, Minister? You want to file your teeth so that you can bite a bit more. I am sorry, but we are not getting any clear answer here about what you are doing about it.

Dr Coffey: I have issued ministerial directions with my powers.

Mr Marcus Jones: I will bring in Dr Coffey in a moment, but I would say that we have a clear line of communication to improve local authorities through the LGA. That is not just as a general programme, but when we have specific issues. The type of thing we do is send peer mentors in to local authorities when they are not delivering what we expect. That is one of the methods. Ultimately, local authorities are responsible to their local electorates, but they are also responsible to the Government.

Q160 **Chair:** When they are responsible to Government, how do you make sure that they bring in a policy that will enhance air quality and move a lot faster, if it is not their political priority, as it sometimes may not be?

Mr Marcus Jones: I will allow Dr Coffey to answer that part, but I was going to finish by saying that when local authorities do not deliver best value—there have been several examples of that in recent years—the Department has the ability, when necessary, to intervene in a particular local authority.

Dr Coffey: I have issued ministerial directions to the additional 23 councils. I did not feel that it was particularly necessary for the five because they have been on this journey. I have highlighted concerns with a particular one. I have written to every council that had an air quality management area outstanding for more than five years to ask what they were doing about it and how we could help them to address it. That brought back some useful things. Some councils had not updated their AQMA and were taken out of needing to be identified. It brought home some other key lessons. The first five cities that we have dealt with have been unitary authorities, so largely they have control of the roads themselves. Whereas the district councils and boroughs have control and they have got to work the counties.

That has opened up a new avenue for us on how we encourage county councils to be proactive in their thinking on this. It is the other reason why I worked with the Health Minister and Public Health England about issuing new guidance—

Q161 **Chair:** I think, Minister, you would accept this. I agree that where you have got districts and counties there could be problems, but as far as our residents are concerned, they are not interested in what is Government, what is county, what is district and what is unitary. They actually want air



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quality to be better.

Dr Coffey: I agree.

Chair: That is what we need you to work on. I am sure you are, but I think we need more. We'll leave it there.

Q162 **Graham Stringer:** The DEFRA air quality model has been heavily criticised by scientists and statisticians. Why don't you go for direct measurements of pollution, rather than use a model?

Dr Coffey: We have a model system that is basically in essence the guidance from the European Union, in order to comply with that ambient air quality directive.

Q163 **Graham Stringer:** Am I right that if you made direct measurements, the European Union would not accept it? You are a scientist, Dr Coffey. You know that direct measurements are much better than modelling. What you have just said are very diverse areas. Southampton is very different from Manchester, which is very different from Newcastle. Why not measure directly?

Dr Coffey: We have more than 200 DEFRA-funded measuring stations, which is part of what helps us to calibrate our modelling and check it in that regard.

Q164 **Graham Stringer:** There are 450 local authorities; that is not one per local authority.

Dr Coffey: And there are about 700 local authority monitoring stations as well.

Q165 **Graham Stringer:** Am I right in thinking you don't use the data from those local authority monitoring stations?

Dr Coffey: I was about to say that they are not all necessarily calibrated in the same way in order to fulfil the data that is appropriate for putting into our model. Our model is assessed. As I say, it fulfils the requirements of how we are required to report all this different data, and model on that basis. The way that we do that is complex; I would say it is almost a clunky model but it is sophisticated.

Q166 **Graham Stringer:** What does sophisticated mean when you have got 30% error built in to the model?

Dr Coffey: I suggest to you maybe you want to contact appropriate regulators in Europe. Our model is recognised to be one of the most sophisticated. There is a degree of accuracy challenge; there is no doubt about that.

We have this monitoring network that is in place. Through our modelling—and that is where we calibrate—we calculate, to 1 sq km, the impact and what we expect the air quality to be. But that is why we will continue to work with local councils, to reflect what is happening with their local



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monitoring as well. If your suggestion is that we need a bigger monitoring network, that is a slightly different question.

- Q167 **Graham Stringer:** I am asking two questions, really, neither of which has been answered so far. One is, if you make direct measurements, would the European Union accept those? I am sure that, as a scientist, you would accept direct measurement is better.

Dr Coffey: We are trying to make an assessment. I think we model about 9,000 road links around the country. That is the basis of what we model. I am not convinced that, necessarily, having 9,000 separate monitoring stations—because we are talking about a road link of a certain length—could give you that.

It may not necessarily give you the accuracy or the modelling we are expected to do with these 1 sq km blocks. It is getting that balance between how many monitoring stations we have and our sophistication of modelling, to try to get us to that and that is why we calibrate our data to those models.

- Q168 **Graham Stringer:** Can I bring you back to the question? If you did direct modelling, if you recalibrated the local authority monitoring stations and put that data into the model, would the European Union accept that data?

Dr Coffey: I suggest that what would happen if we had more monitoring stations is that we would readjust the model to take account of more data inputs. At the moment, the advice I have is that that wouldn't necessarily make it more accurate.

- Q169 **Graham Stringer:** I find it an extraordinary conclusion—and I guess you do, as a scientist—that putting more data points in it from more areas wouldn't make it more accurate.

Dr Coffey: There are parts of the directive that are, in themselves, quite interesting and challenging, and there are definitely things we can do in the future to make some of this more targeted and focused in our assessment and management of measures to improve air quality. At the moment, we have population blocks of more than 200,000 with a certain population density, and that is what we report, in terms of compliance zones. We have 43 zones around the country. That fits in with our European reporting requirements. Potentially, once we leave the European Union and look at this again, we might be able to do something that is a lot more focused and targeted.

- Q170 **Graham Stringer:** I haven't heard an answer to my question. How have you responded to the judgments of the High Court, which was very critical of the modelling that you are using?

Dr Coffey: We have a legal case ongoing at the moment. We have responded to Justice Garnham's two key points. We addressed them in our production of the 2017 air quality plan.

- Q171 **Graham Stringer:** Can you tell the Committee how?



Dr Coffey: Yes. We took the point that we shouldn't have just picked certain years when we set points. We evaluated different timelines to see what could be the quickest for compliance. The second issue he raised was about the factors. We had always said that we would update the COPERT factors when we worked up the model on the best available data. We have had the new COPERT factors, and that was the basis of the new plan.

Q172 **Graham Stringer:** Just finally, can you be satisfied, even with those adjustments, with a model that predicts that there is a pollution problem, according to the European regulatory environment, in either one or 37 local authorities? What is the use of that?

Dr Coffey: Sorry—can you say the second half of the question again?

Q173 **Graham Stringer:** As I understand the modelling, it predicts, at the different areas of uncertainty, that there is a pollution problem in either one area—one local authority—or in 37. I am asking you, what is the use of a model that gives you such a range of areas where there are problems?

Dr Coffey: I am still not sure entirely what you are getting at, so I will give the answer that I think will explain it.

Q174 **Graham Stringer:** I am sorry. I don't want there to be any misunderstanding. I am trying to be as clear as I can. The model, as I understand it, says that it is either one area—to take one extreme of the model—or 37 areas where there will be a pollution problem. I am just asking the simple question, what is the use of a model that gives you that range of problems?

Dr Coffey: I think it is one of the most sophisticated models in operation across the European Union.

Graham Stringer: However sophisticated, if that is the range—

Dr Coffey: I think it gives clear direction on where we need to target our efforts. We know that there are certain places where we can identify—I think this is a fair assessment—that there are particular hotspots within one local district council. We need to be conscious as we move forward, even on these huge zones—I think you will find that in the zone for Swansea, it is one particular stretch of road. It is clear that that is where the problem is, and yet the entire zone is deemed non-compliant. That is why, in the future, we might want to consider how we do better reporting and better monitoring to make sure our actions are even more targeted than they are today.

Q175 **Sandy Martin:** Can I drill down on that one before moving on? There are direct measurements being done by local authorities that don't fit your model because the problem areas are too small. There are lot of towns where direct monitoring is being done, and where there are serious air quality issues in small areas, such as a single street, but which do not meet your model at all. That work is already being done. That data is already being collected. The evidence is already there, and yet you are ignoring it because it does not fit your model.



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Dr Coffey: I am not ignoring it, but in terms of the roadside NO_x air quality plan, we have a particular set of law. That is what we are addressing. Meanwhile, we continue to work with our councils right around the country. I have three air quality management areas in my constituency. One is by the port, and that has been fixed. There are two more. One of them needs a change of speed limit by about 100 yards; that would fix it. The other one is rather more difficult to fix. I am sure you will know precisely where your air quality management problems are in Ipswich, and I am sure you will be working with Suffolk County Council to work out how you can make those better.

It is not a case of ignoring the data. The way we have to collect data that feeds into the model, which is our legal requirement in terms of the modelling and our assessment of that, is that sometimes they have to be in a certain position, near the roadside. Sometimes councils understandably choose to put some of their monitoring near a school or hospital, because that is what they see as the local issue of where air quality is a real problem. We have slightly different technical elements in order to feed into this, but none of this is stopping—in fact, councils already have powers to take action to improve air quality. Indeed, they already have statutory duties to do so. We are working with councils to try to help them wherever possible.

Chair: Minister, these are very good answers, but please make them a little bit shorter. Sandy, can you get on to your question? I am conscious of time.

Q176 **Sandy Martin:** Indeed. The 2017 plan says that there is £3 billion of potential spend on air quality measures between 2010 and 2020. How much of that has been spent, given that we are now seven years into that? How much of it is specifically ring-fenced for targeted air quality initiatives?

Dr Coffey: Do you want to take that, Jesse?

Jesse Norman: I am not sure whether it is a Transport question. Could you repeat that?

Q177 **Sandy Martin:** The 2017 plan that we have seen says there is £3 billion set aside for spending on air quality measures, as part of the plan in operation between 2010 and 2020. Given that we are seven years into that, I would expect a significant proportion of that £3 billion to have been spent already. Can you tell us what it has been spent on?

Chair: Our brief says DEFRA, DFT and HMT, so you are all in the dock. Come on—answer.

