

## AIR QUALITY- ANNUAL STATUS REPORT & UPDATE

Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee - 18 October 2022

**Report of:** Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer Planning and Regulatory Services

**Status:** For Consideration

**Also considered by:**

**Key Decision:** No

**This report supports the Key Aim of:** Green Environment & Healthy Environment

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr. McArthur

**Contact Officer(s):** Nick Chapman, Ext. 7167

**Recommendation to Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee**

To note the contents of the 2022 Annual Status Report

**Reason for recommendation:** This report is for information and has been provided to update Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee on Air Quality results and actions being taken by the District Council.

### Introduction and Background

- 1 The District Council is required by DEFRA to produce an Annual Status Report every year. This report summarises the results of Air Quality Monitoring in the previous calendar year (i.e. 2021).
- 2 In 2021 no diffusion tube showed an exceedance of the National Objective Level (40ug/m<sup>3</sup>) for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>).
- 3 The highest concentrations within the district were measured at Riverhead on the roundabout (37.5ug/m<sup>3</sup>) and at Bradbourne Road South (37.5ug/m<sup>3</sup>). Neither of these monitoring locations are adjacent to residential properties and so the pollution levels experienced by residents within these areas are substantially lower than that measured by our diffusion tubes when corrected for distance (33.1µg/m<sup>3</sup> and 24.5µg/m<sup>3</sup> respectively).
- 4 Across all sites, concentrations of Nitrogen Dioxide increased slightly from those measured in 2020 when Covid-19 lockdowns resulted in reduced traffic. However, the overall trend (over the past 5 years) shows that

annual mean Nitrogen Dioxide concentrations have been continuing to decrease across the district.

5 There were no breaches of the NO<sub>2</sub> hourly, PM<sub>10</sub> (small particulate) annual, or PM<sub>10</sub> daily air quality objectives at any of the relevant monitoring locations across the district.

6 The Annual Status Report 2022 is Appendix A.

#### **Progress towards measures within the Air Quality Action Plan**

7 Councillors will be aware that in April 2022, Council agreed a new Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) that will operate between 2022 and 2027. This AQAP contains a number of measures that seek to improve air quality within the district.

8 Although the AQAP has only been in place for 6 months we have already made progress towards delivering a number of measures.

9 Measure 6- Bike Rental Schemes- a feasibility study will be commissioned to review if such a scheme is viable in the Sevenoaks town area.

10 Measure 8- Development of new walking and cycling routes- The first Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Sevenoaks urban area is in development and is expected to be completed during 2022.

11 Measure 11- Reducing vehicle idling- The Air Quality Promotions Officer is developing an engagement campaign which will be delivered with schools in September/ October 2022.

12 Measure 12- Educational campaigns for schools- Sevenoaks District Council was part of a successful DEFRA bid (with other local authorities in Kent) for the creation of an educational air quality awareness resource aimed at primary school children.

13 Measure 14- Transitioning the Council's fleet to low emission vehicles- The District Council has made significant progress in transitioning its LGVs to electric alternatives and have installed new charging points at Dunbrik depot and Argyle Road offices.

14 Measure 15- Improving and developing EV infrastructure within the district- The District Council has commissioned a specialist consultancy to develop an evidence base, which demonstrates where the local need exists for EV infrastructure. This work will then be utilised to help ensure that infrastructure investment is targeted to the areas of greatest need. This work is being funded by Air Quality s106 money.

15 Measure 23- Complete a detailed modelling assessment of the Swanley area to quantify local air quality. We have commissioned Bureau Veritas to undertake this work and the report will be delivered in autumn 2022.

16 Measure 24- Hire an Air Quality Promotions Officer- This action is complete

## Conclusion

- 17 Monitoring data demonstrates that air quality in Sevenoaks District continues to improve year on year and in 2021 all areas met national objective levels for measured pollutants.
- 18 Although Air Quality within Sevenoaks District is improving, there is no safe level of exposure to air pollution. It is therefore in the interests of our residents that we continue to work to reduce exposure to air pollution as far as possible.
- 19 Our new Air Quality Action Plan (2022-2027) provides the framework of measures we intend to implement to improve air quality. We have already made significant progress towards several measures and hope to report more on these in future updates.

## Key Implications

### Financial

None

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

None

### Equality Assessment

The information in this paper has a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

### Net Zero Implications

Whilst the District Council's Air Quality work aligns and supports our NetZero ambitions. The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment

## Appendices

Appendix 1 - Air Quality Status Report 2022

**Richard Morris**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services**