

Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board	
Title	Air Quality
Date	7 th December 2017
Board Sponsor	Richard Harling/Alan White
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Report type	For Debate

Summary

After the publication of the Governments Clean Air Strategy, Richard Harling and Alan White asked for a briefing report on Air Quality. A report was produced in partnership which included an initial options appraisal. After follow up discussions with Richard harling and Alan White it was agree to bring Air Quality to the attention of the Staffordshire HAWB for debate and support. A more detailed report on Air Quality is available to HAWB members.

Recommendations to the Board

1. Develop a partnership agreement on Air Quality between Staffordshire County Council, Stoke-on-Trent City Council and the 8 District/Boroughs across Staffordshire.
2. Develop an Action Plan for Local Implementation from October 2018. This plan of work would be informed by a detailed options appraisal.
3. Develop a Communications Plan for engaging and communicating with the public on air pollution. In addition the Communications Plan would need to include Business and Commerce.
4. That we bid for any appropriate Air Quality Grants as they become available.

Background / Introduction

“Air pollution can damage lives with harmful effects on human health, the economy and the environment. It is the largest environmental risk to the public’s health, contributing to cardiovascular disease, lung cancer and respiratory diseases. It increases the chances of hospital admissions, visits to Emergency Departments and respiratory and cardiovascular symptoms which interfere with everyday life, especially for people who are already vulnerable. Bad air quality affects everyone and has a disproportionate impact on the young and old, the sick and the poor” – quote from Dr Theresa Coffey (Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defra) and Professor Paul Cosford (Director for Health Protection and Medical Director, Public Health England)

Air quality in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent is a rural and urban mixture dominated by roads such as the M6, A34 and Trunk roads. Staffordshire will be affected by industrial pollutants because of our neighbouring authorities such as Wolverhampton, Stoke-on-Trent and Derby. In addition there will be significant agricultural emissions from farms located in Staffordshire. There are some Air

Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in some districts such as Burton-on-Trent and Stoke-on-Trent.

Poor air quality is recognised as the fourth largest risk to public health behind cancer, obesity and cardiovascular disease. Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts and as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer.

Air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society, children and older people, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues, because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas. In Staffordshire there are around 390 deaths attributable to exposure to poor air quality in 2015.

The annual health cost to society of the impacts of particulate matter alone in the UK is estimated to be around £16bn. Air quality is an important consideration for our communities when people choose where to live, study and work. Good air quality is linked to the choices for schooling, training, the workplace environment and housing.

The Government's £3bn Clean Air Strategy centres round banning the sale of new diesel and petrol cars from 2040 and £255m is to be made available for councils to tackle air pollution and for UK roads to be zero emissions by 2050. The Government's plan at this time doesn't address pollution from construction, farming and gas boilers. However the Government are developing further measures and will set these out in the following documents to be published in 2017/2018

- The Clean Air Growth Plan which the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will bring forward in the autumn of 2017.
- A further strategy on the pathway to zero emission transport for all road vehicles to be published by March 2018.
- A wider Clean Air Strategy to be published in 2018.

Current activity

In Staffordshire we already have the Staffordshire Air Quality Forum (SAQF), which includes Stoke-on-Trent. Our Districts and Boroughs across Staffordshire produce an annual report which is endorsed by Richard Harling (Director of Health and Social Care – Staffordshire County Council). This includes Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) Levels in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and PM_{2.5} and Mortality in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. This annual report also details what actions are currently being taken within Staffordshire to reduce PM_{2.5}. Stoke-on Trent already has a CAZ Strategy and some of our Staffordshire Districts are currently producing their own Strategies such as Stafford Borough Council but it is mixed across Staffordshire.

In addition Air Quality is now also linked to the wider Health in all Policies agenda.

Options & Issues – we have completed an initial options appraisal but further work is still required (pros, cons, health benefits and practicality of implementation). Listed below is a summary of options detailed to date

- Actively work with schools across Staffordshire to produce a Travel Plan to increase sustainable travel on the journey to school, reduce congestion, make the area in the vicinity of schools safer and increase physical activity.
- Improve cycle network – SCC are putting together a submission to the DoT for provision of technical support to prepare a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan for Staffordshire.
- We may need to consider clean air zone options e.g. charging and non-charging and issues around idling and the M6 corridor that cuts through Staffordshire.
- Monitor existing work placed travel plans, as required through planning process – initiatives to be implemented to increase number of sustainable journeys to work and reduce single car occupancy levels, including car share, walking, cycling, public transport and again this will improve air quality and should be cost neutral.
- Promote Smart working and agile working to businesses through Travel Plan process; reducing number of car journeys to employment sites and need to travel to meetings. SCC does now encourage staff working from home but more could be done and a county wide travel plan across workplaces in general.
- Identify a commercial partner to roll out a network of EV charging points across Staffordshire (BP have just committed to install points on all their forecourts, Nissan have points available at their garages), could be an attractive proposition for the right company as income generation will increase as popularity increases.
- Install Electric Charging points at all county and district buildings and replace pool cars with electric vehicles. This would obviously improve air quality and general health but there would be a financial cost to SCC but we may be able to offset some of the costs through funding grants and working with commercial partners.
- New planning / development applications - condition that all new houses built should have EV charging point installed and businesses should allocate a percentage of spaces with EV charging points. We should start this as soon as it's practicably possible and this wouldn't be a cost to SCC or the LA's.
- All procurement exercises to consider / measure carbon footprint.
- Encourage good practice on farms to reduce emissions (gaseous farm emissions are a large source of secondary particles).
- Educating the public – link to school curriculum, use social media and other communication channels.
- Pollution alerts and communicating about air quality to the public - use existing communication streams to share information – including My Staffs app, RTP1 electronic displays at bus stops and bus stations, SCC newsletters and alerts.