

Item 9 - Air Quality - Update on the Development of a new Air Quality Action Plan

The attached report was considered by the Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee on 29 June 2021. The relevant Minute extract is below.

Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee (29 June 2021, Minute 9)

The Acting Environmental Health Manager presented the report which updated Members on air quality within the District. The Department of Environment Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) had required the Council to publish its air quality monitoring data. The District was showing trends of improvement therefore it was proposed that 5 of the 9 existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) be requested to be revoked. It was proposed that a Working Group be set up to consider measures to be introduced in the Air Quality Action Plan and that the 'Air Alert' scheme be brought to a close.

Members asked questions and discussed the report. It was clarified that the proposed AQMAs the Council would request to revoke had been consistently below the national objective levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) or small particulates (PM₁₀) and were very unlikely to exceed them. Air Quality was generally worse in areas where vehicles had to accelerate and decelerate such as town centres.

Members discussed measures to encourage residents to do more active travel and drive less in order to reduce local air pollution including collaboration with Kent County Council on schemes such as developing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M20 AQMA on the basis of the assessment undertaken by BV, be agreed;
- b) officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M25 AQMA (PM₁₀) on the basis of the assessment undertaken by BV, be agreed;

- c) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO₂ levels do not exceed objective levels at the roundabout at London Road, Westerham and residential properties along the A224 and B221 near to the M25, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the M25 AQMA (NO₂), be agreed;
- d) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO₂ levels do not exceed objective levels at receptors along the A224 London Road flyover, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of M26 AQMA, be agreed;
- e) subject to additional monitoring demonstrating that NO₂ levels do not exceed objective levels as residential properties at Phillip Avenues / Ladds Way / Cyclamen Road, Swanley, officers request to DEFRA for the revocation of the A20 AQMA, be agreed;
- f) following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Cleaner & Greener, the Deputy Chief Executive & Chief Officer of Planning & Regulatory Services' constitution of a Working Group of up to 15 Members and Officers (with a quorum of 5) to develop a shortlist of workable measures to be tested (scenario testing) to quantify their impact upon Air Quality within the AQMA, explore possible measures which could be included in the Action Plan and report to the next Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee, be authorised; and
- g) the District Council's withdrawal from the 'Air Alert' scheme as provided by Sussex Air and Imperial College and alternate and comparable 'Air Alert' information be made available on the Council's website, be agreed.