

SUBJECT:	Draft Air Quality Action Plan
RELEVANT MEMBER	Councillor Patrick Hogan – Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Martin Holt – Head of Healthy Communities Ben Coakley – Environmental Health Manager
REPORT AUTHOR	Cerys Williams
WARD/S AFFECTED	Iver Heath; Iver Village and Richings Park;

1. Purpose of Report

To present the draft Air Quality Action Plan that sets out, in partnership, how stakeholders will work to improve air quality in the Iver Air Quality Management Area.

The report also updates on two linked air quality projects, one with schools and one utilising innovative air quality sensors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. That the Cabinet Member approves the draft Air Quality Action Plan for formal public consultation following consideration by the PAG.**
- 2. Following consultation and the consideration of feedback, the action plan will be finalised for approval by Cabinet and DEFRA.**
- 3. That PAG note the two air quality project updates**

2. Reasons for Recommendations

South Bucks District Council is legally obliged to work to reduce concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide within the AQMA in the Ivers.

Following stakeholder engagement, it is considered that the planned measures outlined in the report provide a good range of activities that if fully implemented are likely to result in reductions in air pollution in the Parish.

It is recommended that members of the public are asked for their views on the proposed action plan as improving air quality relies on a collective effort and is dependent on their support and also that of local business and other interested parties.

3. The Draft Air Quality Action Plan

Background:

The Environment Act 1995 obligates each Local Authority (District / Unitary) to monitor its area for air pollution. Where concentrations of certain pollutants fail to meet the Air Quality Objectives set by the Government then an Air Quality Management Area must be declared.

South Bucks District Council has been monitoring Nitrogen Dioxide using passive diffusion tube at a number of locations in the district since 1995. However the percentage of HGVs travelling through Iver Village has been an increasing concern and following a review in 1996, it was decided to increase the number of monitoring locations in Iver to investigate any possible breaches of the Air Quality objectives.

In 2017 the new monitoring locations in Iver measured concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide above the annual average of $40\mu\text{g}\text{m}^{-3}$. Consequently an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared on 1st August 2018. The locations of the greatest exceedance are located on Iver High Street, Thorney Lane North and South.

Following the declaration of an AQMA, the Environment Act 1995 obligates Local Authorities to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

Plan Development:

The purpose of the plan is to reduce the concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide in the AQMA to below the annual mean objective of $40\mu\text{g}\text{m}^{-3}$ as soon as possible. Although the AQMA covers Iver Parish, the Action Plan is initially focused on those areas which have the largest exceedances.

The measures outlined in the report should result in an improvement in Air Quality and all measures identified should not result in poorer air quality elsewhere in the area.

To develop the action plan, two steering groups were set up: an Officers Steering Group and a Members Steering Group. These were made up of key stakeholders representing all 3 tiers of local government. Meetings were held to discuss the possible measures and these were then deliberated further at one to one meetings and the Iver Members Liaison Group.

It was agreed that the Iver Relief Road would be the most ideal solution, removing HGVs from Iver High Street. However this may be considered a longer term action and will therefore continue to be raised as part of ongoing activities and will also require co-ordinated action to seek funding.

Other shorter term proposals are therefore also required. These include: increasing car parking provision, targeting HGV fleet and enhancement of bus services.

Contents and Summary of the Plan:

The Action Plan has been developed using the official template provided by Defra. A full copy of the Air Quality Action Plan is appended to this report. However the following is a brief outline of the document

- There is an Executive Summary with a very brief outline of the contents of the document and Introduction including that the action plan is to be delivered between 2019 and 2025.
- There is a summary outlining history of Air Quality in South Bucks District Council and its current position. This Action Plan will supersede the previous action plan that had previously been developed for the Motorway AQMA only.
- SBDC's Air Quality priorities outline how National Policies and Strategies influence the AQAP, these include:
 - Public Health
 - Planning (Local Plan)
 - Transport (LTP4)
 - National Air Quality Strategies
- The source apportionment calculation identifies the main sources of the pollution. It was evident that road traffic was the main source. The calculation has identified that the main source of NO₂ on Thorney Mill North and South are HGVs and HGVs and Diesel Cars have shared responsibility on the High Street.
- The calculation also informs the Key Priorities for the Action Plan (page 13) which is to reduce emissions from HGVs.

Key plan elements:

A short, medium and long term plan has been outlined here which summarises as follows:

- A significant number of HGVs travelling through Iver originate from 3 industrial estates within Iver. Encourage the uptake of cleaner vehicles including the investigation of introducing alternative fuels such as CNG.
- Minimise impact of National Infrastructure Projects on Iver

- Improve car parking provision in Iver and to introduce car parking restrictions on the Highway
- Carry out a feasibility study for a Clean Air Zone (CAZ) in Iver and simultaneously work with Slough Borough Council to ensure that the proposed CAZ in Slough does not have a negative impact on Iver.
- Develop a relief road that would take HGVs away from the High Street
- A chapter that outlines the consultation and engagement as part of action planning.
- The final Chapter contains the actual measures that the Steering groups have proposed with the aim of reducing concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide within the AQMA.

Air Quality is also a material consideration for development control. The publication of an Air Quality Action Plan will give extra weight to any decisions regarding air quality in those areas. Also planning guidance is more stringent within or near AQMAs than outside of these areas.

Conclusion:

In addition to being a legal requirement, the development of an action plan for Iver is a key step in highlighting the tasks ahead and how in partnership they can be achieved. Following public consultation, the feedback will be considered by those developing the plan and amendments made if required. The plan will then require agreement by Cabinet and also official approval by DEFRA.

The two following projects are linked to the Iver area and demonstrate ongoing air quality action:

4. Iver Update – Schools

In June 2019 Heathrow Airport Ltd worked with South Bucks District council and 2 Iver Junior schools to hold an event at the Schools on Clean Air Day. The schools took the opportunity to learn more about air pollution, its sources and how to prevent it. Both schools produced an excellent painting of a pair of lungs by blowing paint across the paper using straws. Materials were supplied by Heathrow Airport Ltd.

5. Iver Update – Sensor Trial

Earlier in the year, Defra invited Local Authorities to seek funding to run projects that support innovation through trialling of low cost sensors. Projects needed to further develop the understanding of the deliverability and the value for money opportunities low cost sensors may provide. This may be demonstrated through projects that:

- Compare new sensors with the traditional monitoring and evaluation network.
- Conduct specific campaigns where existing sensors networks are not suitable
- Harness new data streams and use these to effectively communicate with key stakeholders.
- Provide agile policy analysis and evaluation.

South Bucks District Council in conjunction with Spelthorne, Heathrow Airport and Ricardo Energy and Environment were successful in receiving £124,000 to trial sensors.

The group will trial 2 types of sensors: Electronic Diffusion Tubes and Vaisala multi pollutant sensor systems. The sensors will be used to monitor the following:

- Air pollution from Heathrow Airport
- Any changes in concentration in Air Pollution as a result of measures being introduced in the area as outlined in the Air Quality Action Plan
- Analyse the efficacy of introducing certain mitigation measures at Heathrow Airport and use this information to inform Local Authorities of their effectiveness.

The funding will be used to purchase 130 Electronic Diffusion Tubes and 12 Vaisala multi pollutant sensors as well as data management from Ricardo Energy and Environment. The EDTs will be deployed in the following locations:

- the perimeter fence on Heathrow airport
- on 2 transects from the airport perimeter fence and into South Bucks and Spelthorne
- Strategic locations within the AQMAs to measure progress.

Ten of the Vaisala multi pollutant sensor systems will be utilised for fixed deployment in three concentrated campaigns at the airport perimeter and in South Bucks and Spelthorne, with the remaining two units used to fulfil two distinct functions: to perform the role of characterising standards and as hot swap spares in the result of sensor failure during the trial.

The project is still in its infancy and SBDC are currently in the process of purchasing the sensors.

6. Consultation

It is recommended that a consultation exercise be carried out to consult members of the public on the suggested measures in the draft plan over a 12 week period. This will be via detailed information on the website, local media and social media.

7. Options (if any)

The Environment Act 1995 compels Local Authorities to monitor areas for Nitrogen Dioxide and where concentrations exceed the objective an AQMA is declared. The Act also obliges Local Authorities to develop an Air Quality Action Plan. Therefore alternative options to developing the plan are not available.

8 Corporate Implications

Financial - A table has been included in Appendix C outlining funding opportunities for the action plan.

Legal - Local Authorities are obliged to develop action plans where AQMAs have been declared. AQMAs and their Action Plans are a material consideration in Development Management.

9 Links to Council Policy Objectives

The Air Quality Action plan aims to advance 2 of the three headline objectives

- Working towards safe and healthier local communities
- Striving to conserve the environment and promote sustainability

The plan also relates to the following three key themes of the Chiltern and South Bucks Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan

- Theme 2 - Sustainable Environment - protecting our heritage, protecting our future
- Theme 3 - Safer Communities - being safe, feeling safe
- Theme 4 - Health and Well-Being - healthier, happier and longer lives

<http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/prioritiesandperformance>

7. Next Steps

If approved for consultation, the Air Quality Action Plan will then be consulted on by members of the public. Consultation responses will then be considered, amendments made and then approval sought from Cabinet.

Background Papers:	South Bucks Air Quality Action Plan (September 2019)
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