

Environment and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny

Date of Meeting: 11 November 2019

Report Title: Cheshire East 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mick Warren – Portfolio Holder for Communities

Senior Officer: Frank Jordan – Executive Director Place and Acting Deputy Chief Executive

1. Report Summary

- 1.1. To update the Committee on the review of the Council's 2019 Annual Status Report (ASR). The purpose of the report is to ensure Members are aware of the report and the current status of air quality across the borough.
- 1.2. The 2019 Annual Status Report has been submitted to and approved by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in accordance with requirements of the Local Air Quality Management Regime.
- 1.3. To address the notice of motion proposed by Cllr Vernon on the 18th July 2019, regarding the Council's Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. That Members

- 2.1.1 Review the contents of the report and provide any feedback to the Portfolio Holder for consideration.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. It is important that Members are kept up to date with the Council's work on Air Quality and consultation with Defra. The Annual Status Report provides an overarching view of all of the Council's air quality activities and current position.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. None.

5. Background

- 5.1 The 2019 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) (Appendix 1) provides an overview of air quality across Cheshire East for the 2018 calendar year. The Report fulfils the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management Regime (LAQM) as laid out in Part IV of the Environment Act (1995) and relevant supporting Policy and Technical Guidance documents published by Defra.
- 5.2 The LAQM places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. Where an exceedance is considered likely the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives.
- 5.3 In addition, at Council on the 18th July 2019, a notice of motion was proposed by Cllr Vernon as set out below:

Proposed by Cllr Rob Vernon and seconded by Cllr L Braithwaite

This Council notes that:

- *At 2019 Annual Council we voted for strong action on the Climate Emergency through a new Environmental Strategy, recognising the urgent need to tackle the varied environment issues across our borough*
- *There are currently 17 declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within Cheshire East*
- *Public Health England have concluded that air pollution is expected to cause over 2 million new cases of disease by 2035, at a health and social care cost of £5.3bn*

This Council resolves to:

- *Review previous and put in place new Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs) to tackle air quality in each individual AQMA, as well as across the wider Cheshire East borough*
- *Support the inclusion in AQAPs of:*
 - *Weight restrictions to reduce the number of HGVs passing through AQMAs*

- *Establishing and promoting safe cycle routes, as well as encouraging more schools to develop walking buses*
- *Any necessary review to nearby junctions with a view to reducing traffic queues*
- *Contributions by developers to air quality mitigation measures in nearby AQMAs that equate to the maximum necessary for preventing any further increase in air pollution*
- *Much greater expansion of green planting and the protection of green spaces*
- *Changes to bus services that cater to new and in-progress developments*

- *Ensure air quality is an important aspect when considering environmental, transport and housing policy going forward*

- 5.4 Council resolved that the motion be referred to the appropriate decision making body, with input from Overview and Scrutiny.
- 5.5 The Annual Status Report (ASR) sets out results of monitoring, discusses trends in air quality data and outlines strategies employed by Cheshire East Borough Council to improve air quality including any progress with regards to actions contained in the Council's AQAP.
- 5.6 To date the Council has completed all of the previous air quality submissions to Defra, which have all been approved. This included approval of the 2018 revision of the Council's AQAP, which addresses the above Notice of Motion by Cllr Vernon.
- 5.7 A part of the submission and approval process Defra may make comment and recommendations with respect to future report content and/or structure. Consequently the 2019 ASR also addresses comments provided by Defra as part of 2018 ASR feedback.
- 5.7 The 2019 ASR does not recommend the declaration of any new AQMAs within the Cheshire East area.
- 5.8 Defra has provided their Annual Status Report Appraisal Report (Appendix 2) and accepted the report, but included some additional comments. These will be addressed in the 2020 ASR as appropriate.

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

6.1.1. Part IV of the Environment Act 1995, requires a local authority to regularly review and assess air quality within its area. The Annual Status Report provides all information to fulfil this statutory requirement.

6.2. Finance Implications

6.2.1. The report was compiled internally and funded from existing Regulatory Services and Health (RS&H) staffing budgets.

6.2.2. In addition, the report provides an update on progress of the Air Quality Action Plan, which sets out proposed measures to improve air quality. Whilst the smaller measures may be funded from within existing RS&H budgets, larger projects will need to be financially supported by services such as Highways and any other relevant service as required.

6.3. Policy Implications

6.3.1. There are no Policy implications arising from this report.

6.4. Equality Implications

6.4.1. There are no equality implications arising from this report.

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. There are no risk management implications arising from this report. The report ensures the Council meets with statutory requirements under the Environment Act 1995.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. There are no implications for rural communities.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People

6.8.1. There are no implications for children and young people.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. The implementation of the Action Plan aims to improve public health.

6.10. Climate Change Implications

6.10.1. The ASR alone will not directly help to reduce the Council's carbon footprint. However, one of the goals of the Council's draft Environmental Strategy is to Improve Air Quality.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. Borough wide.

8. Consultation & Engagement

8.1. There is no requirement for formal consultation, but there is a formal requirement to consult with Defra. Feedback from this consultation is included in Appendix 2 of this report.

9. Access to Information

9.1. Background papers relating to this report are contained as Appendices 1 and 2.

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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