

TO: LICENSING AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
12 JUNE 2014

AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN
Chief Officer: Environment and Public Protection

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report brings to the attention of the Committee the results of a consultation which has been undertaken as part of a process to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). This plan has been developed with the aim of acknowledging and seeking to address air quality within two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) declared within Bracknell Forest.
- 1.2 The report addresses the comments received and where appropriate has built them into the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That the Committee comments upon the content of the Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) (Annex 1) and agrees to its adoption and submission to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council is required to finalise its AQAP and submit it to DEFRA.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 It is a legal requirement that the Council must have in place an AQAP where an AQMA has been declared.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Council is required to measure the air quality within its area. This has and is still being carried through the location of Air Quality measuring tubes in a large number of locations across the Borough. Where concentrations are found to be above certain levels a process must be followed which may lead to an AQMA being declared. In such circumstances there is a further process to be followed to monitor the air quality in those areas and develop an action plan to address the causes. A copy of the proposed AQAP is attached to this report as Annex 1.
- 5.2 The two areas identified as AQMAs are shown in Annex 2a and Annex 2b. In both areas the main pollutant is nitrogen dioxide which is a consequence of traffic flow within those areas. The issue of traffic flow also has the consequence of causing delays for people living in or passing through the Borough. Improving traffic flow is a primary function of the Local Transport Plan 2100-2026 (LTP3) and therefore many of the actions and projected outcomes within that document are also included where they are appropriate to reducing pollution within the AQMAs.
- 5.3 The AQAP if approved will be used to measure our progress within the AQMAs. The most likely contributor to a reduction in air pollution originating from vehicles is likely to be the national strategy to reduce vehicle emissions by manufacturing more efficient engines, although changes to increase the flow and speed of traffic through

the AQMA can also make significant differences. The impact of our AQAP will be monitored and reported upon on an annual basis as part of our legal requirement to report to DEFRA.

- 5.4 From 2 February until 31 March a consultation process was undertaken regarding the actions identified within the proposed AQAP. This was conducted through the Council website and included contact with statutory bodies and neighbouring authorities. A draft plan was submitted to DEFRA and they made comments. A copy of the comments received together with the officer's views and actions is attached to the report as Annex 3.
- 5.5 The next stage is for the Committee to agree that this plan is adopted and submitted to DEFRA. This plan will then be used to set actions which will be measured by air quality data with the Borough.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The legal implications are identified within the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 Budgetary provision has been made to measure air quality within the Borough. Work detailed within the the AQAP will be subject to a seperate budget process.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 There are no implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 The importance of the effect of air pollution on public health is reflected by the inclusion of an indicator of mortality associated with air pollution in the Public Health Outcomes Framework. Authorities are required to work towards the national air quality objectives by drawing up action plans setting out the measures they intend to take in pursuit of them. Failure to do so will put the Council at risk of criticism from national government and from those impacted by poor air quality.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 A public consultation process was undertaken between 2 February 2014 and 31 March 2014.

Method of Consultation

- 7.2 Council website.

Representations Received

- 7.3 See Annex 3

Background Papers

Unrestricted

Air Quality Strategy - DEFRA.
Air Quality Management Areas – Bracknell Forest 2013
Bracknell Forest - Local Transport 2001-2016

Contact for further information

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