

APPENDIX I

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JUNE 2008

EXECUTIVE - 8 JULY 2008

Title:

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL AIR QUALITY PLAN

[Portfolio Holder for Climate Change: Cllr J R Sandy]

[Wards Affected: All - particularly Farnham, Godalming, Hindhead]

Summary and purpose:

In 2005 Waverley declared three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Hindhead, Godalming and Farnham as a result of emissions of Nitrogen Dioxide exceeding the national permitted standards. Following declaration of the AQMAs Waverley is required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan outlining how it is addressing the issues that led to the declaration of the Air Quality Management Areas. The Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ELOS) considered the draft Action Plan in January and its comments were noted. A final version of the Action Plan is now being presented, which incorporates feedback and comments from a public consultation process and those from ELOS.

Environmental implications:

The air quality exceedences that led to the declaration of the Air Quality Management Areas are due to pollutants found in vehicle exhaust emissions. The proposals in the Air Quality Action Plan will help reduce the impact of vehicle emissions on the environment, and will help deliver Waverley's corporate plan priority of tackling climate change.

Social / community implications:

Poor air quality has an impact on people's health. The Action Plan details measures that will have a positive impact on improving air quality and people's health. Many of the proposed measures will help address congestion, particularly in the three Air Quality Management Areas.

E-Government implications:

As part of its role in managing air quality, Waverley will continue to keep the public informed about air quality in Waverley by providing relevant and up-to-date information on the Waverley website.

Resource and legal implications:

Production of an Air Quality Action Plan by this Council for submission to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is a statutory requirement of the Environment Act 1995. Many of the proposals outlined in the Action Plan involve close co-operation with Surrey County Council, in particular with relation to traffic management projects.

Waverley currently allocates 0.4 of a FTE post to carry out Waverley's statutory duties in respect to local air quality monitoring. The officer will oversee implementation and monitoring of the action plan with support from other officers within Waverley.

The Air Quality Action Plan identifies specific measures to improve Air Quality with an indication of likely costs falling on Waverley Borough Council, Surrey County Council and the Highways Agency. These costs falling on Waverley are considered to be in the "low" cost range, costing less than £25,000. Where new budget provision is required, the Council will consider proposals as part of the annual budget process.

Introduction

1. The Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny considered a draft of the Air Quality Action Plan in January this year. A period of public and targeted consultation followed, during which time the draft Plan has also been considered by the Waverley Local Committee and the Local Strategic Partnership. Comments received have been incorporated into the recommended final version of the Action Plan.
2. The final recommended Air Quality Action Plan for Waverley is attached as Annexe 1 to this report. This document, in particular chapter three, has been updated from the original draft, which outlined a range of projects that can have a role in improving air quality.
3. Following consultation, the final recommended Air Quality Action Plan has accorded greatest priority to those measures that are considered to have the greatest impact on improving air quality within the three air quality management areas. Where appropriate these measures will be subject to further assessment in order to ascertain that they will deliver the improvements required without introducing new exceedences of air quality standards. This is explained in the relevant section of chapter three.
4. Annexe 2 to this report comprises the background, and recommendations of the Final Report of the Farnham Review of Movement Studies and Major Schemes. Surrey County Council commissioned this report and it was published in March 2008. The report outlines measures likely to have a major influence on improving air quality (and traffic movement) in central Farnham. Also attached at Annexe 3 is Surrey's response to the Air Quality Action Plan consultation.

5. Other measures that are likely to have limited impact on improving air quality are included, but are given a lower priority in terms of timescale and delivery.
6. For completeness, measures that are already underway that may have an impact on improving air quality are also listed in chapter 3 of the recommended Air Quality Action Plan.

Comments from the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7. The Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Air Quality Action Plan at its meeting on 17 June 2008. The Committee raised the following comments and observations:
 - (a) The Committee noted and supported the Action Plan in principle, but suggested that the Leader of the Council approached the Leader of Surrey County Council asking for input to help Waverley achieve the targets, specifically around timescales and costs especially in view of the health implications;
 - (b) The Committee would support clarification on timescales and information on broad costings in the final report to the Executive;
 - (c) The Committee would like officers to look at where to monitor and measure air quality along Flambard Way, as there is potential site next to Meadow School;
 - (d) The Committee expressed disappointment to Surrey that the measures in Godalming would take until 2011 before implementation;
 - (e) The Committee endorsed a further study into the impact of reducing road space in central Farnham, with the additional impact of the canyon effect and additional waiting time; and
 - (f) The Committee questioned whether the selection of sites for monitoring air quality should be reviewed in due course.

Officer comments following consideration by ELOS

8. The Air Quality Action Plan attached as Annexe 1 to this report has been revised to include broad costings in accordance with paragraph 7(b) above.
9. Other additional actions requested by ELOS will be undertaken by officers together with any further matters raised by the Executive, in particular officers will investigate the possibility of undertaking further monitoring in accordance with paragraphs 7(c) and 7(f).

Conclusion

10. The completion, implementation and annual monitoring of the Air Quality Action Plan will fulfil Waverley's local air quality management obligations and help achieve an improvement in air quality that will result in a number of benefits to the local community.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive approves the adoption of the Air Quality Action Plan.

Background Papers (SD (CS))

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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