



**Resources and Public Realm  
Scrutiny Committee**  
March 2019

**Report from the Strategic Director of  
Regeneration and Environment**

**Update on Air Quality Action Plan Progress 2017-2018**

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| <b>Wards Affected:</b>   | ALL   |
| <b>Key or Non-Key Decision:</b><br>(only applicable for Cabinet, Cabinet Sub Committee and officer decisions)                              | N/A   |
| <b>Open or Part/Fully Exempt:</b><br>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act) | Open  |
| <b>No. of Appendices:</b>  | Appendix 1 – Brent Annual Status Report   |
| <b>Background Papers:</b>  | None  |
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## **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. This report informs the committee how the Council is progressing with local air quality action plan measures as outlined in our Air Quality Action Plan 2017-2022.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee note the progress with the council's plans for the delivery of our strategic air quality objectives to date.

### **3.0 Air Quality Action in Summary**

- 3.1 In our Air Quality Action Plan 2017 – 2022, the council set out a 5-year plan to cut local pollutant emissions from key sources such as local transport, construction activities, energy generation and specific types of polluting industry.
- 3.2 The Plan outlines twenty broad measures the council will undertake to reduce levels of two key air pollutants, nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter, known to be harmful to health.
- 3.3 In compliance with the London Local Air Quality Management (LLAQM) regime the council must annually provide a broad summary of action plan progress to the Mayor of London. The current Annual Status Report (ASR) for 2017 is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Since the approval of our Air quality Action Plan in November 2017 the council has pledged to work with Brent residents and businesses to assist us to deliver local improvements. Our focus in the last year has been to engage directly with the public via community events to discuss local pollution and target specifically idling engines around schools as this was identified by local residents as a specific concern.
- 3.5 We stated also stated that we would focus on replacement of our dirtiest vehicles with cleaner alternatives where possible. In the last 12 months we have made significant progress in improving our infrastructure for electric charging vehicles, consulted with residents about the best locations for electric vehicle charging points, increased our provision of public-use cycles and provided additional cycle training for residents, workers and school children.
- 3.6 The council sought to tackle air quality around schools as an urgent priority and we built on work started in August 2017, and in collaboration with the Mayor of London, to identify schools where further interventions are warranted. Examples of some actions taken to deliver on our air quality objectives are provided in brief.

### **4.0 Air Quality Project Updates**

#### **4.1 School Air Quality Audits**

- 4.1.1 Brent Council participated in a pan-London audit of 50 schools in collaboration with representatives from each school, Transport for London and the London Mayor which began in July 2017. We determined the status of local air quality and sources of pollution at 2 Brent schools and this work was completed in December 2017. Detailed audit reports were published in January 2018. Each school was provided with a bespoke list of recommended actions and recently provided with £10,000 funding from the Mayor to start work to deliver their improvement programme. The council has assisted each school to determine their highest priority action and match-funded each project with an additional £10,000.
- 4.1.2 In the next 12 months John Keble Primary in Harlesden will be enhancing their existing green barrier and Ark Franklin School in Kensal Rise propose to improve ventilation in their worst affected classrooms in spring 2019.

## **4.2 Air Quality Champions**

- 4.2.1 Brent Council started our programme to recruit local volunteers to act as air quality champions in December 2017. Eight air quality champions were recruited and trained facilitated by Vehicle Idling Action to assist the council to raise awareness about local idling issues to the wider community. Our air quality champions have subsequently assisted with the delivery of our local idling action campaigns, Car Free Day and Clean Air Day events.
- 4.2.2 In addition, the council has recognised the contributions made by local residents forming the CAfB group and the Harlesden Environment Action Residents Team (HEART) who have also served to champion local air quality issues and assisted the council in the planning and delivery of community events.
- 4.2.3 In the next 12 months the council will continue recruit additional volunteers from the local community for future events including National Clean Air Day June 2019 and London Car Free Day in September 2019.

## **4.3 London Idling Action Campaign**

- 4.3.1 The council signed up to the GLA's Idling Action Group consisting of 17 boroughs in April 2017. This enabled us to deliver anti-idling projects at relatively low cost and, by sharing campaign materials and the delivery of training to local volunteers, we were able to maximise our use of existing resources.
- 4.3.2 The council organised four community events with a launch of the programme in Wembley in June 2018, Wembley Central and Cricklewood in September 2018 and Harlesden in January 2019. Each campaign was used to target local drivers and provide on-the-spot advice about the law and their contribution to poor air quality. We trained officers to be able to issue fixed penalty notices for enforcement against drivers who do not comply with requests to stop. We have not issued any notices to date.
- 4.3.3 Additional idling action events are also planned for 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 in Kilburn (in collaboration with the London Borough of Camden) and 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 in Neasden Town Centre.
- 4.3.4 The Idling Action Group will be expanded and delivered as a pan-London programme for the next financial year, with many more boroughs signing up to the programme. Brent Council has committed to sign up for 2019 -2020.
- 4.3.5 The London Mayor has requested that all boroughs demonstrate that they are undertaking robust enforcement action to tackle local idling. Further work will be required this year to identify and enforce against persistent offenders.

## **4.4 National Clean Air Day Celebration**

- 4.4.1 Brent celebrated National Clean Air Day on the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 with an event to promote the council's anti-idling work and communicate the Council's plans to tackle pollution.

