

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report

Report of Director of Community Services

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Air Quality Strategy Update

Officer recommendation:

That the Committee notes the progress made implementing the Air Quality Strategy 2017-2022 adopted by Executive on 28 November 2017.

Reason for Recommendation:

To ensure the Air Quality Strategy 2017-2022 action plan is being implemented.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with the annual progress report on the Air Quality Strategy 2017-2022 adopted by Executive on 28 November 2017 and an update on the role of the Joint Committee in the decision making structure for the Borough of Guildford around air quality.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 The actions in this report will contribute to our fundamental themes of:

Place-making - Making travel in Guildford and across the borough easier

Community - Protecting our environment

3. Background

- 3.1 On the 28 November 2017, Executive approved an Air Quality Strategy drafted in consultation with the Air Quality Executive Working Group and departments across the Council.
- 3.2 On the 9 January 2018 the Committee agreed to annually monitor progress with the Air Quality Strategy work plan. A verbal update was provided to Overview and Scrutiny on the 10 July 2018 with this report as the first formal annual review.

4. Update on action plan

- 4.1 There has been good progress with the short term measures (2017-2018) in the action plan with a number of targets either completed, in progress or ongoing. The most significant being the submission of the Outline Business Case to Government setting out how we aim to achieve compliance with nitrogen dioxide air quality limits on the A331 Blackwater Water Valley Road and consulting on the Compton Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) action plan. Below is a short update on these two measures and an update on all the measures in the action plan in Appendix 1.

Measure 12 - A331 – Blackwater Valley Road

- 4.2 The Blackwater Valley Partnership produced an Outline Business Case to meet the requirements of the Ministerial Direction served on the Council was approved by the Guildford Joint Committee on 12 December 2018. The Outline Business Case identifies the preferred measure of a speed reduction from 70mph to 50mph, on a northern section of the A331 not within the Borough of Guildford, to achieve compliance with nitrogen dioxide air quality limits in the shortest possible time and evidence to support the option.
- 4.3 The partnership is now in the process of producing the Full Business Case for submission in May 2019. After submission of the Full Business Case, the Council will have fully complied with the Ministerial Direction. If the Secretary of State accepts the local air quality data presented in the Outline Business Case, the Council would not be part of the implementation phase as the stretch of A331 highway in the Borough will be compliant before any other measure can be implemented.

Measure 8 - AQMA Compton

- 4.4 Consultation on the action plan was conducted following declaration of the AQMA in Compton in November 2017. As a result of the consultation responses, potential new measures are under consideration and have been modelled to assess whether they are likely to achieve compliance with nitrogen dioxide limit values.
- 4.5 An officer steering group from both Guildford Borough Council and Surrey County Council has been established to develop the action plan and implement the measures. The group have been focused on producing an action plan of deliverable measures that achieve compliance. A final action plan will be presented at the 20 March 2019 Guildford Joint Committee for approval.

2019 and onwards

- 4.6 In 2019 we will begin implementing the medium term measures (2019-2020) and we will carry forward short term measures (2017-2018) which have not commenced or are in progress. Work in 2109 to contribute to delivery of the action plan includes:

- delivery of the Surrey wide modelling (measure 11)
 - approval and implementation of the Compton AQMA action plan (measure 8)
 - submission of the Full Business Case for the A331 (measure 12)
 - explore a Council and Business alternative travel network (measure 10 and 19)
 - continue partnership working with the University of Surrey (measure 13)
- 4.7 The Lead Councillor will continue to monitor progress with implementation throughout the year.

5. Guildford Joint Committee

- 5.1 With its formation in September 2018 it was agreed that the Guildford Joint Committee would take the lead in the decision making around air quality. The Guildford Joint Committee is a positive opportunity to further improve air quality in the Borough. With both Borough and Surrey County representation on the Committee it will maximise resources, focus on delivery of solutions, provide accountability and strengthen collaborative working.
- 5.2 With traffic emissions being the main source of air pollution in Surrey having the Highways Authority, Surrey County Council involved in decision-making around air quality for the Borough is a significant advantage.
- 5.3 A Parking and Air Quality Working Group was established at the first Guildford Joint Committee on 19 September 2018 and had its first meeting on the 30 October 2018. Officers have been tasked with reviewing the current scope of air quality work being undertaken by both Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council prior to the next meeting of the working group in February 2019.
- 5.4 There are a number of scheduled items on future Guildford Joint Committee agendas. These include: Air Quality Update, Compton Air Quality Action Plan and Air Quality in Shalford.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The provisions of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 established a national framework for air quality management, which requires all local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales to conduct local air quality reviews. Whilst an Air Quality Strategy is not a legal requirement, it is good practice and helps provide a clear pathway for improving air quality.

8. Human Resource Implications

8.1 The are no human resource implications arising from this report.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Good progress has been made in implementing the action plan within the air quality strategy to contribute towards improving air quality across the Borough with the work continuing in 2019.

10. Background Papers

Guildford Joint Committee – 12 December 2018

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=751&MId=6884&Ver=4>

Guildford Joint Committee – 19 September 2018

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=751&MId=6883&Ver=4>

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 10 July 2018

<http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=262&MId=769&Ver=4m>

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 9 January 2018

<http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=262&MId=634&Ver=4>

Executive – 28 November 2017

<http://www2.guildford.gov.uk/councilmeetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=608&Ver=4>

Local Air Quality Management, Policy Guidance (PG 16) Defra

https://consult.defra.gov.uk/communications/laqm_changes/supporting_documents/LAQM%20Policy%20Guidance%202016.pdf

Local Air Quality Management, Technical Guidance (TG 16) Defra

<https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/LAQM-TG16-April-16-v1.pdf>