Jesse Norman: Nothing could please me more, Mr Parish. With regard to Transport, let us go through this, as you would like. There is £600 million still to be spent in 2015 to 2020 on the ultra-low emission vehicle side, including funding for the plug-in car and plug-in van grant schemes. As you know, it was announced last year that £1,200 million of funding has been allocated through local authorities and other agencies to support



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cycling and walking. There were then the autumn Budget 2017 announcements, on which my colleague can comment, including a further top-up for the plug-in car grant and charging infrastructure fund. A substantial amount of money is being spent in this period, and of course the money that has been spent in the past is part of the reason why nitrous dioxide emissions have fallen 20% between 2010 and 2015.

Q178 Sandy Martin: Thank you. My question was, actually, about how much money has been spent, not how much money is being spent. The Government are very good at announcing money to be spent in the future, but, for instance, £400 million was committed to ultra-low emission vehicles between 2010 and 2015. You are talking about spending £600 million up to 2020, but presumably if you are going to spend the total committed, which was £3 billion between 2010 and 2020, a substantial proportion of that must have been spent already. How much of it has actually been spent already?

Jesse Norman: I am happy to write to the Committee with the details of what may have been specifically committed.

Sandy Martin: Roughly, off the top of your head?

Jesse Norman: It will have been committed—it is a phased programme of investment.

Q179 Chair: Minister, you have come to this air quality inquiry, and we are asking you how much money has been spent on electric vehicles and the Government's promotion of them. I'm sorry; I think you should have figures like that with you. This business of, "We'll come back to you with some figures," is getting a bit repetitive. Surely you were briefed before you came here?

Dr Coffey: For example, there have been 120,000 claims for the Government's plug-in car grant. Money has gone out of the door directly on that. On the green bus fund, about £90 million has gone out of the door and is tackling improving hundreds of buses. In fact, I think 3,000 buses have been upgraded. London had a substantial settlement of £5.7 billion back in 2015, which was supposed to cover air quality. I am not going to pretend that we have yet necessarily got that level of detail from TfL on elements like that, but I think it is a fair challenge. We recognise that spending is going on right across different Departments and that we can do more to ensure that we have one dashboard that tries to establish that.

Chair: Mary wants to come in quickly, and then I am conscious that this is Sandy's question.

Q180 Mary Creagh: We had a very helpful report done for the Committee by the National Audit Office, which was published on 16 November. I am astonished that your parliamentary clerks have not drawn it to your attention. To answer the public health costs question that the Minister was unable to answer earlier, it says the public health costs are between £16 billion and £20 billion each year. That is for you to be aware of,



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Minister. On the green bus fund, which Minister Coffey has just talked about, the budget commitment in 2010 to 2015 was £90 million, as you correctly say, but the budget commitment for 2015 to 2020 is zero. Why is that?

Jesse Norman: That has been taken over by other funding for buses, which includes the clean bus technology fund.

Q181 **Mary Creagh:** That has gone down as well, from £20 million to £7 million. You have taken a budget that was £110 million and reduced it to £7 million.

Jesse Norman: No, actually the clean bus technology fund is £27 million. I think I am right in saying that.

Q182 **Mary Creagh:** That is in total over 10 years, between 2010 and 2020. It has gone down. You spent £110 million on this in the last five years, and in the next five years you are spending £7 million—or has the NAO got it wrong?

Jesse Norman: Or possibly we wanted to retrofit buses that have already been retrofitted. The whole point is—

Q183 **Mary Creagh:** We have plenty of buses that need retrofitting in Wakefield.

Jesse Norman: There is a fleet of buses that have been retrofitted, and work is continuing in that area. The original question—

Q184 **Mary Creagh:** The funding has gone down from £20 million for retrofitting to £7 million. The funding for the green bus fund has gone from £90 million to zero, because it does not exist.

Jesse Norman: No, I think I am right in saying that the autumn Budget 2016 announced a further £100 million to support clean buses. If it is not in the NAO report, I am not quite sure why not.

Mary Creagh: Okay, we will take that up with them.

Q185 **Chair:** You are saying that the £100 million is now in for the coming years?

Jesse Norman: From the autumn statement, yes. It is very easy to take pot shots at Ministers, but the truth of the matter is that we are talking about an in-period spend. Those are with Budget announcements that have been made, one of which was made only two or three weeks ago.

Chair: But you can understand how frustrated we get. We are trying to improve air quality. I know Government takes time and figures take time, but it is action we want, and we are not convinced about this.

Q186 **Sandy Martin:** I will just finish off. In the studies that have looked at the various different ways of improving air quality, one of the most straightforward and cost-effective ways of reducing transport pollution in air quality areas is to have cleaner buses and taxis. That is the one area where, if enough money were put forward, we could be fairly sure that all



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the air quality management concerns in the areas we want to see improved could be dealt with to a large extent by improving the buses and taxis.

The amount of money you are putting forward to do that, quite honestly, pales into insignificance in comparison with the amount of money that you have foregone in the freeze on the fuel duty uplift. We are talking about billions—£46 billion—in one case, and a couple of hundred million here or there in the other case. There are a very large number of highly polluting buses and taxis in almost all the air quality areas that you are concerned about. You are saying, “What can we do with the local authorities?” Local authorities cannot put forward hundreds of millions of pounds to have the buses and taxis upgraded. Why are you not ensuring that all our buses and taxis in this country are upgraded so that they are all ultra-low emission?

Jesse Norman: First, to respond to the points you make, a substantial amount of money has been spent on retrofitting buses, as we have talked about, and more has been committed. The second point is that the money that has been committed to local authorities as part of a transition to clean air through the clean air fund and the implementation fund may indeed be used through collective purchasing to allow further retrofitting of buses if that is required as part of the strategy. There is hundreds of millions of pounds potentially available, part of which can be used for exactly the purposes that the gentleman describes. It is also worth saying that another £50 million was allocated to support the transition to electric taxis in the autumn Budget 2016. Again, these are not trivial amounts of money—of course, it may never be enough—but we are dealing with a very large, wide-scale problem and this is taxpayers’ money, which we are seeking to spend judiciously to address the issue.

Sandy Martin: All I can say is—

Chair: One last question please, Sandy.

Q187 **Sandy Martin:** There seems to be a difficulty in the difference between “million” and “billion”. There is a thousand million in a billion, and there are a lot of billions that are not being spent.

Dr Coffey: I think £3.5 billion is a substantial amount.

Chair: Yes, it is 3,000 million. Just make sure it is spent—that is what we are saying.

Q188 **Dr Offord:** I will try to keep to the figures so that it is a bit more understandable to most people. Sticking with the departmental plan, DEFRA’s own plan indicates that establishing clean air zones will cost approximately £600 million. How does that figure relate to the implementation fund of £255 million?

Dr Coffey: The implementation fund is our calculation of what we believe it will take to establish these additional measures in the councils that we have identified that need to move as quickly as possible.

Q189 **Dr Offord:** So will central Government pick up the tab for the implementation of all clean air zones?

Dr Coffey: Where we have identified that it needs substantial change, and they are the councils that we have named, yes. We are working with them. They already have funds to start their initial planning, which is due to the Department by the end of March 2018, with the final plan by the end of December 2018. We are proactively working with them and we have finances ready.

Q190 **Dr Offord:** It is interesting that you say that you have finances available, because the National Audit Office report states, "If extra funding is required to comply with legal requirements, HM Treasury expects Defra and DfT to find this through reprioritising existing budgets in the first instance, before approaching HM Treasury jointly." Mr Jones, is that correct?

Andrew Jones: The Treasury has always been clear that we will provide sufficient funding to meet our legal obligations on air quality. We are therefore meeting the new burden costs for local authorities to deliver air quality measures. The modelling has suggested that we require £255 million for that implementation. That has been allocated from the Treasury and we raised the revenue to deliver it in the Budget last week.

Q191 **Dr Offord:** So the NAO has got it wrong?

Andrew Jones: Well, the Treasury has always been clear that we will provide the sufficient funding.

Q192 **Chair:** But you also say, "To meet your legal requirements." What we want to see is air quality improve beyond the legal requirements. Are the Government not just being dragged screaming all the time into getting air quality right? You say "legal", but surely it is not about our legal responsibilities. It is about air quality, isn't it?

Dr Coffey: That is right, and air quality is improving, but targets were set and that is what we are trying to reach. Then for the 2030 targets, the Government have already signed up to, and will be putting into law next year, those targets, so we are setting ourselves a forward trajectory—

Q193 **Chair:** Thérèse, I was not directing the question at you; I was directing it at Mr Jones, because he said it was to meet our legal requirements. I think it has gone beyond legal requirements, and I think most Ministers would accept that, so are the Treasury accepting that or are they just being as parsimonious as usual?

Andrew Jones: Well, with the £1.5 trillion of national debt, I am not entirely sure we should say the Treasury is parsimonious. What we have here is a £255 million implementation fund, which deals with the legal side of it—

Q194 **Chair:** No, answer the question. Are you just meeting your legal requirements or are you going further?



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Andrew Jones: I have said already, we are going much further than that. That is why there is a £3.5 billion commitment on air quality and cleaner transport. That is why the Budget also had a £220 million clean air fund. We are not talking the same thing. The £255 million gets us to a particular point of legal compliance, but we want to go much further than that and that is why there is a whole £3.5 billion of spending.

Chair: Thank you Minister; it took a bit of dragging out of you. Okay, carry on.

Q195 **Dr Offord:** Okay, I think that is fairly clear. Last week, we had the pleasure of the Mayor of London coming before us. As Dr Coffey will certainly know, London has 40% of the most polluted roads in the country, including the ones that run through my constituency. The Mayor told us that he cannot access the clean air fund, nor the implementation fund. Why is that?

Andrew Jones: Because there has already been a separate air quality and transport funding settlement for the Mayor, so he has funds but they are from a different mechanism.

Q196 **Dr Offord:** Does that relate, as Minister Coffey said, to the £5.7 billion that was given to London?

Andrew Jones: Yes.

