



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	25 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	<b>Draft revised air quality action plan for 2019 – 2024 and air quality update</b>
Contact:	Julie Banks, Portfolio Holder for Community & Regulatory Services  Author/Responsible Officer  Neil Polden, Lead EHO for Environmental & Community Protection Emma Walker, Group Manager, Environmental & Community Protection
Purpose of report:	To provide to Members with an outline of the proposals for revisions to the Council's Air Quality Action Plan for 2019 – 2024, and;  To seek member approval for the draft action plan in principle.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cabinet approve the draft Air Quality Action Plan for 2019 – 2024.</li> <li>2. That Cabinet delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services to approve implementation of any of the measures noted in the Air Quality Action Plan following further feasibility and consultation where appropriate.</li> </ol>
Corporate Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clean, safe and enjoyable environment</li> <li>• Building strong and vibrant communities</li> <li>• Ensuring economic growth and prosperity</li> </ul>
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> There will be financial implications when the individual measures are considered for implementation.

<p>'Value For Money Implications'</p>	<p><u>Value for money</u> Development of the draft Air Quality Action Plan has been met within existing budget arrangements.</p>
<p>Risk Implications</p>	<p>The council is under a duty to ensure its action plan on air quality is periodically reviewed. Although no time limits are set, Defra expect this to be every 5 years. The current Air Quality Action Plan was set to run over a 3 year period from 2015 – 2108, and therefore must now be revised / updated.</p> <p>Monitoring of air quality within the 3 AQMAs has reported an overall reduction in ambient air quality levels for the pollutant nitrogen dioxide, but still well above intervention levels in the locality of London Road and Apsley. Therefore, revision of the current plan and consideration of more direct measures are justified.</p> <p>Failure to act also has the following implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for the public health to be put at risk</li> <li>• Legal action taken against the Council</li> <li>• Reputational damage to the Council</li> <li>• Mandated actions from central government</li> </ul>
<p>Community Impact Assessment</p>	<p>The air quality action plan is submitted as a draft of measures. A community impact assessment will be required once draft measures advance to implementation.</p>
<p>Health And Safety Implications</p>	<p>In the context of health and safety this relates to the duties of the Council as per the health and safety at work act, i.e. the general, safety, health and welfare of it's the Council's employees whilst at work (and the health and safety of the public from the Council's undertakings).</p> <p>Whilst the aim of the AQAP measures is to address air quality impacts from poor air quality and that of the health of the public at large, this falls beyond the scope of the Council's obligation to health and safety at work.</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b></p> <p>The Air Quality Action Plan will ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties as set out in the Environment Act 1995 to regularly review and assess air quality in its area.</p> <p><b>Deputy S.151 Officer:</b></p> <p>The revised air quality action plan has no immediate financial requirements. Funding for any future approved measures required, outside of the approved budget, will be submitted for formal approval.</p>

<p>Consultees:</p>	<p>The proposed mechanism of delivery for the draft Air Quality Action Plan will be a consult as we go approach. Different aspects of the plan may evolve at varying pace and so the philosophy will be to develop the evidence base for each measure and to address the feasibility that it can be implemented (excluding those measures where the stated aim is to undertake a feasibility assessment). We propose to consult as necessary with relevant partners and stakeholders on individual measures before seeking a mandate to implement those measures.</p>
<p>Background papers:</p>	<p>Draft Air Quality Action Plan 2019 – 2014</p>
<p>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</p>	<p>AQAP – Air Quality Action Plan  AQMA – Air Quality Management Area  EV – Electric Vehicle  CAZ – Clean Air Zone</p>

## 1. Background

The Council is under a duty to keep air quality in its area under review. Where it appears any of the objectives for air quality will not be met then the Council must designate the affected area as an air quality management area (AQMA).

Where the Council has declared an AQMA it must also produce an air quality action plan (AQAP) setting out measures to achieve air quality objectives. Measures put forward by the plan should be relevant, feasible and achievable. They should also be developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and partners.

Since 2012 the Council has declared 3 AQMAs due to exceedances of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). Source apportionment has identified road transportation as the reason for the exceedances within each of the AQMAs. The AQMAs declared by the Council are:

- AQMA 1: Lawn Lane, Hemel Hempstead
- AQMA 2: London Road, Apsley
- AQMA 3: High Street, Northchurch

In pursuance of its duty to air quality the Council produced an action plan which was approved by Cabinet on 16 December 2014. The plan contained 20 air quality improvement measures proposed for implementation over a 3 year period (2015 – 2018).

## **2. Air Quality Monitoring**

The Council continues to monitor air quality across its district. It has monitoring deployed at around 70 separate locations. This includes monitoring of air quality in the 3 AQMAs as well as other parts of the district where there is relevant exposure.

A general comparison of monitoring results from the 3 AQMAs has indicated a general overall reduction in ambient NO<sub>2</sub> levels, however at some locations ambient NO<sub>2</sub> levels have also increased. Therefore, there is no justification for revoking any of the existing AQMAs.

Within the Lawn Lane and London Road AQMAs ambient levels of NO<sub>2</sub> remain noticeably above objective limits. In the Northchurch AQMA ambient levels remain marginally above objective limits. Furthermore, when comparing the measured exceedances in this locality there is no change in levels from 2013 against 2017.

Monitoring undertaken across the rest of the district has not identified any exceedances of the relevant objective for NO<sub>2</sub>. Therefore, the Council does not consider a need to declare any further AQMAs. The Council will however continue to review and assess local air quality as per its duty.

## **3. Further action**

Referring to the most recent monitoring results within the Dacorum AQMAs it is considered that further action is required to achieve relevant air quality objectives.

The approach set under the draft revised air quality action plan is targeted at achieving overall emissions reduction, but also includes actions which are specific to each AQMA.

A summary of the measures presented with the draft AQAP are:

1. A corporate commitment to putting air quality at the heart of the decision making process
2. Maintaining links with the Local Transport Plan, the Local Development Framework and Public Health
3. Influencing emission reduction through new development
4. Relocation of the bus stop and removal of on-street parking in Northchurch
5. Clean Air Zone (CAZ) feasibility study
6. Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) feasibility study
7. Private Hire and Taxi Vehicle Emissions Policy
8. Advanced Quality Bus Partnership
9. Reducing Council Emissions
10. Emissions based parking charges
11. Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure study
12. Promoting Sustainable travel

Adoption of the AQAP measures will involve development with relevant partners, and consultation with other key stakeholders as appropriate.  
For example influencing emission reduction through new development will involve input and agreement from planning departments both at the Borough and County level.

It is proposed that the final decision on the adoption of completed AQAP measures (taking them from draft to implemented) should be sub-delegated by Cabinet to the relevant portfolio holder for community and regulatory services.