

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 MARCH 2018
AIR QUALITY
REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To receive an update on the Council's work in improving air quality since it was last considered on 6 July 2016.

2 Action required

- 2.1 To consider the information provided at the meeting on the action taken by the Council to manage and improve air quality locally, and determine whether a further (or more detailed) review should be scheduled in the work programme.

3 Background information

- 3.1 At its meeting on 6 July 2016 the Committee heard from Nottingham Friends of the Earth and the Environmental Health and Safer Places Team of the Council on the work to improve air quality.
- 3.2 The information highlighted at the meeting included:
- (a) Nottingham was starting to see a gradual decrease in annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentrations. Targets in Nottingham were being met, but these still needed to be lowered to meet World Health Organisation (WHO) targets;
 - (b) there were concentrations of PM 2.5 that exceeded WHO guidelines. Nottinghamshire was one of the highest outliers for air pollution particles affecting residents;
 - (c) Clean Air Zones were a method to try and reduce no2 emissions. This was the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) terminology for zones where special measures were to be taken. The proposal to the EU was to take action to reduce levels to the recommended level by 2020-2025;
 - (d) DEFRA recommended looking at buses, taxis and lorries. However, there were very few taxis and buses on the ring road near Crown Island in Nottingham. There were ongoing discussions with DEFRA over problems – it could be considered unfair that Nottingham City gets penalised for people travelling through the City from other boroughs;

- (e) in urban areas pollution produced by humans could be up to 99% of the total pollution in those areas;
- (f) over the last 15 years Nottingham City Council has targeted transport emissions. Travel plans, trams, walking and cycling have all been promoted. Energy efficiency was key – one method of this was insulating properties;
- (g) for houses on a main road, 75% of the air pollution was coming from the road outside;
- (h) there were effectively 18 months to get the new measures in place;
- (i) DEFRA require the Local Authority to adopt the lowest standard of measures, but the Local Authority could go further;
- (j) diesel vehicles require a higher operating temperature which led to a higher level of no2. There were diesel particulate filters on higher value cars, but not on lower engine diesels. DEFRA did not think it was financially viable to offer another scrappage scheme for diesel cars that were not environmentally friendly;
- (k) buses in Nottingham were seen as part of the solution rather than part of the problem – more focus was needed on individual action and bringing down the reliance on cars;
- (l) the 800 metre problem stretch on the A52 ring road in Nottingham did not have a residential property close enough to the road to trigger an AQA (Air Quality Assessment);
- (m) whilst the UK remained a member of the EU, the government could be fined for breaches of harmful fumes levels, and these fines could be passed onto local authorities;
- (n) DEFRA said that they would meet the costs in the setting up and declaring of a clean air zone. These costs could be recouped by whatever process is in place by the declaring of a clean air zone.

3.3 Representatives from the Environmental Health and Safer Places Team of the Council will be in attendance at the meeting to provide an updated position.

4 List of attached information

4.1 Briefing note from the Environmental Health and Safer Places Team of the Council.

5 Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

5.1 None

6 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

6.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee report and minutes – 6 July 2016.

7 Wards affected

7.1 All.

8 Contact information

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