Dr Coffey: And TfL has received an extra £86 million for low-carbon buses, hydrogen buses, low-emission buses, ULEV taxis, plug-in taxi grants, the Go Ultra Low cities scheme and air quality grants. We are even seeing places such as Ealing Council receiving £87,000 for an emissions management plan and Islington receiving £30,000 for electric charge points on the Regents canal. They are accessing and have accessed money, but the implementation fund and the clean air fund are specifically to support the 28 councils that have been identified as having to establish these plans.

Q197 **Dr Offord:** So London has been given additional funds because it has a greater problem.

Dr Coffey: Well, it has been able to access funding from those other schemes that I have mentioned, but the substantial amount, as Minister Jones has pointed out, was that settlement, which specifically had air quality and low-emission zones as part of the deal.

Andrew Jones: And the other parts of the country do not have the same substantial funding settlement. That is why they have the implementation fund and the clean air fund.

Q198 **Chair:** So if councils need more money than the DEFRA model predicts in order to get the air quality right, is HMT going to meet that requirement? A straight answer, yes or no, will do, Minister.

Dr Offord: I understood that he said yes.



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Andrew Jones: We are meeting them, but it is a question of what exactly you mean by that. You just said, I think, giving local authorities a blank cheque. What we are looking to do here—

Chair: Not a blank cheque, but recognising—we have talked this morning about whether the modelling is right and whether you are picking up where all the air pollution is across the country. It is no good then saying to councils, “You’ve got it wrong so we won’t give you any money.” We have to accept that sometimes they will get it right, and that you will give them the money.

Andrew Jones: We have always said that we will be providing sufficient funding to meet all our legal obligations. If more things are required—

Chair: That will be down on the record, Minister.

Andrew Jones: We have said it before, Mr Parish, and are happy to say it again.

Q199 **John Mc Nally:** Can I just ask you if there are any Barnett consequentials being generated for the devolved Administrations from this project?

Andrew Jones: Yes. The implementation fund and the clean air fund both have Barnett consequentials.

Chair: Do you mind if we move on to Caroline, now? We are getting short on time.

Q200 **Dr Johnson:** We have talked about the modelling and the margin of error within it. Can I just clarify a point from earlier on? NKDC, which is one of my local authorities, measures the air quality at 12 sites, of which 11 are compliant and one is sometimes not. The council is working to improve that particular road junction in order to, among other things, improve traffic flow, but also to improve the air quality. Is this the sort of measure that councils that are struggling for funds would be able to apply to this implementation fund to access? Is this the sort of project they would be able to use the money for?

Dr Coffey: The implementation fund is targeted at the 28 councils that have been identified in the plan. We have other air quality grants, for which we have had funding, although more modest in total, but councils have been able to apply for grants to support them in that work. I know councils are actively monitoring air already and there are different technologies they can use to focus their efforts.

Q201 **Dr Johnson:** The other issue is that the modelling does not include certain towns. York has been given to us as an example of a city that is not in one of your zones, but does have poor air quality in places. Will you be using the data that local authorities have monitored and provided to perhaps increase the number of areas that you target?

Dr Coffey: The PCM model takes into account a variety of things. It does use a certain number of DEFRA sites and verification sites used by local authorities to generate their assessment of air quality in the 1 sq km box



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to which I referred earlier. The monitoring stations are sited in accordance with the criteria set out in the EU directive, to ensure that the results are representative and comparable across not only the country but member states.

To reinforce this, I just want to flag that DEFRA's chief scientific adviser convened an air quality review group. We all recognise that the interdependency has rather complex atmospheric chemistry at its base, and that is why we have an air quality expert group to advise us on this. They identified this and have effectively done the assurance on it.

Q202 Dr Johnson: Okay, but does leaving the EU give us the opportunity to be more specific in how we target and to use some of the data that local authorities are collecting?

Dr Coffey: As it stands today, when we bring the targets that we will adopt for 2030 into law, we will need to think carefully about any changes that we make in measuring ourselves against that. I do think there are opportunities to reconsider in the future how we get more targeted, focused monitoring and measuring in order to really tackle this issue, but I can't confidently give you an answer today that all of a sudden we are going to change stuff the day we leave the EU. We need to think that through carefully, on the basis of the targets that we have agreed to and will implement in due course.

Q203 Dr Johnson: It does seem a little incongruous that we have all this monitoring going on, but it is not necessarily being collated and used together.

Dr Coffey: Do recognise that these are all collated. They are put on the DEFRA UK-AIR website. They are there. Councils are under a duty anyway to be proactively managing air quality. That is why they have the monitoring.

Q204 Chair: Are the figures from the councils published as well, or not?

Dr Coffey: I'm pretty sure that is on the air quality website. I am just going to quickly turn round and check. Am I right in saying that? Are the local ones on there too? *[Interruption.]* An answer will come through in a moment, but I'm pretty sure they are.

Chair: You have a lot of help, but they're not giving many answers, are they? Anyway, carry on.

Dr Coffey: I'm sure they want to be precise, Chairman.

Q205 Dr Johnson: We were told earlier that measures so far had led to a 20% reduction in nitrogen oxide since 2010. What assessment have you made of which of the measures that you have used so far are the ones that have delivered this reduction?

Dr Coffey: I'll be candid: I don't know whether we have done specific analysis, but our general themes are these. This is about improving the cleanliness of technology. We know that Euro 6 diesel standards have



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helped particularly on HGVs. Euro 5 and Euro 6 have not had the same impact on cars, but there is all the work that Minister Norman laid out. Three thousand buses have basically been converted, and that has reduced nitrogen oxides by about 75%, by using retrofitting technology. We have provided 1,200 low-emission buses through various funding mechanisms. So we have proactively used technology that is available to retrofit, but also the technology that exists today, and we are investing in the technology of the future. I think it has largely been technological innovation, but there is also the benefit brought by councils. There are different things that they do. They can look at their traffic light monitoring. We are seeing that with Leicester. *[Interruption.]* I can see the Chairman wants me to repeat my answer. There are different things working. That is why we work with councils; we can share best practice.

Q206 Dr Johnson: Thank you. This question is specifically for Andrew Jones. Obviously it is important, when you are spending money from the Treasury, that you see that you are getting good value for money. Have you made any assessments of which areas of spend have led to the best improvement in air quality for the money spent?

Andrew Jones: We work with colleagues in different Departments. What happens is that officials from the Treasury work with officials from other Departments across all the areas of Government expenditure, and monitor the success that is being achieved. I really have very little to add to what Minister Coffey has just said, because it is actually a joint analysis.

Q207 Dr Johnson: It is an awful lot of money that we are going to spend on air quality—£3 billion. Who is working out whether that is good value? When this period and the £3 billion are over, we may be looking to spend more money on improving air quality further. Who is looking to see where we are getting good value and where money might be being wasted on something that sounds good but does not actually deliver any quantifiable improvement in air quality?

Andrew Jones: That, again, would be joint work between the Treasury and the Departments involved in spending the money.

Q208 Chair: Are we confident that the joint work is happening and people are actually looking at all this?

Andrew Jones: Yes.

Q209 Chair: We are not seeing much confidence here this morning from the Treasury, dare I say it.

Andrew Jones: I don't think that is reasonable.

Chair: You don't?

Andrew Jones: We have a joint air quality unit, as was described earlier in the session, and the Treasury is a key part of that. If the Treasury were in any way reluctant, we would not have had the £564 million—if you include the Barnett consequential—of new funding raised at the Budget. This is an important part of Government policy, and we are playing our



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part in making sure not just that there are funds, but that they are used wisely.

Q210 Andrew Selous: DEFRA's own modelling shows that 73 local authorities are breaching legal air quality limits, yet only 28 authorities plus London are being required to take extra measures. What is the reason for that, and what do you expect the other 45 local authorities to do?

Dr Coffey: I think the slight difference is that we are not requiring the other 45 to do these complex feasibility studies because we recognise that these plans take some time, and the measures in them will take some time to come into effect. We predict the compliance of the majority of those councils. They will not be in breach by the timeline of 2021, which from today's date, or from this summer, would be the earliest point by which we could get comprehensive schemes in place. We will continue to work with those councils to help them to tackle their hotspots, but the big issues are those other 23, plus the original five, where without significant changes we would not get compliance as quickly as possible.

Q211 Andrew Selous: I understand that. I have the list of all 45 here; some Members here have some offenders on it. We have some authorities that have levels of 49 to 50 micrograms per cubic metre at the moment, and that will have illegal levels up to 2020. That is a serious issue, given that we know the health damage. From a local government perspective, Mr Jones, how seriously is DCLG taking this, and what is the cross-Government plan for those other 45 local authorities where, as I say, there will be illegal levels all the way up to 2020?

Mr Marcus Jones: As I set out at the outset, DCLG is a Department that facilitates local government rather than directing local government in relation to this area of policy. That function is carried out by DEFRA, as the responsible Department for that particular area of policy. What we actually do, having just had quite a wide-ranging discussion about finances, is use our areas of expertise. For example, we assess new burdens, and the new burdens doctrine, on behalf of all Government Departments that have responsibilities for their policy through local government. We are working with the joint air quality unit to establish those new burdens in relation to—

Q212 Chair: Minister, I am sorry to interrupt you. DEFRA has the policy in Government, but it is you that deals with DCLG. Somehow there does not seem to be any transfer of what DEFRA wants to do to get the air quality right through to you, through to the local authorities. I am trying to drill down—

Mr Marcus Jones: With respect, Mr Chairman, I think it is quite important for me to make this point, which applies not just for DEFRA around air quality. If you look at, say, education, a significant amount of which is still provided through local authorities, the responsible Department is the Department for Education. It deals with the enforcement of the various regulations and the implementation of policy through its bodies.



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Just to clarify, DCLG does not have a role in enforcing specific areas of policy. We are there to do a number of functions, including making sure that there is sustainability of local government finance—

Chair: But you are—

Mr Marcus Jones: Our policy areas relate to things such as planning and building regulations, and we work with colleagues to deliver their objectives.

