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**Cabinet Member for Transport and Sustainability
and Councillor for Arbourthorne Ward**

Town Hall
Pinstone Street,
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S1 2HH

The Rt Hon Chris Grayling MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horsferry Road
LONDON
SW1P 4DR

Dear Secretary of State

Sheffield City Council: Improving Air Quality

I am writing to express my ongoing concern regarding air quality in the United Kingdom. Air pollution is a public health emergency and is a major drain on our economy.

Although Sheffield's air quality situation is not dissimilar to that of most large UK cities, I believe our vision, determination and the Clean Air Strategy we published in November is yet to be surpassed.

[Sheffield's Clean Air Strategy](#) sets out a compelling vision for the future for our city, the scale of the challenge we face and the specific actions (both short and long term) that we will take to improve air quality.

However, whilst we will do everything we can, the UK government continues to delay taking meaningful intervention on air quality, despite the UK breaking EU law on Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) gas since 2010.

As you are aware, we collect data on air quality from both national government (DEFRA^[1]) and from our own monitoring stations, and this information is formally reported in our Annual Status Report.

Nitrogen Dioxide^[2] (NO₂) gas is currently of particular concern – and is the primary focus of the NAQP and our because, in common with many other parts of the UK, Sheffield is in breach of EU legal limits which should have been met by 1st January 2010.

Fine particulate matter dust (PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5}) is also an issue for Sheffield because, although the annual averages are significantly below the EU threshold, the daily average level is

^[1] Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

^[2] Both NO_x and NO₂ are referred to in this document. NO₂ is formed when NO_x mixes with air. For the purposes of our strategy, the distinction between them is minimal.

higher on more days per year at some locations than is acceptable by EU standards. Crucially, in addition, there is no safe limit for this pollutant.

DEFRA's data indicates that Sheffield has roads where NO₂ levels in 2017 exceed the legal limit^[3]. NO₂ levels on these roads in 2017 is 53µg/m³ whereas 40µg/m³ is the legal limit, according to the NAQP.

The map below shows our latest picture for NO₂ pollution levels. DEFRA data (black and grey lines) shows exceedances on particular routes in the city^[4].

Our local monitoring information (red and orange points)^[5] shows that air pollution is actually unacceptably high in even more areas than the Government indicate.

The scale of our local challenge is therefore, much more significant than the national NAQP suggests and this discrepancy is a real cause for concern as the Government are persistently underestimating the problem nationally.

As can be seen from the maps, the key transport corridors into and out of the city centre are of particular concern, where the most significant source of transport pollution is emissions from diesel vehicles.

In **every case**, our local data demonstrates worse pollution data than is suggested by the national DfT/DEFRA data and modelling. If we are to take meaningful action in improving our air it is vital that it is benchmarked against this local, not national, data. I understand my officials are in discussion with yours about this matter, but definitive agreement has not yet been reached in a fashion that enables proper planning and compliance with legal obligations.

I look forward to your response on this matter.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Jack Scott
Cabinet Member for Transport and Sustainability
Sheffield City Council**

^[3] NO₂ level on some Sheffield roads in 2017 is 53µg/m³. 40µg/m³ is the legal limit. DEFRA (2017) *UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations* https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633022/air-quality-plan-detail.pdf

^[4] According to Defra figures, the A630 – A57 Parkway (from M1 J33 to City Centre, and sections of the A61 Inner Ring Road breach the annual mean limit. However, other main arteries including the A57 near Richmond, the A61 by Sheffield Station and the A61 near Kelham Island/Savile Street (Derek Dooley Way) are only just under the annual mean limit by 1-2 points.

^[5] based on the Low Emission Zone feasibility study and ongoing monitoring. Highest concentrations in Sheffield: A61 – Penistone Rd, Sheaf St, Queens Rd, Chesterfield Rd, Woodseats; A631 – Tinsley Roundabout, Bawtry Rd; B6388 – London Rd South; A621 - Abbeydale Rd; A6178 – Attercliffe Common, Sheffield Rd; A6109 – Savile St., Brightside Ln; A57 - Brook Hill, Whitham Rd, Fulwood Rd (S); Waingate / Haymarket, Arundel Gate; West Street, Barkers Pool; A625 – Ecclesall Rd South