

**Councillor Joanna Baker-Rogers – Cabinet Member for Adult
Social Care and Health**

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31st July 2024

Councillor Simon Ball
Elected Member

Via email: simon.ball@rotherham.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Ball

Question at Council Meeting – 17th July 2024

Thank you for the question you raised as part of the discussions on the Health and Wellbeing Board minutes. I have set out your question and my response below:

With the Council not hitting its own targets on reducing its emissions as of last year, despite revising its targets to make them more favourable, did the Cabinet Member agree that the Council was contributing to the poor mortality rates? You referenced a section of the minutes that stated: “Given that much of the impact that air pollution had on mortality was linked with cardiovascular deaths, it was considered that it made a contribution to some of, perhaps even all, cardiovascular deaths.” You stated that the Council was therefore failing to protect its residents and contributing to a lower mortality rate. You asked when the Council would get a grip of the emissions it produces in order to help residents.

I can advise that there is a difference between emissions and air pollution. The pollutants that are known to directly contribute to cardiovascular disease, and thus have an impact on mortality rates are: particulates, nitrogen oxides and carbon monoxide. None of these pollutants fall within the scope of the Council’s plan to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2030. Whilst it is still important for the Council to make progress on the greenhouse gas emissions target, missing it is unlikely to have a significant impact on mortality rates in the same way that the other pollutants named above do. While the Council does not set targets on air pollution, there are four Air Quality Management Areas in Rotherham, each of which has a [plan](#) in place to reduce nitrogen dioxide pollution which will have a positive impact on local health.

However, reducing greenhouse gas emissions offers indirect benefits to cardiovascular health through reducing climate change and the resultant health consequences of extreme temperatures. A climate change annual report and action plan is published on the Council website, and in total the Council is responsible for only 0.55% of all relevant emissions in the Borough. In terms of promoting reductions in both emissions and pollutants, we are continuing to encourage and support an active travel agenda.

There is currently a consultation out with citizens and stakeholders to explore how we can develop our transport planning to improve our environment, improve health behaviours and reduce harms: <https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/travel-schemes/say-local-sustainable-travel>

I hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Joanna Baker-Rogers
Rawmarsh West Ward
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health