Q213 **Andrew Selous:** The joint air quality unit currently has no local government representatives on it, as far as I understand it. From DCLG's point of view, do you not think there should be local authority representatives? Given that we are asking them to do this—we are saying it is a partnership between central Government and local government—why are there not local government representatives on the joint air quality unit? Do you think that would be a good idea?

Mr Marcus Jones: As I say, we as a Department support the joint air quality unit. I gave a prime example earlier in terms of—

Q214 **Andrew Selous:** Could you answer the specific question? As far as I am aware, there are no local authority leaders on the joint air quality unit.

Dr Coffey: The joint air quality unit is civil servants between DFT and DEFRA, and then there are direct relationships—

Q215 **Andrew Selous:** Right, but it would be quite reasonable to think that you might have some local authority representation on that unit, given that you are looking for a partnership between central Government and local government.

Dr Coffey: The unit works with the different local authorities to achieve that. In terms of the programme boards that the civil servants have and that we are overseeing, they do not have the LGA on them, but they do have two separate organisations. One is called Local Partnerships—that is a unit that was established, and that also is an external party that works with councils—and the other is Centre for Cities. There was careful consideration about external parties and whether it should be the people the Government is working with who sit on this. They are, in effect, clients of the JAQU, and we work with them, but we have brought in this external consideration for us to think about how we work better.

Andrew Selous: I think there is quite a widespread feeling among quite a lot of local government leaders that this is a central Government problem, and they feel it has been foisted on them. The general point is that if you could have more involvement with local government that would be helpful.

Chair: Yes, could you take that back and look at it?

Q216 **Andrew Selous:** A final question from me. What is your view on the monitoring of air quality around schools? We know that a child's lung health, if damaged in childhood, often never recovers. We also know that air quality is worse in some of our most socially disadvantaged areas. Do



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you think there is a case for air quality monitoring around school playgrounds?

Dr Coffey: Several councils do place monitors near schools or hospitals, and it is in their gift to do more if that is what they think is best in their area.

Q217 Mr Bradshaw: As you have already heard from the Chair, we had the worst evidence I had ever heard in my 21 years as an MP from the LGA last week. They couldn't answer the most simple of questions. I wonder whether you can help us with a couple that they couldn't answer. First, Dr Coffey, are you confident that those 23 authorities that must produce their plans by March will do so?

Dr Coffey: The initial track is that we believe all but one are in a place to do so. We are pushing back on that one council that is saying it is going to struggle. There are active conversations with that one council.

Q218 Mr Bradshaw: Mr Norman, do you know whether and how the money allocated to the walking and cycling strategy is actually being spent?

Jesse Norman: Yes, we keep tabs on it. The strategy itself was only announced in April of this year, as you know, so we are in the early stages. Much of it related to money that was allocated through other channels to local government and therefore is accountably being managed through them. The same would be true for money through things like Sustrans. There are other funding streams, such as Bikeability, where we have direct insight into spending. I was on one of the Bikeability visits only the other day looking at how they work. We have very good assurance that the money is and will properly be spent over time.

From our point of view, that is really pulling together a strand of Government streams. What is really going to be interesting is to see whether we can take that consolidated view and do more with it in particular areas. That is why I'm hopeful that some of the new money that has been announced for the transforming cities fund will be used to support the cycling and walking strategy over and above that in those key cities. That is not just for ones that are already allocated; the remaining money is unallocated and to be bid for, and I am hopeful that we will have a chunk of that for cycling and walking as well.

Q219 Mr Bradshaw: I think that the Committee would find it quite helpful if you could write to us with details of how and where this money is being spent, because there is some scepticism among cycling and walking groups that it is actually being spent.

Jesse Norman: We are literally still in the first year it relates to, so we've barely begun the process of actually monitoring the spending of that money, but we would be delighted to send you all the evidence you could possibly want. It's all in the public domain already, but we would be happy to send it to you.

Chair: And quickly, please, because we will need that evidence as we put our final recommendations together. I will hand over to Mary now; I was



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being very nice, so now you have Mary.

Dr Coffey: If I could quickly answer the question from earlier, data is published by local authorities for their monitoring stations. It is not currently available on gov.uk—it is the DEFRA ones that are—but we want all the data on that one website, and we will work with local government to achieve that.

Mary Creagh took the Chair.

Q220 **Chair:** We would like to look now at some of the detailed plans around electric vehicles; these questions are mostly to the DFT and HMT Ministers. The Government have announced plans to ban new petrol and diesel cars by 2040, and the Office for Low Emission Vehicles says it wants 100% electric vehicles by 2050.

When the Environmental Audit Committee looked at this, we had no confidence that the Government would meet their interim target of 60% ultra-low emission vehicles by 2030. The reason for that is it was at 1.5% last year when we looked at it, and it was set to miss its 2020 target. What actions are you undertaking to put some steam behind your words?

Jesse Norman: Two things. First, I have already said that the Government are already expecting an end to the sale of conventional vehicles in 2040, as you have said. I don't think anyone can predict—I think it is important for all parties to recognise a fundamental degree of uncertainty—how fast take-up will be of ultra-low emission vehicles, and electric vehicles in particular.

Secondly, what typically happens, as the Committee will know, is that there is a period of early adoption and technological change, in which concerns that have been identified are successively or collectively tackled. For ultra-low emission vehicles, that includes range anxiety, the existence of a second-hand market in which to sell a vehicle, the availability of charging points and the like.

Chair: But that early adoption period—

Jesse Norman: Excuse me for a second, Ms Creagh; may I continue? Once those are in place—this history of recent technology shows this—there is then an S-shaped change to patterns of usage. I personally think that that will happen in the latter part of the 2020s. That would give a high degree of potential assurance that the target can actually be met. The point is that there is no reason to be concerned about it.

We continue to address all the areas that are a matter of concern. We support the development of the technologies. We are looking forward to the next generation of electric vehicles, which will have longer ranges—notably the new Nissan Leaf, or most famously so. We look forward to changes in charging infrastructure. We are already rolling out significant



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increases, and we are looking at on-street charging as well as the 60% of homes that have off-street charging.

On the idea that we can't meet a target by 2030, given the amount of uncertainty, the number of different variables in place and the history of rapid take-up, I think no one can say for certain. Our assumptions are perfectly reasonable.

Q221 Mary Creagh: You will be aware that the Committee on Climate Change says we need to be at 9% ultra-low emission vehicles by 2020 to meet the lowest-cost path to decarbonise our economy. We are wildly off that target, aren't we? This early adoption period has lasted for about 10 years in this country. Compared with Norway and the Netherlands, which have rolled out electric vehicle charging points and have really driven this market, we have just sat on our hands, haven't we?

Jesse Norman: No, we really haven't at all; we have one of the largest networks in Europe. There are some countries that have gone further, and that is for reasons in some cases specific to them. We don't see any reason why we shouldn't hit the 2020 targets—well, we will be on track to hit the 2030 targets and—

Q222 Chair: But not the 2020—the 9%.

Jesse Norman: Well, I am not sure the 2020 target is a Government target.

Q223 Chair: It is the Committee on Climate Change's independent advice to Government about what they say is the most cost-effective path to decarbonise.

Jesse Norman: Well, we will see, but I don't think there is reason for concern.

Q224 Chair: Your officials told us, effectively, that they weren't going to meet it. They didn't quite put it like that, but they said the range has gone down now to between 3% and 7%, with a mid-point of 5% by 2020. What is the current percentage of the car fleet that is ultra-low emissions?

Jesse Norman: It's less than 1%.

Q225 Chair: Right. So to double that by 2020 and to get to 2% or 3% would be an achievement, you would think?

Jesse Norman: I'm not sure. I think it is not impossible that you could get to a very substantial proportion of new cars being bought in the next four or five years that would be electrical or ultra-low emission vehicles.

Q226 Chair: What do you think would be a substantial proportion, percentage-wise?

Jesse Norman: Enough to meet the outline numbers we have already given; that is to say, the 3% to 7%.

Q227 Chair: Okay, so which bit of the 3% to 7%? The 3% or the 7%?

Jesse Norman: There is a lot of uncertainty imbedded in these. We can pretend to a spurious accuracy in advance, but actually we just can't know. That is why we have ranges, backed by expert advice.

Q228 **Chair:** Okay. So we are quite a long way from the Committee on Climate Change's most cost-effective path.

One of the ways that the Government can drive the electric and ultra-low emission vehicle market is through fleet purchase. We are the biggest purchaser. The Budget, Minister Jones, said that a quarter of central Government Department fleets would be ultra-low emission by 2022. How is that going to be achieved?

Andrew Jones: Through making sure that the various Government procurement officials are purchasing electric vehicles. It is as simple as that. I think it is a very—

Q229 **Chair:** How is that going at the moment? Because when we had the Ministry of Justice, which is responsible for 10% of all Government spend, in front of my Committee a couple of weeks ago, two of its 1,500 vehicles were ultra-low emission or electric. So they don't seem to be aware of this target.

Andrew Jones: The target was in the Budget, wasn't it? They wouldn't have been aware of the Budget in advance. What we have is, 25% of cars in central Government Department fleets will be ultra-low emission by 2022, and the Environment Agency will ensure that all its cars are ultra-low emission by 2025 and stop buying or leasing petrol or diesel cars.

Q230 **Chair:** How many are ultra or low emission across Government at the moment?

Dr Coffey: In the Government Car Service, about 8% of the fleet.

Q231 **Chair:** Yes, but that 8% is just the cars that you are in.

Dr Coffey: EA is very low, at 3.3%. We are issuing our revised standards, which will support what was set out by Treasury in the Budget, and Departments are going to be reporting regularly on our progress towards that target.

Q232 **Chair:** Of course, but if they have signed a three-year fleet leasing contract in 2016, it is going to be at least three years before they are up for renewal. Are they bought on three or five-year contracts?

Dr Coffey: I don't know the answer to that specific issue. Normally, my previous commercial experience would suggest that cars are leased on three years in a commercial environment, but we are setting out these revised standards before the end of the year, which will support Departments as they make those changes.

