

Greens slam Government as EU prepares to take UK to court over air pollution failures



Green Party

7 February 2017

*** Keith Taylor MEP: “The government has been exposed, yet again, as failing in its duty to take even the most basic action to combat an air pollution crisis that needlessly claims the lives of more than 50,000 people in Britain every year.”**

Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East, has slammed the Conservative government for its consistent failure to tackle the air pollution crisis, as the EU prepares to [escalate action against the UK](#) for breaching air quality laws.

The latest EU review has revealed multiple failings by the UK Government in applying environmental law, with Britain being in breach of vital EU nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) limits since 2010 and London overshooting its whole 2017 limit in the first five days of the year.

It is understood that the results of the review will be sent on 15 February to the UK. A court case at the European Court of Justice could follow if the UK Government fails to send a satisfactory response to the findings.

Keith Taylor MEP, a vocal air quality campaigner, is urging the UK government to finally take seriously its responsibility for the health of British citizens.

“The government has been exposed, yet again, as failing in its duty to take even the most basic action to combat an air pollution crisis that needlessly claims the lives of more than [50,000 people in Britain every year](#).”

“The failure highlighted by the European Commission review is as much moral as it is legal; Ministers have displayed an extremely concerning attitude of indifference towards their duty to safeguard the health of British citizens.”

“That the European Commission is having to hold to account this government for a public health crisis that costs the British public [more than £20bn a year](#) is a shameful indictment of the Conservatives’ irresponsible and deadly

apathy.”

“Theresa May’s administration is failing to do even the bare minimum, as required by EU laws the UK itself helped to set, to improve the quality of the air we all breathe. The bare minimum.”

“Where embraced and enforced, EU air pollution limits are helping to [prevent thousands of deaths every year](#) and saving [billions of pounds](#) in direct health costs. In fact, this government [readily acknowledges](#) that it is EU law that has been the driver of any positive air quality action in the UK. For the sake of the health and prosperity of the British people, we cannot risk scrapping these safeguards.”

“The government must finally face up to its moral and legal responsibility for tackling Britain’s air quality crisis. Ministers must now be forced to make a firm commitment to abiding by and fully implementing EU air quality laws. Theresa May must also make maintaining and strengthening these vital protections a priority as Britain prepares to leave the EU.”

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[Andrew Gwynne response to new rules new rules from the DFT covering access to taxis for disabled people](#)

Andrew

Gwynne, Labour’s shadow minister without portfolio, commenting on new rules from the DFT covering access to taxis for disabled people, said:

“It is welcoming to see the Government taking a positive step to help to prevent some of the discrimination faced by wheelchair users, finally bringing into force this aspect of the Equality Act of 2010.

“This new rule matches those already in place to prevent discrimination against users of assistance dogs, but still in the last year YouGov research showed that 42% of

assistance dog owners reported being turned away by a taxi or minicab

“Labour’s

Disability Equality Roadshow is touring the country, listening to disabled people, many of whom have raised discrimination as an issue.

“Unfortunately

the Private Members Bill I introduced earlier this year to fix this problem was

talked out by the Government, but I trust the Accessibility action plan will take on the recommendations suggested within my Bill.”

[HSL: Leadership Series – Health & Safety Leadership Excellence: A Workshop for Senior Leaders – Buxton, 21 Feb 2017](#)

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HSL is to run a 1 day course on Leadership Series – Health & Safety Leadership Excellence: A Workshop for Senior Leaders.

21 February 2017

Introduction

This one day interactive workshop is designed to equip senior leaders with knowledge and understanding of key health and safety leadership responsibilities and values (as identified through research) and understand how this enables them to work towards achieving health and safety cultural excellence.

By the end of the workshop, leaders will be able to reflect on their own leadership style as well as leadership within the business in the following four areas:

THE BUSINESS:

Leaders will be able to:

- Consider their roles and responsibilities for health and safety in line with current regulation
- Recognise the influence of leadership on health and safety

performance/culture

- Recognise the importance of leadership as a means of preventing work-related stress
- Recognise the link between effective health and safety leadership and becoming a high reliability organisation (HRO).
- Reflect upon their business's leadership strategy

LEADING THE TEAM:

Leaders will be able to:

- Recognise the impact of leadership on team cohesion and functioning, in particular the importance of effective interpersonal skills
- Understand the importance of inviting and challenging the good and bad news
- Appreciate the benefits of effective reward, recognition and reinforcement

BEING ME:

Leaders will be able to:

- Understand HSL's model for effective health and safety leadership
- Reflect on their own health and safety leadership style and what can influence their own decision making and subsequent behaviours

BEING HUMAN:

- Better understand the myriad of influences upon others' behaviour (introducing HSL's evidence based model of human behaviour), including the impact of our subconscious bias, learning styles and human error. This will help leaders respond more appropriately to their team.

The workshop is designed to equip you with the latest thinking and research in health and safety leadership as well as provide you with the opportunity to share your own experiences, reflect on your capabilities, consider ways in which you can drive a leadership strategy forward in your own organisation and learn from your peers and HSL experts.

Delegates will leave with an individual and organisational development plan for how they intend to improve their own and others leadership capabilities.

Who will benefit?

This workshop is for anyone with senior health and safety leadership responsibility, i.e. health and safety managers and directors, operations directors, human resource directors, company directors. This workshop could be delivered in-house depending upon company requirements.

Venue

The workshop will be run at the Health & Safety Laboratory in the spa town of Buxton. Buxton is in the heart of the Peak District and has good links to mainline train stations and Manchester International Airport.

Details of hotels in the Buxton area can be found at www.visitbuxton.co.uk

Cost

The cost of this workshop is £495 per person (includes course notes, lunch and refreshments).

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[Book Course](#)

Please note the invoice option is not available within 4 weeks of the course date, or for overseas customers. If you are selecting the invoice option for payment, it will be mandatory to input a purchase order/reference number as we are unable to process booking forms without this.

For further dates and additional information email: training@hsl.gsi.gov.uk or contact the Training & Conferences Unit at HSL directly on +44 (0)1298 218806.

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[John McDonnell responds to the IFS Green Budget](#)

John

McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow Chancellor, responding to the publication of the IFS Green

Budget today, which reveals that the Tories are going ahead with £34bn in additional austerity at a time when the NHS is in crisis following the slowest growth in health spending since the 1950s, said:

"This report from the IFS is damning of the seven wasted years of Tory economic failure. Rather than learning the lessons of his predecessor, Philip Hammond is pursuing an austerity agenda that will make matters in our NHS and social care system even worse.

"The Chancellor who has been at the heart of government since 2010 must take his share of responsibility, especially as the IFS is now cutting growth forecasts with the national debt at its highest as a fraction of national income since England won the World Cup, and with the tax burden at its highest in thirty years.

"The fact the NHS is seeing its slowest growth in funding since the 1950s proves you cannot trust the Tories with our health service. And the social care crisis is only set to get even worse as the Tories refuse to provide the funding needed, continuing to let elderly people in our communities down.

"Rather than going ahead with £34 billion of austerity while our public services are already stretched, which as the IFS say have under the Tories seen the longest fall in funding on record, it is time for the Chancellor to truly change direction.

"Labour would call for a serious boost to investment, underpinned by our Fiscal Credibility Rule, which would help bring an end to a Tory economy rigged against working people; sort out the public finances; and get the national debt under control."

Central authorities handle over 90 pct suggestions, proposals

The central authorities handled 11,735 suggestions and proposals submitted by legislators and political advisors in 2016, over 90 percent of all of those submitted.

Xi Yanchun, spokeswoman with the State Council Information Office said at a press conference on Tuesday that State Council departments had responded to 7,873 suggestions raised by deputies to the National People's Congress and 3,862 proposals put forward by members of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference during the annual sessions of the two bodies held in March 2016.

This means that 91.5 percent of the national legislators' suggestions and 90.9 percent of political advisors' proposals put forward during the two sessions were handled by the central authorities, Xi said.

More than 3,000 suggestions and proposals had been adopted by State Council departments and over 1,300 policies and measures have been introduced accordingly, Xi said, adding that the process had improved the quality of government decision-making.

The Ministry of Education (MOE), which handled 1,023 legislators' suggestions and 805 political advisors' proposals, introduced 81 new policies in 2016, most of which were inspired by the suggestions and proposals, according to Shen Xiaoming, vice minister of the MOE, at the briefing.

Issues of top concern last year included student life, educational equality and development of higher education, Shen said.

Inspired by the suggestions and proposals, the National Health and Family Planning Commission issued a guideline on what it calls "Healthy China," with more than 20 other authorities, and launched an action plan to improve medical services, according to Cui Li, deputy director of the commission, at the briefing.