

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE - 7 MARCH 2023

COUNCIL – 21 MARCH 2023

Title:

**DRAFT UPDATED AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN
DRAFT CLEAN AIR STRATEGY FOR WAVERLEY**

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Steve Williams Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability

Head of Service: Richard Homewood, Executive Head of Regulatory Services

Key decision: No

Access: Public

1.0 Purpose and summary

- 1.1 To review feedback from the public consultation and consider the draft updated Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) February 2023 for the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) and draft Clean Air Strategy for Waverley (CAS) February 2023.
- 1.2 To seek approval of the draft updated Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) February 2023 and draft Clean Air Strategy for Waverley (CAS) February 2023, prior to submitting the AQAP to Defra for approval.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive note the feedback from the public consultation and recommend that Council adopt the draft updated AQAP February 2023 and draft CAS February 2023, which align with the Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy (CCSS), the Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (CNAP) and the work underway on the Farnham Infrastructure Plan (FIP).

3.0 Reasons for the recommendations

- 3.1 To afford Members of the Executive the opportunity to comment on feedback from the public consultation and the draft updated Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) February 2023 and draft Clean Air Strategy for Waverley (CAS) February 2023.
- 3.2 To approve the draft updated Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) February 2023 and draft Clean Air Strategy for Waverley (CAS) February 2023, prior to submitting the AQAP to Defra for approval

4.0 Background

- 4.1 Members will recall that the outline process to update the AQAP and develop a CAS was presented to Executive Briefing on 13 September at the time the 2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report was presented.
- 4.2 Whilst it is currently not a statutory requirement to produce a CAS the Executive considered the adoption of a strategy to encourage actions to improve air quality across the Borough important, given impacts poor air quality can have on health. This is consistent with the Council's strategic objective for improving the health and wellbeing of our residents and communities, taking action in response to the Climate Emergency and protecting the environment.
- 4.3 Consultants were appointed to work with the Council to update the AQAP for the Air Quality Management Areas and develop a CAS for Waverley that aligns with the CCSS, the CNAP and the FIP. A member and officer Air Quality Steering Group was formed to help take this project forward.
- 4.4 There were two steering group meetings prior to the public consultation, on the 13 September and 18 October. Feedback from the Executive on the updated draft AQAP and draft CAS was received from the Climate Emergency Board on 8 November 2022 and the Executive on 15 November 2022.
- 4.5 Members of the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee were also given the opportunity to review the documents at a special meeting held on the 9 January 2023. Feedback from this meeting was also considered in preparing the final drafts.

5.0 Public Consultation

- 5.1 The public consultation strategy was developed with the Communications Team and the public consultation ran from 5 December 2022 to 15 January 2023. Many people and organisations were emailed directly such as schools, GPs, WBC Members, Town and Parish Councils and Members, Chamber of Commerce contacts, neighbouring local authorities, SCC's Public Health and Highways, National Highways and the Environment Agency. The public were notified of the consultation on the [Council's news](#) webpage and via numbers of social media posts.
- 5.3 People and organisations were encouraged to complete an online survey or to email Environmental Health directly. Please see the AQAP and CAS [consultation webpage](#)
- 5.4 Additionally all WBC Members and Town and Parish Councils and Members were invited to a Meeting on the 7 December 2022 to introduce the draft updated AQAP and CAS, address any queries, and discuss feedback. Overview and Scrutiny for Services also reviewed the documents and gave feedback at their meeting on 9 January 2023.
- 5.5 Following the public consultation the Air Quality Steering Group met on the 31 January 2023 to review feedback and their response to it. Officers also met with SCC Highways for their response.

5.6 A Review of Consultation Responses, February 2023 is given in Annexe A, Appendix A. It details the consultation responses we received, summarises and reviews them, and details where the draft updated Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) and draft Clean Air Strategy have been updated, and some actions needed.

6.0 Draft Updated Air Quality Action Plan

6.1 The draft updated AQAP February 2023 is presented in Annexe A. It includes a Review of Consultation Responses February 2023 (Appendix A), and draft CAS February 2023 (Appendix C).

6.2 There are 2 AQMAs in Waverley. One in Farnham and one in Godalming, both declared as the annual mean air quality objective for NO₂ was being exceeded at relevant locations there.

6.3 The draft updated AQAP only relates to actions to improve NO₂ concentrations within the AQMAs. It is a statutory requirement and must follow Defra's prescribed report template.

6.4 Once Council has approved the AQAP it will be submitted to Defra for approval.

7.0 Draft Clean Air Strategy for Waverley

7.1 The draft CAS February 2023 is presented in Annexe A, Appendix C.

7.2 The CAS covers the whole Borough and actions to improve outdoor concentrations NO₂ and PM (particulate matter). Strategies are not required by Defra to have a set format.

8.0 Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan

8.1 An AQAP and CAS will help support the Corporate Strategy's aims to 'improve the health and well-being of our residents and communities' and 'taking action to protect the environment.' There is a requirement in the Service Plan to follow Defra's Local Air Quality Management requirements and produce a CAS.

9.0 Implications of decision

9.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)

9.1.1 The development of an AQAP and CAS forms an integral element of the overall Carbon Neutrality Action Plan which will be reviewed annually. An update on actions will also be detailed in the annual Air Quality Status Report which is published on the web. Actions detailed can have significant financial implications for the borough and county councils and for other agencies but cannot be quantified at this stage. Additionally, without additional staff resources we are unlikely to be able to action all commitments made.

9.2 Risk management

9.2.1 Achieving many of the actions detailed in the AQAP and CAS are dependent on actions by other organisations and the public, which we cannot control. Lack of financial and staff resources will limit our ability to meet commitments made.

9.3 Legal

9.3.1 The Local Air Quality Management regime (LAQM) is set out in Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and relevant Policy and Technical Guidance documents. The LAQM process places an obligation on all local authorities (borough and district councils and unitary councils) to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas.

9.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion

9.4.1 Poor air quality can have an adverse effect on vulnerable groups in the community. Actions to improve air quality will support those groups and the community at large.

9.5 Climate emergency declaration

9.5.1 Waverley has in place climate change and sustainability strategies, which bring together work in relation to air quality, green spaces and waste. An updated AQAP and CAS forms an integral part of that strategy and contributes to the delivery of the carbon neutrality action plan.

10.0 Consultation and engagement

10.1 The public consultation undertaken, and the review of consultation responses are set out above in section 5 of this report.

10.2 There will be ongoing consultation and engagement with Members through the Climate Emergency Board and Farnham Infrastructure Board.

11.0 Other options considered.

11.1 The production of the updated Air Quality Action Plan and annual Air Quality Status reports are a statutory requirement.

12.0 Governance journey

Executive – 7 March 2023

Overview and Scrutiny for Services – 14 March 2023, verbal update to Council.

Council – 21 March, approve Executive minutes with adoption of AQAP and CAS

Attachments

Annexe A - Air Quality Action Plan (Draft), February 2023 incorporating:

Annexe A - Appendix A – Review of Consultation Responses, February 2023

Annexe A - Appendix B – Reasons for not pursuing action plan measures

Annexe A - Appendix C – Clean Air Strategy (Draft), February 2023

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