Q233 **Chair:** Okay. Can I come to the second Minister Jones—or the first in DCLG? The EU proposes all buildings with more than 10 parking spaces should install a charging point. What are the plans to change the planning rules in this country?



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Mr Marcus Jones: We are currently considering the national planning policy framework, and that is a look at all aspects of planning, which includes this type of apparatus within certain properties. What I would say is that a draft of that national planning policy framework is coming forward early next year, and at that point we would very much welcome further representation from the sector and from this Committee to feed into the final national planning policy framework that we bring forward. But I would also say—

Q234 **Chair:** Do you think that that EU proposal is a good idea? Is it something that you as a Minister would consider putting into the draft planning framework?

Mr Marcus Jones: It is something we need to look at in conjunction with our colleagues in other Departments that are responsible for these areas. On building regulations, we are also looking at a review at the moment; in fact, we said in the industrial strategy last week that we will bring forward a proposal in building regulations where developers will have to put cabling on to all new dwellings so that they have the ability to connect to a charging point. Within that, we will also have to look at the planning situation in that regard, so that that infrastructure is laid on to new estates. So there are a number of things that we are looking at in this regard, Ms Creagh.

Q235 **Chair:** Can I go back to Treasury Minister Jones and take him back to the cost-benefit analysis on page 42 of our National Audit Office report? It says that asking car manufacturers to put air quality emissions information on new car labels would take 73,000 tonnes of NOx out of the atmosphere over 10 years and would cost Government nothing. Is that something that has been considered by the Treasury and the Department for Transport, and if not, why not? Why aren't we doing the easy stuff—letting consumers know how much their new cars are spewing out into the atmosphere? Why is that hard?

Jesse Norman: All cars already have their environmental performance made available to the purchaser, who can know in advance where their car fits in a particular standard and what its performance is.

Q236 **Chair:** On the vehicle excise side of things, you would know and that would be a consideration, but not on air quality.

Jesse Norman: I am not at all averse to the idea; I think it is a very sensible suggestion and it may well be that the committee is already working on that.

Andrew Jones: We have new labelling regulations coming into force in 2018, which will provide significantly greater customer information.

Q237 **Chair:** Will that include this air quality emissions information?

Andrew Jones: I think it does include air quality information, yes.

Chair: Thank you.

Q238 **Zac Goldsmith:** Briefly, before I move on, I think you said the target is



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that 25% of the Government fleet will be ultra-low emission by 2022. Is that right?

Andrew Jones: Yes.

Q239 **Zac Goldsmith:** Can you confirm that all contracts or purchases of individual vehicles from this point on will be tailored towards the—

Andrew Jones: Pretty much.

Q240 **Zac Goldsmith:** So there will be no diesel vehicles bought or contracted from this point? Are we at the beginning of a total transformation, or is it a gradual process in terms of the contracts we award or the purchases of those vehicles?

Andrew Jones: It is the start of a process. I am not sure we can say that no diesel vehicles will be purchased from now on because there could be, for example, specialist vehicles of different types, so I think a black and white rule would be inappropriate. But should Government leadership by example be a part of this? Absolutely. That is why we have said that 25% of cars in central Government fleets will be ultra-low emission by 2022.

Q241 **Zac Goldsmith:** To clarify, is it the case, then, that there will be no further purchases or awarding of contracts for polluting vehicles where low emission alternatives exist, exempting, obviously, those vehicles for which the alternatives do not exist.

Andrew Jones: I do not think it will quite as clear-cut as that, but we will leave that to individual purchasing decisions. The presumption will be that where it is possible to buy ultra low, Government will be buying ultra low.

Q242 **Zac Goldsmith:** I will move on to a question for Thérèse Coffey. The 2017 plan concludes that a diesel scrappage scheme offers poor value for money, but looking at the 2016 plan, the DEFRA evidence review identified schemes elsewhere that have been successful in reducing emissions. On Budget day, you launched a consultation on how a scheme could be designed to deliver the most cost-effective outcomes. My first question is, why on Budget day? Why has it taken so long for that process to begin?

Dr Coffey: For whatever reason, the consultation was published on the same day as the Budget; I think that was because it matched the funding that was announced to go with that—the £220 million that was laid out. A targeted scrappage scheme is one of the options, and we are consulting on that. There has been experience in the past. Transport leads, in effect, on the potential design of what a scheme could look like, but we know from the past that there have been some challenges in making sure that it is effective.

Q243 **Zac Goldsmith:** Have the Government already been working with the car manufacturers to develop a scheme that helps them and also improves air quality? That might be a question for Jesse Norman.

Jesse Norman: It is certainly a question for me, and the answer is yes. We have been working with the car manufacturers and, as you know,



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there is a widespread car scrappage scheme for more than 70% of the market in place. It is manufacturer-led and it is because there is a recognition that it is important to look at the issue more widely that the consultation exists.

It is not a panacea scrappage; it is important to take a proper look at it but there are some real challenges to making an effective scrappage scheme work. The first is cost; the second is targeting, to make sure you get the right vehicles and being absolutely clear about what happens—taking them off the road rather than just allowing them to recycle. Obviously, there is a question of fraud, which is potentially quite considerable. The issue of social justice is also quite important. Many of the worst vehicles are older and owned by people on limited incomes. A scrappage scheme often targets the energised middle class. One has to be careful and sensitive to all those issues, which is why it is appropriate to have a consultation about it.

Q244 Zac Goldsmith: That is absolutely right. There is a link between the targeting and the cost, obviously: the more targeted it is, presumably the lower the cost or at least the greater the value for money. Have you looked yet at the City Hall proposal, which is a very targeted scheme looking specifically at scrappage schemes for those people driving the most polluting cars but who are on the lowest levels of income?

Jesse Norman: I have not, but I would be very interested to see it. I will definitely look at it as a result of your raising it now, and I have no doubt that it will be considered through the consultation process.

Q245 Dr Johnson: This is a question for the Treasury Minister. We have talked about there being all these ultra-low emission vehicles—25% by 2020—but we will need an awful lot of charging points to achieve that. The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership is in the middle of doing a report that looks at local utility challenges affecting greater Lincolnshire, and noting in particular the challenges for people wanting to both input and take from the electricity grid in our area. If we have all these ultra-low emission vehicles that need charging up, that will produce more strain on an already strained infrastructure. What money has the Treasury put aside to ensure that there is investment in the infrastructure for the electric charging points that will be needed, not just in large cities but in rural communities, too?

Andrew Jones: I completely recognise that we need to have a comprehensive network of charge points. That is part of addressing the range anxiety, which has been seen as one of the barriers to the purchase of electric vehicles. Ninety per cent of people who have electric vehicles charge them at their homes, but the network across the country is critical. To support the transition, we announced at the Budget that £200 million will be made available, to be matched by private investment into a new £400 million charging investment infrastructure fund.

Q246 Dr Johnson: Will that be available to Western Power Distribution, for example, to upgrade the infrastructure? It is not an issue of putting in the



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charging points per se, but the electrical infrastructure to carry that electricity from the power station or wherever to that charging point is the problem in my county.

Andrew Jones: I am not so sure of the specifics of Lincolnshire.

Dr Johnson: It is a capacity problem.

Andrew Jones: But the point is to make sure that we have the network. Obviously, the networks will need to be powered and we need to ensure that there is greater roll-out. That is why we have this fund, to which people will be able to apply for investment.

Q247 **Andrew Selous:** Can I track back briefly to the 25% of central Government Department fleets being ultra-low electric vehicles by 2022? What about the local authority fleets? The police fleets? The NHS? And what about schools' own transport? A lot of that is spent with central Government money, so what is happening in that area?

Andrew Jones: We have not had any direction from the Treasury, apart from a general encouragement towards doing this. We want to lead by example, but I cannot tell you we have had a direction.

Q248 **Andrew Selous:** I understand it is perhaps an unfair question to junior Ministers, but I put it to all of you that this would be a good idea. I would like some comfort that those conversations are taking place around Whitehall. The Metropolitan Police has started to go down this track. I do not know what the NHS is doing. Local authorities have huge fleets in terms of school transport, social services transport and so on. There are rich winnings here from the public sector to pump-prime this industry. So what will happen about that?

Mr Marcus Jones: As you know, Mr Selous, local authorities are autonomous organisations. That said, as you have just identified, they receive significant central Government funding. The obvious time to look at this type of matter is as we come up to a spending review. At that point we would generally work with the spending Departments across Government—DEFRA and particularly the Department for Transport—and we would work through those types of issues, because, when funding is distributed, that is the point at which we are able to guide local authorities.

Q249 **Chair:** Can you not guide them in the interim? We have just had a Budget. We are not going to have a spending review for goodness knows how long. It is all BSE: blame someone else. Mañana, mañana—that is all we are hearing.

Mr Marcus Jones: In terms of local government funding, in 2015 we set out a four-year spending period for local government and we clearly set out the funding available to local authorities.

Q250 **Chair:** But you could give them guidance in between times.

Mr Marcus Jones: At that point we offered a four-year deal to local authorities, and 97% of them took that deal. Other Ministers here will



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know exactly what is going on in their particular spending Department. The Treasury has brought forward further funding for various projects, as has Transport and so on. In relation to anything additional that we want local authorities to do, generally that comes down to the new burdens principle that we talked about earlier. That is where my Department comes in and assesses what that additional cost would be. I do not think we are able to go back in history and revisit a settlement that has already been offered.

Chair: You can never go forward in history; that is for sure. You can only go forward in history.

Q251 **Andrew Selous:** Moving on, the United States of America has secured a huge payment from Volkswagen. How is our payment going?

Jesse Norman: Thank you for that non-prejudicial and open-ended question, Mr Selous. The situation with Volkswagen is perfectly clear. They have done something very bad. We should be perfectly clear about that. Their behaviour has been utterly unacceptable. In America the standards are different from ours, and Federal Government, with a lot of support from the plaintiffs' bar through class action suits, has extracted a substantial settlement. In this country we are in a slightly different position. First, many of the vehicles were compliant with the law according to the tests that were in place at the time.

