

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

30 AUGUST 2012

Subject: Air Quality

Cabinet Member: Councillor Keith Humphries – Public Health and Public Protection

Key Decision: No

Purpose of the report

1. To present to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee suggestions on how best Overview and Scrutiny can be involved with the issue of air quality generally but specifically to ensure corporate buy-in to the Air Quality Strategy, its strategic objectives and action plan.

Background

2. Air quality in Wiltshire is predominantly good with the majority of the County enjoying clean, unpolluted air. There are however a small number of locations where the combination of traffic, road layout and geography has resulted in exceedences of air quality standards, specifically nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates.
3. In response, Wiltshire Council adopted its Air Quality Strategy in December 2011. The Strategy is a document that provides high level guidance to inform policy and direction across a range of council services with the aim of improving air quality. It recognises that improving areas of poor air quality can only be achieved by working collaboratively across departments and with local communities.
4. The Strategy contains a number of strategic objectives and strategic action plan, the implementation of which will work towards improving air quality in the few areas where this is currently a problem and maintaining the good air quality across the rest of Wiltshire.
5. The Environment Select Committee has held a longstanding interest in the development of the Council's Air Quality Strategy and considered drafts in the run up to its adoption in July 2010 and 2011 and November 2011. At the meeting of the Committee in November 2011 there was endorsement that in order to deliver the aims of the strategy a more holistic involvement from council teams, local groups and the community was required. It resolved that the aims and objectives of the strategy are integrated into relevant service delivery plans and that an update on the delivery of the Strategy would be received in May 2012.
6. At its meeting on the 17th July 2012, following the review of O&S functions, it was agreed by the O&S Management Committee that air quality should be picked up

in its forward work programme as a legacy issue and priority for Members. It was agreed that proposals as to how this could be achieved would be presented at its next meeting on 30th August 2012.

7. This short report presents options as to how this can move forward.

Moving Forward

8. As outlined above one of the main strands of the Air Quality Strategy is to ensure that Council services work together holistically ensuring that respective service contributions are embedded within service delivery plans. It is envisaged therefore that the role of O&S going forward would be monitor this action.
9. Another role of O&S would be to keep an overview on the realisation of the strategic objectives within the strategy and the implementation of the action plan of which the paragraph above forms part.
10. Realistically there are two options to achieve this. Firstly through a report to the Environment Select Committee so that all members of the Committee can undertake this role or through the establishment of a small task and finish group of the ES Committee which would allow a more focused approach to the issue.
11. Members may also wish to consider which select committee this task and finish group sits under, the Environment Select Committee or the Health Select Committee as the overarching purpose of the strategy is to secure better health outcomes for individuals and communities in Wiltshire.

Recommendations

12. It is recommended that a Task and Finish group be convened to consider and monitor the progress of the Air Quality Strategy, realisation of strategic objectives and action plan.

Mandy Bradley
Service Director, Public Protection