4.4.2 The event was held in Wembley in collaboration with Global Action Plan, Idling Action London, Brent Friends of the Earth and Clean Air for Brent (CAfB), a local community group. MP Smarter Travel, Dr Bike and Source London also participated and were on hand to field specific queries about cleaner transport, local cycling initiatives and options for electric vehicle charging. Council officers and volunteers targeted drivers on local streets to engage with drivers as well as with parents at four Wembley primary schools. Feedback from those who attended including local residents and children, Councillors, Members of Parliament and London Assembly members was very positive.

4.4.3 The council will plan similar events for Clean Air Day in June 2019.

#### **4.5 Breathe Clean Project**

4.5.1 The Breathe Clean Project builds on our previous work in schools which included school audits, tailored assemblies to answer queries about local air quality and our ongoing schools idling programme. Once completed the council will be able to better estimate exposure of children to poor air around Brent schools. The installation of anti-idling signs at school entrances, encouraging drivers to switch off their engines has been incorporated into this and we expect 400 signs to be deployed by the end of the project.

4.5.2 We will use data derived from short term monitoring undertaken as part of the project to obtain a more accurate assessment of local pollution in and around our schools. The results of this project will enable the council to establish which of our schools are most at risk and identify further actions which could be employed to reduce this. We expect to have all results by late spring 2019.

#### **4.6 Construction Emissions**

4.6.1 Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) has the potential to significantly contribute to local pollution. Most large construction sites are required to register NRMM they use so that the council can verify they are using the least polluting equipment available. The council began work to inspect this equipment in October 2018. In recognition of the importance of this work, and the need to ensure consistency in approach across London the GLA has endorsed Merton Council to govern the programme, supplying funds from the Mayors Air Quality Fund to deliver the programme. All London boroughs are expected to join this pan-London group and membership will cost £4,000, significantly less expensive than trying to implement our own programme.

4.6.2 The council will join the NRMM Action Group once arrangements for this have been confirmed.

#### **4.7 Cycling**

4.7.1 We continue to actively promote cycling in the borough and offer many services to support cyclists and encourage more people to take up cycling. Cycle training is available free to anyone who works, lives or studies in the borough.

4.7.2 The number of requests for bike hangers is rapidly increasing and we plan to install these at various locations across the borough. We are working in partnership with TfL to expand the cycle route network and will soon be consulting on the revocation of the byelaw to allow cycling in our parks and open spaces.

#### **4.8 School Streets**

- 4.8.1 The Council have agreed to pilot two School Street (pedestrian and cycling zones) outside Harlesden and Wykeham Primary schools to reduce congestion and improve safety. This initiative will be enforced by CCTV cameras but still enables residents to access their properties during the hours of operation. If the pilots prove successful we plan to develop a prioritisation model and introduce these outside other schools in the borough.

#### **4.9 Diesel Surcharge**

- 4.9.1 The borough's CPZs contain a relatively high density of motor vehicles; the issue of transport-related air pollution is therefore particularly relevant in CPZs. The Council is looking to put policies in place that dis-incentivise the use of diesel vehicles.
- 4.9.2 Interventions include imposing specific parking restrictions, introducing differential charging in Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) with higher rates for diesel vehicles, and the introduction of a surcharge on the price of a resident's parking permit for all diesel vehicles.
- 4.9.2 Cabinet has now agreed to the introduction of a £50 diesel surcharge from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, increasing to £75 p.a. on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and £100 p.a. on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. The objective is to incentivise a reduction in diesel vehicle ownership in favour of more sustainable transport options and less polluting vehicles, and help Brent to meet its targets for air pollution reduction as set out in its agreed Air Quality Action Plan. It is felt that the surcharge will send a strong price signal that diesel vehicles are not an environmentally friendly mode of transport.

#### **5.0 Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The Air Quality Action plan objectives are anticipated to be delivered within existing budgets. However, subject to complying with the LLAQM criteria and attainment of Cleaner Air Borough status, the council can also apply for funding for air quality projects from the Mayors Air Quality Fund, which will be subject to availability.
- 5.2 Any requests for additional funding, or savings arising out of its implementation, will be managed through the normal budgeting process.

#### **6.0 Legal Implications**

- 6.1 The Mayor governs an accreditation scheme to reward local authorities able to demonstrate the impacts of their work. Local authorities can apply for Cleaner Air Borough status which is awarded to those who can demonstrate how they are improving air quality and exceeding upon rather than simply meeting targets. The scheme is currently under review by the Mayor. Officers aim to attain this once the criteria for the scheme has been published.
- 6.2 The Air Quality Action Plan outlines the council's strategy for reducing local emissions of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter. This legal duty is a requirement under the Environment Act 1995 and all local authorities must

publish and regularly review their action plan once an air quality management area has been declared.

6.3 Progress reports detailing how we are delivering on our objectives will be published in accordance with the timetable set out by the Mayor. The LLAQM is currently under review and may necessitate a further review of the Air Quality Action Plan in 2019 – 2020. The council cannot anticipate at this stage the potential implications of this action for Brent or the additional legal requirements that might be imposed following the publication of the new guidelines. In 2016, the Greater London Authority provided technical guidance, known as “London Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance” which has been prepared to support London boroughs in carrying out their duties under the Environment Act 1995 and connected regulations.

6.3 Air quality in the capital is devolved to the Mayor of London, who has a supervisory role, with powers to intervene and direct local authorities in Greater London under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. In support of these devolved powers, the Mayor has established a London-specific LAQM system (LLAQM) for the effective and coordinated discharge of their respective responsibilities under Part IV of the Act.

6.4

## **7.0 Equality Implications**

7.1 None.

Report Sign-Off

**AMAR DAVE**  
**Strategic Director of Regeneration and**  
**Environmental Services**