

Cherwell District Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10 July 2018

Air Quality Action Plan Update

Report of Executive Director Environment

This report is public

Purpose of report

To review the agreed Air Quality Action Plan for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington and to update with new initiatives to improve air quality.

Recommendations

The meeting is recommended :

- 1.1 To review and comment on the Air Quality Action Plan for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington

1.0 Introduction

- 2.1 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 established the legislative framework for local air quality management. Under the Act, the Council has a statutory duty to review and assess air quality in the District against national air quality objectives and co-ordinate actions to improve air quality where exceedances are identified.
- 2.2 Local authorities have a duty to declare any area where an air quality objective is unlikely to be, or is not being met as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Once an AQMA has been declared the Council is required to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) outlining the measures required to improve air quality in that area.
- 2.3 The assessment reports confirmed the air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide was being exceeded at four locations in the District and AQMAs were subsequently declared for these areas. The AQMAs are at:

1. Hennef Way in Banbury
2. Horsefair/North Bar in Banbury
3. Bicester Road in Kidlington
4. Kings End/Queens Avenue in Bicester

- 2.4 The review and assessment process identified nitrogen dioxide from road transport sources as the pollutant of concern in Cherwell. The review and assessment reports, details on the latest monitoring, the location of the AQMAs and the AQAP can be found on the air quality management page of the Council's website at www.cherwell.gov.uk/airqualitymanagement.

2.0 Report Details

- 3.1 The AQAP was agreed by the Executive on 6 March 2017.
- 3.2 A review of the 2017 actions has been undertaken in consultation with the following;
- Oxfordshire County Council Highways Department
 - The Bicester Delivery Team
 - The Council's Environmental Services
 - The Council's Strategic Transport, Strategic Planning and the Economy team
- 3.3 An updated AQAP is attached at Appendix 1 that includes comments on the progress to date, and actual or estimated completion dates where known.
- 3.4 The AQAP will be reviewed annually to check progress on the agreed actions but also to consider any additional measures that could be included.
- 3.5 The key issues over the past year and proposed changes are as follows;
- When compared to the 2016 data nitrogen dioxide levels in 2017 decreased across the district except in the Hennef Way (83 to 85), Horsefair (39 to 42) and Kidlington (40 to 41) AQMAs.
 - The weight restriction in Bicester applies to 7.5T heavy commercial vehicles and covers the whole of the central corridor (action 4.2). Entry is prohibited (except for access) into the B4100 Banbury Road (south of its junction with Lords Lane and Southwold Lane), the Buckingham Road (south of its junction with Southwold Lane and Skimmingdish Lane), and Kings End (north from its junction with Oxford Road and Middleton Stoney Road). A recent volumetric weekday (0700-1900) survey undertaken by the County Council showed how few HGVs make use of the central corridor compared to the Launton Road, data below:

Queens Avenue northbound, average weekday 12 hour hgv flow = 268
Queens Avenue southbound, average weekday 12 hour hgv flow = 209
Percentage of total flow over that period, northbound = 3%
Percentage of total flow over that period, southbound = 3%

Launton Road eastbound, average weekday 12 hour hgv flow = 30767
Launton Road westbound, average weekday 12 hour hgv flow = 3161
Percentage of total flow over that period, eastbound = 45%
Percentage of total flow over that period, westbound = 46%
- Enforcement can be carried out by either the police or OCC's Trading Standards; it is mainly done through the latter.

- 3.6 Consideration is currently being given to the use of electric charging points at its two depots and the subsequent use of electric vehicles for the Council's fleet. However, the Council has a number of opportunities through its range of public assets to consider a wider application of electric charging points which can be accessible to the public. Such examples include the major car parks, Bodicote House for public and staff purposes, Castle Quay car parks, leisure centres, sports facilities and other potential new developments. Therefore, further detailed consideration is needed to assess the feasibility of this wider application.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The production of an AQAP is mandatory once an order to declare an AQMA has been issued. The Council has issued an order for each of the four AQMAs declared.
- 4.2 There is much activity underway to improve air quality particularly in the declared AQMAs. This is very much multi agency in nature given that where poor air quality is identified, it is all traffic derived. It will be important for the Council to maintain this multi-agency approach.
- 4.3 A specific initiative worthy of further consideration is how the use of the Council's wide range of assets can provide opportunities for public electric car charging points to respond to changes in the direction of travel of car technology which in turn will assist air quality locally.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 The main period of consultation was undertaken in 2016 when the AQAP was established.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative option has been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: The Council could choose not to adopt an AQAP. However, once an AQMA has been declared the Council is required to produce an AQAP and so for this reason this is not an alternative option.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications for the Council arising directly from this report. The continuing review and assessment of air quality and the development of the AQAP will be met within existing budgets. Should the Council decide to progress electric charging points in its key car parks, there are likely to be significant capital expenditure implications which will be considered separately when a full assessment of that is made.

Comments checked by Kelly Wheeler, Principal Accountant (Operations and Delivery), 01327 322230, kelly.wheeler@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There is a statutory requirement to review and assess air quality and if an AQMA has been declared it is a requirement to produce an AQAP outlining the actions to improve air quality in that area.

Comments checked by Nigel Bell, Team Leader Planning & Litigation, 01295 221687 nigel.bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Risk

- 7.3 There is an increase in risk to health to prolonged and continuous exposure to elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide. This risk is being managed through the service risk register and will be escalated if necessary to the Leadership register.

Comments checked by Louise Tustian, Team Leader, Strategic Intelligence & Insight, 01295 221786, louise.tustian@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: Yes

Wards Affected

Banbury Grimsbury and Hightown
Banbury Cross and Neithrop
Kidlington East
Bicester West
Bicester East
Bicester South and Ambrosden

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Fulfilling the statutory regulatory functions of the Council, supporting the protection of human health and wellbeing from poor air quality and protecting the natural environment link to the Council's Business Plan objective to 'work to promote and support health and wellbeing across the District'

Lead Councillor

Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Environment

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Updated Cherwell District Air Quality Action Plan March 2018
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Trevor Dixon, Environmental Protection Manager
Contact Information	01327 322279 Trevor.dixon@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk