
REPORT TO:	Environmental and Development Service Committee	AGENDA ITEM: 10
DATE OF MEETING:	4th October 2012	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Mark Alflat – Director of Community Services	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Matt Holford – Environmental Health Manager	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Air Quality Review and Assessment	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	All	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS14

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That Members approve the contents and conclusions of the 2012 Air Quality Updating and Screening Assessment (available via <http://cmis.south-derbys.gov.uk/CmisWebPublic/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=1701>).
- 1.2 That Members instruct the Environmental Health Manager to issue the Assessment report to DEFRA for its approval in order to meet the Council's statutory duties under the Environment Act 1995.
- 1.3 That Members instruct the Environmental Health Manager to provide a Detailed Assessment of air quality in Repton to the Environment and Development Services Committee within 12 months of this report.

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To advise Members of the Council's statutory obligations to assess air quality within the District under the Environment Act 1995.
- 2.2 To advise Members of the outcomes of an Updating and Screening Assessment of Air Quality within South Derbyshire prior to the submission of the report to DEFRA.
- 2.3 To seek Member agreement to undertake a Detailed Air Quality Assessment of the effects of traffic emissions along High Street in Repton.

3. Background to the Review and Assessment Report

- 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 eight 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 eight 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 224 of the 326 local authorities in England had needed to declare an Air Quality Management Area due to air quality in either part or all of their administrative areas failing to meet the Air Quality Objectives. Air quality in South Derbyshire can therefore be said to be historically very good.
- 3.4 Statutory guidance has been issued by DEFRA advising local authorities about how these review and assessments should be undertaken. The guidance requires that every three years Councils must undertake a thorough review of the available evidence to determine whether circumstances have changed within their administrative areas to such an extent that there is a risk that Air Quality Objectives are no longer being met. The Updating and Screening Assessment (USA) report contained in Appendix A, (available via <http://cmis.south-derbys.gov.uk/CmisWebPublic/Meeting.aspx?meetingID=1701>), contains the evidence and conclusions of this three year assessment.
- 3.5 The USA requires the completion of a long checklist of technical questions based on air quality data gathered by local authorities and other information - such as road traffic data and types of local industrial sources. If the checklist criteria are met then a local authority can conclude with a high degree of certainty that Air Quality Objectives are being met. Where the checklist highlights any uncertainties then it is a requirement of the local authority to produce a 'Detailed Assessment' within 12 months of the completion of the USA.
- 3.6 All assessments must be submitted to DEFRA for appraisal by their own environmental consultants.

4. Summary of the Review and Assessment Findings

- 4.1 The USA has established from the Council's air quality monitoring network that the Air Quality Objectives continue to be met at all of the 12 air quality monitoring locations around the District.
- 4.2 The USA has also concluded that the nature of the emissions from all sources of air pollution within the District do not pose any risk of causing a breach of the Air Quality Objectives anywhere else in the District (i.e. everywhere where we do not monitor air quality).
- 4.3 The USA has identified that there is a small potential risk of elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide (a pollutant mainly released in car exhaust emissions) from traffic along High Street in Repton. The risk has been identified from the checklist because;
- 4.3.1 Traffic levels along this road have now been determined to be above the checklist trigger point of 5000 movements per day, **and**;
- 4.3.2 Residential properties are very close to the road kerb, **and**;
- 4.3.3 The properties either side of the road may create a 'canyon' which can have the effect of trapping traffic emissions at ground level.
- 4.4 The USA conclusions recommend that the District Council undertake some additional air quality monitoring in Repton to establish if a canyon effect is occurring in the High

Street and if so, whether this is causing any risk of a breach of the Air Quality Objective.

- 4.5 The monitoring will need to be undertaken over a 12 month period in order to determine the average air quality conditions over a full calendar year. If the results of the survey indicate that the Air Quality Objective for nitrogen dioxide may not be met then a further detailed study using computational air quality dispersion modelling will be required.
- 4.6 A report of the conclusions of the air quality survey will be presented to Members before its submission to DEFRA and before any further dispersion modelling work is commissioned.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 None. The next stage of monitoring will be undertaken using similar methods to those already used by the Council and the small additional cost will be met from existing budgets.

6. Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The proposals align with the “sustainable growth and opportunity” Corporate Plan Objective as well as ensuring the “health and wellbeing” of our residents.

7. Community Implications

- 7.1 Any implications of the Detailed Assessment will be brought forward in the proposed future report to Committee.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Air quality right across South Derbyshire has consistently met health standards for the past decade and therefore has been shown to be better than that across the majority of local authorities in the UK. The USA report which we must submit to DEFRA demonstrates that this continues to be the case. A small scale further assessment of air quality will be required in Repton to provide empirical evidence of how air quality along High Street compares against the Air Quality Standards.