



AGENDA ITEM: 9

SUMMARY

Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	16th December 2014
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN
Contact:	Councillor Neil Harden - Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services David Austin – Assistant Director Neighbourhood Delivery Nicholas Egerton - Team Leader Environmental Protection & Housing Danielle Newnham – Scientific Officer.
Purpose of report:	To provide an opportunity for Members to comment on the Regulatory Services – Air Quality Action Plan, Appendix A of the report: http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/council-democracy/appendix-a---action-plan-(pdf-2-68-mb).pdf?sfvrsn=0
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Members note the contents of the Regulatory Services – Air Quality Action Plan as detailed in Appendix A. 2. That the Air Quality Action Plan as detailed in Appendix A. to this report be approved. <p>Please note the Air Quality Action Plan is available to view on the Dacorum Borough Council website via the following link:</p> <p>http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/docs/default-source/council-democracy/appendix-a---action-plan-(pdf-2-68-mb).pdf?sfvrsn=0</p>
Corporate Objectives:	To produce an Air Quality Action Plan in line with current best practice and one that provides value for money and most economical use of resources. Safe and Clean Environment

	Improvements made to improve the air quality within the borough will enable people to live longer and healthier. Reductions in nitrogen dioxide emissions are also likely to have a positive effect on other associated emissions.
Implications: 'Value For Money Implications'	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>There are limited financial implications relating to this report. The actions that are proposed have been reviewed and prioritised so only those that can be funded from existing resources or external funding opportunities (such as DEFRA) will be progressed. All officers costs associated with delivering the actions will be achieved within existing resources.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>Improvements in air quality in the borough will increase the health of the population, reduce sickness and reduce the cost of avoidable treatments. When options/actions have been considered we have assessed the total benefits and costs of a project, thereby allowing their direct comparison to see if the benefit exceed the costs and is used as a measure to assess value for money.</p>
Risk Implications	Dacorum Council has a duty to develop an Air Quality Action Plan following the identification and declaration of Air Quality Management Areas. Failure to comply with this requirement could leave this authority open to legal action and potential fines.
Community Impact Assessment	The aim of this policy includes improvements to all residents, however some measures are targeted at those within Air Quality Management Areas(AQMA's). There is believed to be only benefits to the community in general and also in the areas designated as AQMA's.
Health And Safety Implications	There are no additional health and safety implications associated with this report.
Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments	<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>No further comments to add to this report.</p> <p>S.151 Officer</p> <p>No further comments to add to this report.</p>
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder for Residents and Regulatory Services • Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director (Housing and Regeneration) • All properties within the Air Quality Management Areas • All relevant Town and Parish Council Members • All relevant Dacorum Borough Council Departments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dacorum Borough Council consultation email group • All neighbouring Borough and District Councils • Hertfordshire County Council • Defra • Local Chamber of Commerce • Bus Operators in Dacorum • Highways Agency • Environment Agency • Natural England <p>Dacorum Borough Council website for general public access.</p> <p>The comments received were considered and where appropriate included.</p>
Background papers:	Included in the reference section of the attached report Appendix A (section 11)
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	Included in the glossary section of the attached report Appendix A (section 12)

Background

1.0 Local Air Quality Management

1.1 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 requires all local authorities to periodically review and assess air quality in its area. The UK Government is required by Part IV of the Act to produce a national air quality strategy. This strategy introduced a review and assessment process, which requires local authorities to undertake annual assessments of air quality and determine areas where any of the health-based air quality objectives are likely to be exceeded. Objectives have been set for seven pollutants, (benzene, 1,3-butadiene, carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter (PM₁₀) and sulphur dioxide). The objectives are expressed as the maximum ambient concentration not to be exceeded. The air quality objectives only apply where members of the public are likely to be regularly present, this is termed 'relevant exposure'.

1.2 Where, any air quality objective is not being achieved, the local authority must designate an air quality management area (AQMA) and prepare, a written plan (referred to as an 'action plan') which must detail the range of air quality improvement measures to be adopted by the local authority

2.0 Air Quality in Dacorum

- 2.1 The Council undertakes monitoring of the main local air pollutants associated with urban areas: nitrogen oxides (NO_x); consisting of nitrogen oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Monitoring has indicated that the annual mean air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide is being exceeded at three locations within the borough: Lawn Lane, Hemel Hempstead; London Road, Apsley and High Street, Northchurch. As a result, in June 2012, the Council formally declared these areas as AQMAs.
- 2.2 The Council has drafted its air quality action plan, which has been subject to a two month public consultation. The action plan proposes twenty air quality improvement measures for the three AQMAs and the borough as a whole. These measures have been grouped into 'packages' where they have similar characteristics or are alternative options to achieve the same result. The Council does not necessarily have the power to implement all the measures directly but potentially it does have a role in attempting to influence those bodies or individuals who could implement them. Four packages of measures have been recommended for implementation at this time:
- Package of Measures 1: Reducing emissions via strategic measures
 - Package of Measures 2: Optimising traffic flow through the AQMAs
 - Package of Measures 3: Reducing transport emissions
 - Package of Measures 4: Promoting sustainable transport options

Those measures that are considered to provide good potential air quality benefits (with appropriate consideration of cost-effectiveness, feasibility, acceptability etc.), are most likely to contribute towards NO₂ reductions within the AQMAs and are realistically achievable within the short to medium term, have been given the highest priority for implementation. The Air Quality Action Plan is therefore an initial step showing the commitment this authority has towards improving air quality, but will need to be reviewed and progressed against the actions reported to Defra and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). It is proposed that annual progress will be reported to both OSC and DEFRA. The reporting time period will be in accordance with the DEFRA timetable for the submission of progress reports.

- 2.3 It is therefore recommended that Members note the contents of the Regulatory Services – Air Quality Action Plan as detailed in Appendix A.
- 2.4 That the Air Quality Action Plan as detailed in Appendix A. to this report be approved.

Please note Appendix A, the Air Quality Action Plan, can be viewed on the Dacorum Borough Council website via the following link:

<http://www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/council-democracy/meetings-minutes-and-agendas/events/2014/12/16/cabinet/cabinet>