



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing Paper

### Subject: Air Quality Update

Director: Graeme Kane, Chief Operating Officer

Officer Responsible: Trevor Dixon Environmental Protection and Licensing Manager

<b>Background and Reason for Briefing Note</b>	To provide updates on the air quality monitoring carried out across the District in 2018 and the review of the Air Quality Action Plan for Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington. The September 2019 Air Quality Action Plan is attached for information.
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#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. 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.
- 1.2. Where an air quality objective is unlikely to be, or is not being met an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) must be declared. 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.
- 1.3. Four AQMAs have been declared because air quality does not meet the annual mean air quality objective for Nitrogen dioxide. The AQMAs are at:
  - AQMA No.1 - Hennef Way, Banbury
  - AQMA No.2 - Horsefair/North Bar, Banbury
  - AQMA No.3 - Bicester Road, Kidlington
  - AQMA No.4 - Kings End/Queens Avenue, Bicester
- 1.4. Nitrogen dioxide from road transport sources has been identified as the pollutant of concern in Cherwell.

#### 2.0 Monitoring

- 2.1 Nitrogen dioxide levels are measured using diffusion tubes. The tubes are changed monthly and returned to a laboratory for analysis. The monthly results are used to calculate the annual mean for each site. The annual mean air quality objective for Nitrogen dioxide against which the data is assessed is  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . In 2018 monitoring was undertaken using diffusion tubes at 42 locations across the District.
- 2.2 In AQMA No.1 (Hennef Way, Banbury) there was a decrease in concentrations to levels lower than those measured in the previous three years, which had all previously shown year on year increases. The measured level in 2018 was  $75\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  compared to 85 in 2017  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .
- 2.3 In AQMA No.2 (Horsefair/North Bar, Banbury) there were also reduced concentrations across most of the monitoring locations. Only the Oxford Road /South Bar monitoring location showed an increase in concentrations ( $33\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  to  $36\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) when compared to the previous year. In 2017 the monitoring location at Horsefair had exceeded ( $42\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) the



annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide; however in 2018 the objective was not exceeded at any of the locations in this AQMA.

- 2.4 In AQMA No.3 (Bicester Road, Kidlington) there was a decrease in nitrogen dioxide concentrations, taking the level at the nearest receptor to ten percent ( $36 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) below the objective level for the first time in five years. If this trend continues over the next 2 years the AQMA could be revoked.
- 2.5 In AQMA No.4 (Bicester) the Nitrogen dioxide concentration at King's End South remains stable but above ( $42 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) the annual mean objective level. All other monitoring locations in this AQMA remain below the objective level.
- 2.6 Overall the general trend in nitrogen dioxide concentrations across the District was downwards but the monitoring supports the retention of the AQMAs.
- 2.7 The full monitoring data for 2018 can be found in the 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report on the air quality management page of the Council's website at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/downloads/download/1069/air-quality-management> Councils are required to submit the Annual Status Reports to DEFRA each year for their review and assessment.

### **3.0 Air Quality Action Plan**

- 3.1 The AQAP was agreed by the Executive on 6 March 2017.
- 3.2 A review of the agreed actions has been undertaken in consultation with the following:
- Oxfordshire County Council
  - The Bicester Delivery Team
  - The Council's Environmental Services
- 3.3 An updated AQAP is attached at Appendix 1 that includes comments on the progress to date, new initiatives, and actual or estimated completion dates where known.
- 3.4 The AQAP is 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:
- OCC will be consulting on Local Transport Policy 5 (LTP5) this autumn and transport measures to reduce air quality issues will be a key part of area transport strategies within LTP5 (measure G.5).
  - Both CDC and OCC have started replacing their fleet vehicles with electric vehicles (measures G.8, G.9 and G.11).
  - Proposals for an additional junction on the M40 north of junction 11 with north facing slips should improve air quality in the Hennef Way AQMA (measure 1.4).

**Completed by: Trevor Dixon**

**Date: 1 October 2019**

**Presented to: Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 15 October 2019**