

PE1653/H

Petitioner submission of 11 May 2018

I would like to raise a few points regarding the Committee's recent response to the consideration of the petition:

1. It is a sensible decision to await the Task Force and TRCI reports.
2. Liaising with Environment Cttee - is fine, but presumably the Env't Cttee was primarily considering the pollution and CO₂e aspects, not the perhaps more important question of safety and of public health and, most importantly, the gov't's target to hugely increase cycle use. I have read 'The Evidence Review of the Potential Wider Impacts of Climate Change Mitigation Options: Transport Sector' reported to the Scottish government. Below is the executive summary. It is clear active travel has a key role to play in pollution and CO₂e emissions reductions but more importantly there is a real opportunity to improve health by supporting active travel which 'dominates the literature.'
 - 'This evidence review is based on a systematic literature review of over 100 papers on the wider impacts of climate change mitigation in the transport sector. The review looked at qualitative and quantitative sources of relevance to the Scottish context. Particular consideration was given to the impacts from an equalities perspective.
 - Overall the evidence base suggests there are a number of potential co-benefits associated with transport climate change mitigation measures. Health benefits associated with increased levels of walking and cycling dominates the literature. Reductions in car vehicle kilometres whether through modal shift or demand reduction (e.g. through teleworking) can offer air quality improvements, noise and congestion reduction. There is also an emerging evidence base on the co-benefits of improved transport efficiencies. However, the extent of these benefits, particularly from an equalities perspective, is dependent on how and where policies are implemented and the extent of consumer uptake and acceptance.
 - Transport is a major contributor to air quality pollutant emissions. An emerging literature base suggests that improvements in vehicle efficiency for example, through the use of electric vehicles can offer benefits here. Further understanding relating to population exposure and the spatial distribution of these vehicles to ensure these benefits is required. The evidence base suggests links between socially deprived neighbourhoods and exposure to higher levels of air pollution, thus consideration should be given to the geographic positioning of demonstration schemes and grants to help facilitate equitable, social and distributional benefits of these vehicles.
 - There are opportunities too with regard to the potential for noise reduction through the use of electric vehicles, however a fuller understanding of the implications of the European Commission's required introduction of sound generating devices (for safety purposes) on these vehicles is necessary to better understand the extent of this potential reduction.

- Modal shift from car to public transport and walk and cycle can potentially bring about reductions in noise, air pollution and congestion. The level of benefit depends on the extent of modal shift in terms of car vehicle kilometres reduced, and where and when these reductions take place. For public transport modes, the impacts will be greatest when the modal shift is to cleaner vehicles. To capture these potential benefits, guidance is available at the UK and Scottish level. In terms of quantitative approaches, recent Defra modelling work may be highly relevant. Identification of opportunities from an equalities perspective is required e.g. the location of bike share schemes in areas where the numbers of existing cyclists is limited.

I would also like to point out that if the Petitions Committee is liaising with other committees, the most relevant committee on cycling is the committee which deals with transport policy.

3. Regarding some cyclists not using cycle routes, The Committee would need data on how many use each route, not anecdotal comment from committee members. Maurice Corry himself stated that the cycle path surface is poor, and there may well be additional reasons why some prefer the road (note that not all motorists prefer the same type of road!). It is extremely concerning that Maurice Corry suggested 'some sort of enforcement' in his comments.
4. Finally, I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the new Scottish Parliament SPICe report <https://spice-spotlight.scot/2018/04/26/cycling-what-works/> which states. 'Increasing the proportion of everyday journeys made by bike is a policy aim of the Scottish Government.' My question is how is the government going to ensure that policies and actions recommended by the SPICe report, such as:
 - 'Long term, strong pro-cycling political and official leadership at a national and local level.
 - Cycling is seen as a legitimate transport choice and accorded appropriate physical infrastructure and policy priority.
 - Plans are in place for the development and maintenance of a comprehensive cycle network focused on facilitating everyday cycling.
 - Cycle networks are based on clear design standards aimed at ensuring direct, obstacle free travel' are integrated into transport infrastructure and policy making decisions throughout Scotland and within different local authorities?