
REPORT TO:	ENVIRONMENTAL AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM: 11
DATE OF MEETING:	2nd JUNE 2016	CATEGORY: RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	MIKE HAYNES- DIRECTOR OF HOUSING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	MATT HOLFORD – ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH MANAGER (EXT. 5856) matthew.holford@south-derbys.gov.uk	DOC:
SUBJECT:	AIR QUALITY ANNUAL STATUS REPORT – FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS01

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. That Members agree to issue the Annual Status Report (ASR) attached as Appendix A to this report as the Council's submission to DEFRA outlining the current status of air quality in South Derbyshire.
- 1.2. That Members agree to proposals 1 and 2 on page iv of the ASR (section titled Local Priorities and Challenges) and to receive a further report later in 2016/17 on specific proposals arising from this work prior to the development of the 2017-18 Performance Board for the Corporate Plan.

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1. To provide Members with an understanding of new evidence of the health impacts of air pollution and the changing role of local authorities following the release of new statutory guidance.
- 2.2. To provide members with information on latest measured air quality levels and air quality trends over the last 5 years.
- 2.3. To seek member approval for a proposed approach to responding to the changing role of local authorities given the current local air quality conditions.

3. Background

- 3.1. Under Section 82 of the Environment Act 1995 all local authorities have a duty to undertake a periodic review and assessment of air quality within their administrative boundaries.
- 3.2. These review and assessments are intended to establish whether levels of the most common environmental air pollutants meet European standards to ensure the protection of human health. Where these standards (known in the UK as Air Quality

Objectives) are not being met, the local authority has a duty to declare an Air Quality Management Order and then to develop an Air Quality Action Plan which must show how the authority is “in pursuit of the achievement” of the Air Quality Objectives.

- 3.3. All previous assessments undertaken in South Derbyshire since 2001 have established that the Air Quality Objectives for the most common air pollutants are being met. In this respect South Derbyshire is in the minority of Councils in the UK. Recent information from DEFRA identified that 191 of the 326 local authorities in England have needed to declare an Air Quality Management Area due air quality failing to meet the Air Quality Objectives. Air quality in South Derbyshire can therefore be said to be historically very good.

4. Recent National Policy Changes

- 4.1. Since SDDC published its last report in 2015 there has been a significant shift in national air quality policy. Previously, all assessments were undertaken on a pass or fail basis, to determine if air quality met the quantitative Air Quality Objectives (see Appendix E, page 29 of the ASR).
- 4.2. However, there is an increasing body of evidence which suggests that for some pollutants, particularly those known as fine particulates (commonly referred to as PM_{2.5}) there is no known safe level for exposure. Recognising the significant impact that poor air quality can have on health, the national Public Health Outcomes Framework now includes an indicator relating to fine particulate matter and its effects on mortality.
- 4.3. Following on from this, revised 2016 statutory guidance has introduced a ‘new role’ for local authorities in relation to this type of pollution which states “*we have introduced a PM_{2.5} role for local authority air quality teams so that alongside measures to tackle other pollutants, they also consider action necessary to address PM_{2.5} issues in their area, aligning their interests with those of public health officers*”.
- 4.4. In order to embed this new role within local authorities, DEFRA have produced a prescriptive new reporting format to the ASR, which not only requires Councils to report on measured air quality levels but also requires them to report on what they are doing to improve air quality generally, as well as specifically in relation to PM_{2.5}.

5. Recent Local Policy Changes

- 5.1. Due to the increased evidence of the impact of air quality on health, the Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board requested that they receive a paper on the subject. The paper was presented to the May 11th Board which subsequently approved four recommendations, namely;
- To receive an annual report on the state of air quality in Derbyshire with particular reference to trends in NO₂ and PM;
 - To recommend to local planning authorities in Derbyshire that they adopt a joint Supplementary Planning Document on air quality;
 - To agree to the inclusion of an ‘Air Quality’ chapter within the JSNA and;
 - To consider the development of a working group on air quality improvement.

6. Proposed Action

- 6.1. Appendix A to this Committee report contains the proposed ASR submission covering the calendar year for 2015. In summary, the Report findings are as follows;
- That measured levels of the polluting gas nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) continue to meet the Air Quality Objective across the whole of South Derbyshire;

- That the trend in air quality over the last five years is generally cause for optimism and that, on an area basis, all but one of the areas monitored has tended towards improvements in measured levels of NO₂.
- Because we have never previously been required to assess local levels of PM_{2.5}, we have very little understanding of the local sources of and exposure to PM_{2.5}. We are therefore unable at this point to offer any coherent plan about what, if anything, can be done to address PM_{2.5} issues in South Derbyshire.

6.2. In response to the recommendations of the Derbyshire Health and Wellbeing Board and in order to improve the local understanding of the sources and exposure to PM_{2.5} we would propose to undertake the following actions;

6.2.1. We propose to utilise the guidance in the recently published LAQM TG(16) and the toolkit for public health professionals, published by DEFRA to evaluate and understand the local magnitude of PM_{2.5}; identify key sources and identify in collaboration with partners identify the opportunities for exposure reduction.

6.2.2. We propose to issue local guidance on planning and air quality to help give due weight to air quality issues within planning application determinations.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. The proposals have no immediate financial implications. The evaluation into the sources of PM_{2.5} and their impacts will be undertaken in-house. A working group is currently producing draft guidance on planning and air quality on behalf of all East Midlands District Councils and we would propose to base any local guidance on the work of this group.

7.2. The longer term financial implications of further actions or policies arising from the proposed resolutions will be communicated to members in future reports.

8. Corporate Implications

8.1. This report delivers on the Quarter 1 milestone of the Corporate Plan Place project "Air Quality meets Directive 2008/50/EEC and the Air Quality Strategy".

9. Community Implications

9.1. The overall impact of the proposed recommendations are likely to be positive, however a fuller commentary on this will be provided in future reports when more detail on the outcomes are known.

10. Background Papers

10.1. Copies of all previous South Derbyshire District Council air quality reports are available online.