

PLYMOUTH'S BRITTANY FERRIES' CONNECTIONS TO SPAIN AND BRITTANY

Amendments to Annex VI of The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) set out more stringent limits on sulphur oxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from ships' exhaust. The new regulations are to take effect on 1 January 2015.

The Council is concerned that –

- (a) this is a short term challenge for Brittany Ferries; the company is investing £100 million and has commissioned a new ship at £225million. Plymouth will have the latest environmental technology and a new ship, which will exceed the (MARPOL) standards by late spring 2017. Plymouth will have one of the cleanest ferry routes in Europe, operating uniquely on liquid nitrogen gas, which will have a hugely beneficial environmental impact. The new ferry will replace the company's current flagship Pont-Aven and is designed to have capacity for almost 2,500 passengers. Brittany Ferries makes a significant contribution to our economy in terms of revenue and employment (supporting over 1,000 jobs across the UK);
- (b) unless the company is given a short term exemption to continue to burn heavy fuel oil for the next two years, or is provided with government support to ensure the short term commercial viability to burn "cleaner" marine gas oil , (estimated additional cost £30 million) the route will become more expensive for both freight and passengers. This will result in a shift of passengers to less environmentally-friendly air travel. Furthermore, fuel switching to low sulphur diesel, has a significant negative impact in terms of pushing freight back onto roads. Clearly this is unsustainable and poses a significant risk to local jobs and investment, as well as the environment.

The City Council agrees to support Brittany Ferries and lobby the Secretary of State to protect its connections to Spain and Brittany by –

- (1) seeking a short term exemption to continue to burn heavy fuel for the next two years pending procurement of new technology and provision of a new ferry; or
- (2) providing government support;

to ensure the short term commercial viability of Brittany Ferries, thus protecting local jobs and investment as well as the environment.

Proposed by Councillor Evans
Seconded by Councillor Bowyer