Q252 **Andrew Selous:** Can I pick you up on that point? My understanding is that many of those vehicles paid lower rates in vehicle excise duty on the basis that they would perform at the levels Volkswagen set. At the very least we are owed the extra vehicle excise duty.

Jesse Norman: You are raising some very important points, but they are ancillary to the point I am making. We will come to them in a second. There is a legal process in place, as you know, which is that these vehicles were manufactured, commissioned and, with a small number of exceptions, type tested in Germany. The German prosecuting authorities are in the lead on this issue. We should be perfectly clear that we as Government fully expect those prosecuting authorities to behave fully in accordance with the rule of law and prosecute to the limits of their ability. That is their job, and that is what we require to start to gain the confidence of consumers, not just in Germany but in this country as well. That is an important issue for the car industry as a whole. As you can imagine, I have had conversations at some length about the powers of UK Government on this issue. We have independent prosecuting authorities; the advice so far has been that we have to see the process through in Germany from their point of view.

There is an entirely separate issue to do with making the UK fleet compliant. We are at almost exactly the same levels as across the rest of the EU.

Q253 **Andrew Selous:** Is that about a third of Volkswagen vehicles at the moment?



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Jesse Norman: No, at the moment about 69% of vehicles are compliant. Officials have monthly meetings with Volkswagen to ensure and manage that process.

Q254 **Andrew Selous:** Going back to Germany, I understand that its car industry has contributed about €250 million to help with the clean air agenda within Germany. It just seems that while in America there is a huge legal payment, and the German car industry has come up with €250 million to help, we in the UK are not in the fortunate position of having either of those two things happen.

Jesse Norman: Believe me, Mr Selous, I have been round these thoughts myself on many occasions. The situation in the UK is that we have a very different kind of car industry and very different levels of exposure to diesel. Germany's car industry is very large but relatively compact and very focused on diesel, and that has created a congruity of incentives. Central Government in Germany has put up a further sum of its own, and that fund is not by any means just dedicated to clean air. So I do not think it is quite the *pari passu* read-over that one might have wanted.

Q255 **Andrew Selous:** But I think it is dedicated to ultra-low emission vehicles as well.

Jesse Norman: It is certainly dedicated to the further pursuit of German industrial policy through cars. There is no doubt about that.

Q256 **Andrew Selous:** Can I ask what the policy implications are of the failure of Euro 4 and 5 standards to deliver the expected emissions? Maybe that is one for Dr Coffey as well.

Andrew Jones: Mr Selous, could I come in for two seconds, just to help a little on VED? Apologies for cutting across. VED is based on CO₂ emissions. Putting defeat devices in VWs—I have to say I have a VW with a defeat device in it—was not done to deal with NOx emissions. It is not the same thing at all.

Q257 **Neil Parish:** Why is it just Germany that gets money out of its car industry, when its manufacturers were the problem? I bought a BlueMotion diesel that obviously did not do what it said on the box. Why are individuals not compensated? The Government is absolutely toothless on this. Surely you can look for ways of getting money out of the people who have perpetrated this and use it for common good. Why is it that Germany, which is held to account by its massive car industry, can still get money out of it, while we just sit there wringing our hands and saying "Well, we don't know what sort of laws we have that we can make stick"? Why can't you find something that will stick?

Jesse Norman: What a splendid intervention from the Chair of the EFRA Committee. Thank you very much indeed, Mr Parish. You are asking exactly the same question, of course, that—

Q258 **Neil Parish:** I know, but you haven't answered it, have you? You are just not doing anything about it.



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Jesse Norman: Au contraire, I have precisely answered the question asked. We are very much not wringing our hands; we are doing what we can within proper obedience to the rule of law and a degree of deference to the German prosecuting authorities.

Q259 **Neil Parish:** So are you going to get money out of the German car industry generally for its mistakes, or not?

Jesse Norman: We are going to see where the prosecutions lead and where the evidence that has been gathered takes those prosecutions.

Q260 **Andrew Selous:** Do we have an idea of the timescale?

Jesse Norman: I'll come to that in a second. Let's not forget that there is potential scope for private prosecutions, as I don't need to tell you, but those, too, need to follow the proper legal procedure. That is the difficulty that they are under as well.

Q261 **Chair:** Those prosecutions have already happened in the United States, and they have been plea bargained. They have the Environmental Protection Agency, the state of California and then class actions—a triple-pronged attack. What we have here is a bunch of Volkswagen customers who are getting together. What are you doing as Transport Minister about the fix? Only two thirds of the cars that were supposed to have been fixed by the end of this year have been, so a third of the cars are on the road with no fix on them. People do not want the fix because after a couple of years, the performance goes out the window and they are left with nothing.

Jesse Norman: As you know, Ms Creagh, our levels of compliance are as high as the Euro average. We are not by any means doing any worse than anyone else. We are on track and will continue to progress—

Q262 **Chair:** We were promised that it would be fixed, but it is not fixed. What are you doing about it?

Jesse Norman: We are continuing to press Volkswagen to get it fixed as quickly as possible.

Q263 **Chair:** Why should it be fixed if it makes your vehicle worse in two years?

Jesse Norman: Volkswagen, through negotiation with us and in addition to payment for appropriate testing facilities and so on, has undertaken this unusually named confidence-restoring or trust-restoring measure, the purpose of which is to give purchasers a degree of confidence that their vehicle will not be undermined by taking the fix.

Q264 **Chair:** It is not a confidence-restoring measure; it is a confidence trick. People who have done it have had their vehicles back and they then need extra repairs. It is only covered on a two-year warranty. That is a big problem for you as a Minister.

Jesse Norman: We don't know yet, because we are still seeing the outcomes. If it is necessary to go back to get further extensions to that process to make sure that those vehicles are held, then on behalf of



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customers, we will do that. What we will not do is not act in accordance with the law, and we would like to avoid clobbering people such as Mr Parish, who bought a car in good faith, believing that it would help them and was compliant with the law.

Q265 **Chair:** I think Mr Parish is saying that he doesn't feel that you are on his side, and millions of other Volkswagen, Audi and Škoda drivers out there feel the same.

Jesse Norman: Well, they don't have any reason for that, for the reasons I have described. Shall we come to the question that you raised, Mr Selous?

Q266 **Andrew Selous:** Yes, I just wondered what the policy implications were of the failure of Euro 4 and Euro 5 standards to deliver the effect on emissions.

Jesse Norman: The policy implications are that we have to redouble our overall efforts to improve air quality and to reduce emissions as a whole. There is no doubt about it; that has been a very serious contributor to the problem. That is one of the reasons why we have to take the very wide range of actions that we have been describing for the last couple of hours this morning.

Dr Coffey: Let us be clear that some time ago, Ministers took a decision. They were warned that there might be issues about air quality, but they decided that the climate issue was more important. It is a great irony that the current Mayor of London was a Transport Minister when we signed up. He stood at the Dispatch Box and said, "Euro 5 is going to save us all." I know he will have made that reply to Parliament because he thought that that was going to happen, but we are dealing with the issue that it simply hasn't delivered.

Chair: Well, that is a long way from Volkswagen. Let's move on to Lilian.

Q267 **Lilian Greenwood:** I am going to return to the issue of buses—I know that Minister Coffey seemed to suggest that that was some sort of odd hobby horse of mine.

Dr Coffey: Not at all.

Lilian Greenwood: I remind the panel that although bus use is declining across the UK, buses still account for 5% of all journeys—4 billion journeys a year—so they are very important for many of our constituents. We know that a bus can mean that 75 cars are taken off the road, helping to tackle both air quality and congestion, and Policy Connect tells us that reducing traffic is the fastest and most effective way to tackle NOx. We know that the Government have a cycling target, which is to double cycling by 2025. We know that you do not have a target for walking—I am interested to know why not—but do you have a target for bus use?

Jesse Norman: I don't think we have a target for bus use as a whole. However, as you know, we have a wide range of measures, some of which we have already discussed today, that are designed to support the bus



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industry. That includes the bus service operators grant, retrofitting, and concessionary fares and support. All those things are welcome. I have met almost all the big bus operators individually recently to discuss the issues.

Actually, I do not share what appears to be your pessimism about the industry, Ms Greenwood. I think it has a great future ahead of it. It is changing its practices very rapidly to accommodate changing patterns of use and of technology. If you look, for example, at some of the decisions they are making on ensuring that there are route notifications, or on accessibility, or on the use of technology for ticketing, all of that is rather encouraging. We are miles away from air quality, but it is still very encouraging.

Q268 Lilian Greenwood: Do you expect there to be an increase in bus use then?

Jesse Norman: I don't know what will happen, and it is a very brave Minister who makes projections about modal use in transport. No one predicted the massive increase in railway usage and, as I have already described, uncertainty is an ever-present feature of the human freedom to choose one's mode of transport.

Q269 Lilian Greenwood: So you have no target and no forecast. The LGA said that charging buses to enter clean air zones could lead to fewer or more expensive bus services; so what is the Government doing to ensure that that does not happen, and what measures are you intending to make sure that measures to improve air quality are supported by complementary policies to support the shift towards public transport?

Jesse Norman: Well, of course, just outside buses we continue to invest in and support many other forms of public transport—notably railways; you will have seen an announcement on that just recently. In regard to buses, I have already described that the £475 million-odd that is going into clean air and air quality improvement in local authorities is a component which is absolutely responsive, through the joint air quality unit, to local authorities that wish to use buses as an important part of their plans to improve air quality. That is a substantial commitment, and we look forward very much to hearing plans that use buses creatively. There are parts of the country already, as you will know, where not only bus lanes but dedicated bus routes are in place that are highly effective and very good for air quality.

Q270 Lilian Greenwood: There are also places where bus lanes have been removed. I just want to come back to this point: what specific policies are you going to take to ensure that buses are not negatively affected by clean air zones and that there is modal shift?

