

Health and Wellbeing Panel
22nd March 2017

- Air pollution is a major killer in the UK. The Department of Health estimates that 29000 deaths annually are attributable to air pollution equivalent to a loss of population life of 340000 life years.
- One of the principle pollutants are nitrous oxides which are largely emitted by diesel motor vehicles.
- Further health impacts are caused by PM particulates which are too fine to be captured by the nasal passages and lodge in the lungs creating risks of cancer.
- The Government after considerable pressure from the EU and after legal action against it has finally begun to take action.
- Directors of Public Health have a crucial role in taking an overview of the public health risks associated with air pollution and poor air quality.
- In March this year DEFRA and the Dept of Health issued guidance to Directors of Public Health concerning their responsibilities in tackling this serious issue.
- The last report of the Director of Public Health on the health of Bath and North East Somerset was published in 2016.
- The report is largely silent on the question of air quality particularly air quality in Bath.
- I am calling on this panel to examine why the clear risk to public health posed by vehicle emissions and resultant air quality has not in the past formed part of the reporting of the Director.
- I urge the panel to ensure that air quality becomes a top corporate priority for the Council and that the Health and Wellbeing Board is held accountable for clear actions to reduce the impacts of vehicle pollution in Bath.