

JOINT AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

(Report by Head of Environmental & Community Health Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of progress with the statutory process known as 'Air Quality Review and Assessment' and to seek authority for the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services to publish a Joint Air Quality Action Plan in conjunction with Cambridge City Council (CCityC) and South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC).

A hard copy of the report has been placed in the Members Room and electronic versions can be emailed on request.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Progress on Air Quality Review and Assessment was last reported in June 2007 when the findings of the Further Assessment of Air Quality (February 2007) and the Air Quality Progress Report (May 2007) were reported to the Licensing and Protection Panel.
- 2.2 At that time the Panel granted authority to publish the reports and to amend three of the Councils' four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).
- 2.3 Following the Further Assessment of air quality within the declared AQMAs there is an obligation on the Council to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which will propose actions to be taken in pursuit of the national Air Quality Objectives. Due to the similarities in air quality issues within the three administrative areas and the contiguous A14, the draft AQAP has been developed jointly with CCityC and SCDC.

3. THE AIR QUALITY REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 3.1 The Review and Assessment process is outlined in technical guidance (LAQM.TG09) and policy guidance (LAQM.PG09) issued by Defra. The aims of the process are to comply with the provisions of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and various sets of regulations made under the act. The majority of the air quality objectives contained in UK regulations originate from Europe.
- 3.2 The Review and Assessment process involves annual reporting to Defra, usually involving information on air quality monitoring practice, data capture, pollutant concentrations and development changes which have had an impact on air quality.
- 3.3 Where observed or predicted exceedences of national air quality objectives are reported to Defra the requirement for a Detailed Assessment is triggered. Huntingdonshire conducted Detailed

Assessments in 2005 and 2006. Where Detailed Assessments confirm exceedences of air quality objectives then AQMAs have to be declared.

- 3.4 Huntingdonshire declared AQMAs in 2006 and 2007. The declaration of these AQMAs then triggered a Further Assessment stage in which detailed source apportionment studies were conducted for the AQMAs. Huntingdonshire completed the Further Assessment in 2007.
- 3.5 The next stage of the process is the development of an AQAP in which actions are proposed in pursuit of the air quality objectives. The Action Plan also includes further technical work and proposes various actions, targets and indicators. It is this AQAP that Officers have now drafted in conjunction with the two other councils.

4.0 THE JOINT AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

- 4.1 The draft Joint AQAP has been developed by the three council's over the last eighteen months. It has been informed by, and has drawn from, work carried out during previous rounds of Review and Assessment. Many of the previous stages of Review and Assessment were also produced jointly by the Cambridgeshire districts.
- 4.2 In excess of one hundred measures have been considered during the process and these measures, together with an early draft document, were the subject of stakeholder and public consultation workshops in March 2009.
- 4.3 Following the consultation stage each Council brought forward their favoured measures as proposed actions, based on expected positive impacts on pollutant concentrations in AQMAs, cost-benefit analysis and deliverability.
- 4.4 The Huntingdonshire measures have either already been delivered during the AQAP development stage, are already in progress via other programmes such as the Local Transport Plan and A14 upgrade or are works in progress via the Environmental Protection Team. They can be found on pages 57-59 of the draft Joint AQAP.
- 4.5 Measures in the draft Joint AQAP do not commit Huntingdonshire to any additional expenditure or policy measures which are not already agreed via other regimes.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The draft Joint AQAP has been developed together with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- 5.2 The draft Joint AQAP proposes actions, targets and indicators for measures which will improve pollutant concentrations in existing AQMAs without committing Huntingdonshire to any additional expense.
- 5.3 The draft Joint AQAP has already been subjected to a series of consultation workshops which included inputs from district and county Members and Officers, industry representatives, interested parties and members of the public.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 It is recommended that the Head of Environmental & Community Health Services be authorised to:

- (a) Publish the Joint Air Quality Action Plan,
- (b) Publish subsequent annual progress reports on the Joint Air Quality Action Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Environment Act 1995, Part IV
Technical Guidance LAQM. TG(09)

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