

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
19TH February 2009

Air Quality Management Consultation

OPEN	
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY THEME:	A better environment for today and tomorrow
CORPORATE PLAN AIM:	A Sustainable Environment
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Anne Hingley
HEAD OF SERVICE:	Head of Planning, Health and Environment
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APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Radford Avenue/ Coventry Street Detailed Air Quality Assessment report on Nitrogen Dioxide Appendix 2 – Air Quality Management Proposals (These appendices are available electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request - see front cover for contact details)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Members of the Air Quality Management Consultation proposals following the completions of a detailed air quality assessment in Radford Avenue/Coventry Street, Kidderminster, and recommend management proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATION

CABINET is recommended to APPROVE:

- 2.1 **The Air Quality Management Area Consultation documents set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of this report and to delegate responsibility to the Head of Planning, Health & Environment to undertake a consultation exercise and to report back on the results of such consultation, together with proposals for the future declaration of an Air Quality Management Area.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As Members are aware the Council has actively been assessing air quality within the District since 1998 as part of the Government's strategic approach to improving air quality.
- 3.2 The Council has two roles with respect to air quality:

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- To develop strategic plans with respect to reducing poor air quality within the Wyre Forest area
 - To monitor and quantify current air pollution status within the District.
- 3.3 To date, 2 air quality management areas (AQMA) have been declared due to road transport pollution:
- Welch Gate in Bewdley
 - Horsefair in Kidderminster
- 3.4 Since the declarations were made in January 2003 high levels of nitrogen dioxide were monitored at nearby Coventry Street (Junction of Radford Avenue by St. Mary's Church) in 2006.
- 3.5 A detailed assessment of the monitoring was undertaken on behalf of the Council by Air Quality Consultants Ltd in November 2007 which confirmed that nitrogen dioxide is exceeding the air quality objectives in this area at a number of residential properties. (Appendix 1).
- 3.6 Air quality management areas provide local authorities with the tools to prioritise investment in local transport infrastructure and focuses on the delivery of environmental improvement.
- 3.7 It is considered that it may also be more efficient to declare larger built up areas as an AQMA rather than declare 'spot' areas. This would allow far more Strategic Planning when preparing 'action plans' which are a requirement for each AQMA and explain how pollution levels will be reduced.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 There are four relevant methods of defining the size and boundary of AQMA's: -
1. Whole Borough designations or "blanket" designations
 2. Road Network or "Matrix" AQMA's encompassing many roads (Trunk, major and Minor)
 3. Individual or "Spot" AQMA encompassing a single building or property.
 4. Combination of Roads (Matrix) and Land in between roads to produce a "mitten" or "blob" approach.
- 4.2 For the purpose of developing appropriate proposals for Wyre Forest, the Pollution Control Team has used methods 3 and 4 to develop the two proposals that it considers appropriate.
- Proposal 1
- 4.3 To declare the specific area identified in the detailed assessment as being in exceedance of an AQMA (Appendix 2).

Proposal 2

- 4.4 To amend the current Horsefair AQMA which will incorporate Proposal 1 as one individual AQMA (Appendix 2).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There will be cost implications both with regard to the public consultation and future monitoring but these can be contained within existing budgets.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Requirement to declare

- 6.1 The Council is obliged under the Environment Act 1995 to declare an area of exceedance of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) where levels exceed nationally set objectives. Local authorities have a duty to make such declarations whether they have the power to resolve the problem through the action planning process or not, and they are subject to Secretary of State Guidance.
- 6.2 The local authority is required to consult on proposals to declare AQMA's and should publish the intention to declare in the local papers. The publication of an official AQMA is also a requirement.
- 6.3 The confirmation of such declaration will then require the Council to produce an action plan. These usually discuss a range of options available to improve air quality.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There is no Risk Management issues arising from this report.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 Members should consider the two AQMA options and recommend that they are used to carry out a public consultation exercise prior to deciding a way forward.

9. CONSULTEES

- Secretary of State
- West Midlands Regional Assembly
- Environment Agency
- Highways Agency
- Worcestershire County Council Highways
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Primary Care Trust
- Bodies representing Local Business interests.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Part IV of the Environment Act 1995
- DEFRA Policy Guidance LAQM PG(03)
- DEFRA Technical Guidance LAQM TG(03)
- Air Quality Consultants – Detailed assessment Radford Road-Coventry Street Kidderminster November 2007
- Wyre Forest District Council Air Quality Progress Report April 2008
- NSCA – Air Quality Management Areas – Turning Reviews Into Action.