Jesse Norman: I have already laid out a series of policies that support buses and support air quality from buses. As we have described, we are promoting the use of buses alongside other forms of clean transport as part of the creation of these air quality plans at the local level. Those plans come from local authorities who know where the problems and the blackspots are. That is appropriate given our relationship to local



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government, and those policies will be determined in each particular case and, of course, we try and support them nationally where we can.

Q271 Lilian Greenwood: Minister Coffey, have you got an answer, as clean air zones fall to DEFRA, on how you can avoid buses becoming fewer and more expensive?

Dr Coffey: Through various funding streams, we have already helped buses to be converted and upgraded with retrofitting technology so that it reduces NOx. The whole point, if a council is considering charging vehicles to enter a zone is to charge those that are considered not to be of the best air quality, so we are already proactively doing that. You also talk about potentially removing bus lanes. Liverpool City Council, when I went there, made a specific assessment of what was going to help improve the circulation of traffic flow. They made the judgment that by removing some of their bus lanes it would help traffic flow overall. It has got to be down to the decisions locally, but we are actively, from the centre, funding things which mean that we are cleaning up the buses, particularly in those congested towns and cities.

Q272 Lilian Greenwood: What do we know about the state of play? What proportion of the UK bus fleet is now clean, either having been retrofitted or through already being an ultra-low emission vehicle or a Euro 6 standard?

Dr Coffey: I don't know the answer about the proportion. I know that the technology fund has helped 3,000 buses and that about 1,200 to 1,300 low-emission buses have been purchased through the green bus fund as well.

Q273 Lilian Greenwood: But you don't know whether that is 1%, 2% or 5%.

Dr Coffey: I don't know the size of the fleet, but we are focused on those buses in the particular areas where we know that we have the specific real challenges of air quality.

Q274 Lilian Greenwood: In those particular areas, do you know the size of the problem, in terms of how many buses would need to be converted and how much the money that you are providing will allow to happen?

Dr Coffey: I am not aware of the data on how many councils have how many buses, or buses that serve a particular area; no, I don't have that information.

Chair: If I can be helpful, every regional transport authority has data about the Euro 4, 5 and 6 emissions of their fleet. It is very easy to get that in, and then you will be able to do some maths around it with your air quality people. We are going to move on.

Q275 Iain Stewart: I turn to the important issue of public awareness of the health implications of air pollution. We heard from our witnesses last week that there is an urgent need to raise awareness. Unlike the pea souper fogs of the 1950s, this pollution is not visible. I think there is a large degree of ignorance about what people are breathing in. For



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example, one of the startling findings I heard was that one of the most dangerous places to be is in your own car, because a high concentration of the pollutants filter in. Who is responsible primarily for raising awareness of these air quality issues? Is it the directors of public health in local authorities? Is it the NHS? Is it central Government? Who should be taking the lead?

Dr Coffey: We do have an information network. We also proactively contact many health partners. Public Health England is actively engaged in this, as is DEFRA. So we always want to try to extend that network to as many partners as possible. That is how we get our messages out, and we deal as well with local councils. I do think the role of public health directors now being firmly part of local councils is good. That is why we issued a new toolkit to help them again to try to raise awareness.

For what it is worth, the pollutant that worries me the most is particulate matter. That is why although we continue to see the amount of particulate matter fall, there are still some clear things we can continue to do. I have a particular obsession—my civil servants behind me are going to kill me—about people burning wet wood when they pick up a net of it from the garage on the way home instead of having properly dry, seasoned wood. That is not good value for money, but, more particularly, it causes immediate health issues when you try to burn it. On those kinds of things, we are working with our partners to try to highlight them. We have introduced the “ready to burn” label, but we will continue to work on enhancing the awareness that people have of actions they can take right now to avoid that. I will get told off afterwards!

Q276 Iain Stewart: Do you think there is a sense of urgency? As Mr Bradshaw mentioned earlier, this is the avoidable problem that kills the second highest number of people after smoking. For smoking, we have got a very clear action strategy to raise awareness of the problem and measures to stop it. When will we see a similar degree of priority given to making the public aware of this? What measures could be taken to help prevent it—for example, by asking car manufacturers to install better air filtering equipment?

Dr Coffey: As I said earlier, we are preparing our updated clean air strategy for next year for consultation. That will cover the greater range of pollutants. Particulate matter is the key one, I would suggest. That has a greater effect on the entire population, whereas NO_x tends to exacerbate the conditions of people in what we call vulnerable groups.

Now, 40% of particulate matter emissions are from home heating and burning. That is why I have this particular obsession about aspects of wet wood and smoky coal. So we will be doing more, and I expect that again we will be working with partners on that to continue to raise awareness.

I think public awareness of air quality issues is already reasonably high, but I am sure there is more we can do to get those alerts out that can alert people particularly to episodes of pollution. We have to recognise that, particularly in the south of the country, about half of particulate



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matter emissions come across from the continent. So we are not always entirely in control, but we can and do raise awareness of issues when these episodes arise.

Chair: I am sorry, we are going to have to move on.

Q277 Maggie Throup: This morning, we have heard a lot about how £3 billion is going to be spent on improving air quality. Who is measuring the impact of air quality policies across Government?

Dr Coffey: There have been different phases, and we have seen through the changes a gradual reduction in pollutants in our air: a 20% reduction in NO_x since 2010. We think some of that has been due to the fact that we are cleaning up our heavy-goods vehicles through the higher standards and through changing bus fleets. We continue to see action on other air quality challenges, such as sulphur dioxide. Again, we have policies in place specifically targeted at reducing them.

The challenge, Ms Throup, is that the air quality issues vary depending on where you are in the country. In the countryside, a bigger challenge is ammonia and the way it interacts. I am not an expert on that aspect of chemistry, but we have people who are. That has a multiplier in a different way. The impact of ozone comes in in a different way in the countryside, so it really varies area by area. I assure you that we have plenty of people working on different policies so we can focus on what works best, but it is not going to be the same solution in every part of the country.

Q278 Maggie Throup: It almost seems that, because it is so complex, that causes problems in itself. Do you think that the joint air quality unit, which has got responsibility for some aspects, should look at the wider aspects so it is more joined-up across Government?

Dr Coffey: Two Departments—Jesse's Department and my Department—have responsibility for the strategy and the overall responsibility. The main drivers at the moment are transport-related, but we work with wider groups. The clean growth group covers more Departments than just our two, and we are working proactively with other Departments on the clean air strategy that is coming forward.

For example, when we were looking at the combustion plant directives, we specifically did something to address the fact that diesel generators are not going to be part of our back-up generation supply. We worked actively with BEIS on that. Some of the market is reacting, but we took the decision across Government, and as I say we worked with BEIS. We knew that air quality would be improved as a consequence of doing that. We do work in different ways. The main driver at the moment—the reason why JAQU was established—is the particular challenge of NO_x, but I assure you that we work across Government in all sorts of ways.

Q279 Maggie Throup: The ultimate goal of what we are discussing this morning is to improve health outcomes. What input do you get from the Department of Health when considering the various policy interventions, and how will the Government be joining up their air quality plans and the



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other issues we have talked about with health plans to tackle heart disease, cardiovascular disease and lung disease?

Dr Coffey: I can't quite remember the chronology in my brain, but I convened Ministers in the last Parliament, including from Health—it was the first time they had been engaged in this—BEIS and others. That effectively led to the establishment of the clean growth IMG, where air quality was positioned through. Since the election, we have continued to focus on this issue with Ministers, including from Health. As I say, I have worked with Public Health England and the Health Minister in creating the toolkit to go to public health directors. PHE is very engaged in that regard, and we will continue to work with it. I met BHF and BLF, which were representing us in the UK. We are working together to try to raise awareness. We also need local effective action to make a difference.

Q280 Maggie Throup: Have any specific measures been put in place with regard to the impact on those disease conditions, if you have been working with the Department of Health?

Dr Coffey: I don't know the answer to that. I recall from one of our meetings this year that the Public Health Minister was going to assess whether or not to include an indicator specifically focused on this issue. I will follow up with him to see what has happened since.

Q281 Chair: Could you write and let us know? Just on that, JAQU is responsible for only 10% of the £3 billion for air quality. You are just looking after 10% of that budget, and most of it is coming through the Department for Transport. Can I ask Minister Norman about this £400 million and £600 million—the total of £1 billion—that is going to be spent on charging infrastructure? How many charging points will that budget deliver?

Jesse Norman: The budget is, of course, not just for charging points. It includes about £100 million—

Q282 Chair: Grant schemes. But how many charging points will it deliver?

Jesse Norman: The answer is, I don't have the number in front of me, but we can certainly send it to you.

Q283 Chair: We are eight years into that now, so you must know how many it has delivered so far, and if you can project—

Jesse Norman: It has delivered 11,500 so far and they are rolling out relatively quickly, so it might be 15,000 by 2020, but we would have to send you the numbers.

Q284 Chair: Okay. If you can give us the numbers, that would be helpful.

Jesse Norman: Can I say just one other thing? There is also an important distinction to be drawn between charging points that are funded directly through this kind of grant, charging points that are set up through organisations themselves and then charging points that may be set up through other pots of money, for example at service stations, Highways England and the rest. It is a slightly more complex picture than—



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Chair: Yes, we understand planning gain. Thank you.

Q285 Sandy Martin: My question is for Mr Jones from the DCLG. You have mentioned the work that local authorities do with respect to planning. We have heard that the national planning policy framework, which is meant to ensure that planning systems take account of air quality dangers, is not effective enough. Do you believe that the framework should be strengthened?

Mr Marcus Jones: We already have a strong framework in relation to air quality matters that must be considered when planning applications are taken, but as I said before we are currently looking at the whole of the national planning policy framework. We are due to come back with a draft of the latest version of the framework early next year, and that is currently being worked on by the Minister for Housing and Planning, my colleague in the Department. We will then consult on that draft before we come forward with the final, finished national planning policy framework, to reflect the changes that we are making. However, what I can say to you is that certainly these matters within that are under active consideration.

Q286 Sandy Martin: My experience as a local authority councillor up until May of this year was that at planning meetings, whether it be development control meetings or indeed strategic planning meetings, the officer advice to local authorities for the most part was, "This is not a consideration that is strong enough to carry any weight, councillor." I guess that that sort of advice is being given by officers to councillors up and down the country as we speak.

I am sure you accept that if councillors argue against a particular piece of planning or a particular development control decision against the advice of the officers, then the applicants or developers almost always win on appeal. So what do you think can and should be done to strengthen the national planning policy framework so that councillors start taking air quality matters seriously and are allowed to do so by their officers?

Mr Marcus Jones: As I say, it is currently firmly part of the framework. Not all appeals are successful in the planning system; I also point that out. However, there is wider work that the Department is doing, particularly in relation to the White Paper on planning. We have also brought forward the infrastructure fund, because that is a critical part of this. It is one thing giving planning permissions and properties being developed, but one of the other big things—it fits very well in terms of the air quality issues that we have been talking about—is how we facilitate infrastructure, particularly road infrastructure, so that new development does not lead to significant challenges around air quality.

Through the Budget that was put forward last week, the housing infrastructure fund that we have has actually been doubled. So the Department is taking a number of measures to do that but, as I say, the measures relating to air quality and all the other things within the national planning policy framework are under active consideration and a draft of the latest framework will be put forward early next year.



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Chair: Sandy, we need to move on, as we have got about 10 minutes left.

Q287 **Sandy Martin:** Very briefly, there is an issue about highways planning and Highways England, because where problems are caused by the offshoots from trunk roads, obviously the local authority has no control over that. Why do you not believe that Highways England should have a statutory duty to consult with local authorities?

Mr Marcus Jones: That is probably more of a matter for my colleague Mr Norman, because the policy relating to how highways are approached from the point of view of the local authorities and from the point of view of Highways England is the policy of the DFT rather than the DCLG.

Q288 **Sandy Martin:** If you don't mind my saying so, you should be standing up for your own Department, not saying that the Department for Transport has priority over the DCLG.

Mr Marcus Jones: No. The point I would make is that we work very closely with all the Departments here in the formulation of policy. What I was merely pointing out was where the actual policy responsibility emanates from. In terms of how that policy moves forward, we certainly work with the other Departments and certainly work on behalf of local government, particularly in relation to new burdens.

Chair: Okay. I think we have understood that point.

Q289 **John Mc Nally:** Can I take you briefly on to the EU legal challenges, Thérèse? The Committee would like an update on the status of the infringement case that the EU started in 2014 for breaching the nitrogen dioxide standard, for which the UK received a reasoned opinion in February 2017. That is my first question, if you could give us an update on that.

Dr Coffey: Twenty two out of the 28 EU member states reported annual mean concentrations of NO₂ above their annual value limit. I understand that infraction proceedings are currently under way against 12 member states. However, I am afraid it is the policy of the Government that we do not give detailed views or a commentary on what is happening because it is, in effect, an ongoing legal proceeding.

Q290 **John Mc Nally:** Okay. Can I briefly ask you then about more parochial matters? It is worth repeating that Scotland has adopted World Health Organisation guidelines on the fine particulates that you mentioned earlier into its law. Again, it is the first country in Europe to do that. If one or more of the devolved Administrations is able to comply but the UK fails overall, will those devolved Administrations still have to pay part of the fine? That also applies to the local authorities that we have been discussing.

Dr Coffey: You will be pleased to know that DEFRA has not had to pay any infraction fines at all. We have always sought to do the best that we can. We will continue to work as quickly as we can to improve air quality. You will be aware of the other legal case that is currently in the High



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Court. I cannot really comment any further on that, either, but we will continue to work as quickly as we can.

As you know, this is a devolved responsibility. We do work with our other nations in order to share best practice, but there are slightly different challenges. As I was articulating earlier, quite a lot of the particulate matter emissions come across from other countries. Scotland does not have to concern itself so much with that, but it does continue. You will be aware that Scotland is putting forward a low-emission zone to go into one of the cities next year, in order to tackle the issue that it has. We are working and sharing our analysis as well.

Q291 Mr Bradshaw: Your boss, Dr Coffey, makes a big play of saying that if we leave the European Union, we will have a better framework, or at least equivalent standards across the whole of environmental legislation. However, given that on this major issue, which we have heard is such a big public health issue, the Government have been dragged, as the Chairman said, kicking and screaming through the courts before any action has been taken, why should we believe what the Secretary of State says about your future intentions?

Dr Coffey: Of all the air quality targets that successive Governments have signed up to, we are failing on one. We are meeting our commitments that we said we would do on all the others. I do not agree that it is the case that we are being dragged to try to improve air quality—far from it. Our statistics show that we are actively improving air quality all the time.

Moving forward, the Gothenburg protocol on transboundary pollution is the underpinning of a lot of our air quality regulations. The very first decision that was made after the decision to leave was taken by the British people in the referendum was to sign up to our 2030 targets. We did that at an EU level, fulfilling what we need to do to comply with this UN convention.

That will get transposed into our laws next year and we will continue to work closely with our European neighbours, because we have to, because we want to and because it is necessary to improve air quality, but we will be able, potentially, to take a more focused approach and not necessarily be constricted by some of the rules that we have at the moment, especially on how we have to report certain things. There is absolutely no diminution in any sense of any target or of our ambition to accelerate our meeting this, but I accept that there is one measure on which we are in breach of the targets we signed up to, and we are proactively working to try to address that.

Chair: Some final questions from Matthew.

Q292 Dr Offord: It is the Government's intention that we leave the European Union. As part of that, some of the powers over air quality currently possessed by the European Union will not be in effect when we leave. Do you agree with the calls from the Mayor of London that we should have a clean air Act?



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Dr Coffey: The Secretary of State has set out, on behalf of the Government, our intention to consult on a new body to effectively replace some of the powers that the Commission has in regard to accelerating compliance with the targets that we set out. Frankly, clean air action is what we need. Councils already have a heck of a lot of powers at their disposal. That is why we are working with them. I believe that there are already the necessary powers today to improve air quality.

I know that the Mayor of London is specifically keen on getting certain powers regarding the river and construction. However, there are already powers, if they work with the councils, around what they can do on planning conditions and environmental permitting and so on, so I don't think that the answer to this is necessarily some new clean air Act. We are clear on what we have to try to do, we know that councils have the powers to do that and we need to press on with it together.

Q293 **Dr Offord:** I don't want to prolong this, but that is not happening, is it? Many people are concerned that, when the UK leaves the European Union, there will not be any mechanism in force to allow people to take legal action. As such, if we had a clean air Act, the Mayor would be able to do so.

Dr Coffey: As I have pointed out, the Secretary of State has outlined that we intend to consult early in the new year on a new body to effectively replace those powers. We have been taken to court in the past and we are being taken to court again against what we have in UK law today; ClientEarth is taking that through the UK High Court.

It is not the case that that will all evaporate all of a sudden—far from it. I assure you that the Secretary of State is ambitious in these areas and wants to assure people that there will be those avenues for people to pursue.

Q294 **Dr Offord:** I am conscious of time so I will move on to the next question. This is not actually addressed to Dr Coffey, but as she said, the Secretary of State has indicated that a new body should be created. It is my belief that the ECJ will not have any role in the United Kingdom in the future—other people may disagree with that—but the Secretary of State has said that there should be a body to hold the Government to account.

I want to ask the opinion of the Treasury, Transport and DCLG Ministers, particularly: how do you feel about such a body bringing actions against your Department, imposing limits, possibly looking at inquiries, establishing policy and possibly even imposing fines against you if you fail to achieve the objectives?

Jesse Norman: Can I respond? That is very much a picture of how the Government is set up and what it does. As the Committee will know, I was formerly at BEIS as an energy Minister, and we had the Committee on Climate Change there acting in very much a supervisory, standard-setting role. We will have to see what this new body does and how far it becomes a formally legally accountable process of resort.



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Q295 **Dr Offord:** It is not about what it will do; it is about your opinion. What do you think?

Jesse Norman: Let me tell you, because my view is very simple: I think Parliament is the correct body to hold Government to account. I think the rule of law is very important, and that there should be scope for private prosecutions of the kind we have seen here. That needs to be adequate redress; adequate remedy is a fundamental part of the rule of law.

I will make one other point, which is that, whatever the arrangements may be after this country leaves the EU, the body of jurisprudence that has accumulated will, in theory, be available to UK courts. Judges are notoriously and properly independent-minded about how they use jurisprudence to solve a legal case, and that will continue, whatever happens.

Q296 **Dr Offord:** I won't go any further with Mr Norman, because I certainly have a view about people bringing judicial review post-Brexit as well. Treasury Minister?

Andrew Jones: I think the best way to hold Government to account is through Parliament. We need to ensure that we do not in any way lose the democratic authority that Parliament has. In terms of other areas, it is a question of the process of law—

Q297 **Dr Offord:** Hang on, you say, "Don't lose the democratic legitimacy of Parliament," but you were someone who wished to remain in the European Union, and they were the ones that brought the prosecutions against the UK Government over air quality—sorry, not over air quality, but over other derogations.

Andrew Jones: Yes, I did indeed vote to remain, and the British people made a decision. The EU was about pooling sovereignty where it was appropriate to achieve a broader objective. We are not going to be in the EU in a few months' time. There is no point thinking that we do not have parliamentary democracy, because we do and we should preserve it.

Q298 **Dr Offord:** I will leave that where it is. Mr Jones?

Mr Marcus Jones: I do not want to get into the debate over who should be the arbiter in these situations. What I will focus on is the action of remediation in dealing with any judgments that are made, which will probably fall directly to local government as the ones responsible for putting the law into practice on a local level. Where our Department is extremely concerned in all these matters is local government finance and its stability. Therefore, when these types of things happen, we work with the relevant Departments to ensure that the new burdens that fall on local government are dealt with and that they are in a sustainable position to deal with that particular judgment, but also all the other services they provide.

Dr Offord: Thank you.

Chair: Ministers, thank you very much. I know Dr Coffey has a plane to



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catch. We look forward to seeing you next time, perhaps on electric bicycles.