

SWANLEY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA ASSESSMENT

Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee- 13th June 2023

Report of: Richard Morris- Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer- Planning & Regulatory Services

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by:

- Not Applicable

Key Decision: No

This report supports the Key Aim of: Our Environment- Ensure the design and location of new development takes account of the need to improve air quality through the Local Plan in line with Sevenoaks District Council's Air Quality Action Plan.

Portfolio Holder: Cllr McArthur

Contact Officer: Nick Chapman, Ext. 7160

Recommendation to Cleaner & Greener Advisory Committee:

To note the contents of this report and the technical study of the Swanley AQMAs in Appendix A

Reason for recommendation: Measure 23 of the Air Quality Action Plan 2022-2027 (approved by Council in April 2022) committed the District Council of undertaking a technical assessment of the existing Air Quality Management Areas in Swanley. This report outlines the key findings of the study and helps officers, residents and councillors to understand potential threats to air quality in the Swanley area.

Introduction and Background

- 1 In April 2022, the District Council adopted its new Air Quality Action Plan 2022-2027 (AQAP).
- 2 In preparation of this AQAP, the District Council had commissioned a specialist contractor to undertake a review of our existing Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). This study sought to review existing air quality and traffic data across the district to re-ratify the existing AQMA boundaries.
- 3 Unfortunately, whilst commissioning this work, it became clear that insufficient, up to date traffic data existed within the Swanley area. It was therefore not possible to undertake such a review within the production timescales of the AQAP. Consequently we progressed the AQAP on the assumption that the areas would remain as they had been declared in 2006 (AQMA 8- London Road (East), High Street, Bartholomew Way and parts of central town area) and 2014 (the junction of London Road and Birchwood Road).
- 4 Nevertheless, Officers and Councillors recognised that it was necessary and appropriate for a review of the Swanley AQMAs to take place. Our commitment to this action was outlined in 'Measure 23' of the AQAP.
- 5 This technical report has now been completed by our specialist contractor and is provided for consideration in Appendix A.

Key findings of the technical assessment

- 6 The model predicted no exceedances of Air Quality Objectives outside of the existing AQMA boundaries. Therefore, there is no need/ requirement to extend the existing AQMAs.
- 7 The model did predict likely exceedances of the annual NO₂ objective level along the High Street, near to the junction of Bevan Place (AQMA 8). Development in this area has already created a partial street canyon and additional monitoring is required to establish if this will result in a deterioration of air quality for residents over the next few years.
- 8 Source apportionment indicates that in AQMA 8, diesel cars account for 34.5% of emissions, diesel LGVs 21.5%, HGVs 19.6% and petrol cars 6.9%. Background emissions account for 16.3% with bus, coaches and motorcycles accounting for the remaining 1.3%
- 9 The Environmental Health Team will continue monitoring Air Quality in this location and will review establishing monitoring locations at 1st floor levels in order to accurately reflect residential exposure along the High Street.
- 10 The model and monitoring data predicts exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives for NO₂ at the Junction of Birchwood Road and London Road (AQMA 14). This AQMA will therefore be retained and as per the report recommendations, we will consider deploying additional monitoring in this area.

- 11 Source apportionment indicates that within AQMA 14, diesel cars account for 30.6% of emissions, diesel LGVs 20.8%, HGVs 15.7% and petrol cars 5.3%. Background emissions account for 26.7 % with bus, coaches and motorcycles accounting for the remaining 0.9%

Next Steps

- 12 The District Council will undertake a review of the actions within the current AQAP to ensure that they remain relevant in light of this technical study. We will also consider if it is appropriate to add additional measures to address areas of concern highlighted by the report.
- 13 The source apportionment for AQMAs 8 & 14 suggests that it remains important for the District Council to reduce the number and use of diesel vehicles across the district and reaffirms the need for following measures within the AQAP:
- Measure 7- Promotion of active travel schemes
 - Measure 8- Development of new walking and cycle routes
 - Measure 9- District wide promotion of active travel
 - Measure 11- Reducing vehicle idling
 - Measure 12- Educational campaigns for schools
 - Measure 14- Transitioning the Council's fleet to low emission vehicles
 - Measure 15- Improving and developing the EV infrastructure within the district
 - Measure 16- Installing EV charging points within all Council owned car parks
 - Measure 17- Improving public transport infrastructure
 - Measure 18- Promote the use of public transport
 - Measure 20- Car Club/ sharing schemes
 - Measure 21- Exploring flexible working and home working
 - Measure 22- Walking to school incentives/ encouragement
 - Measure 26- To work with businesses to identify ways to reduce emissions from their activities
 - Measure 31- To work with business operators to increase the % composition of LEV within private fleets
 - Measure 32- To increase the number of Taxi operators using LEV and EV vehicles
- 14 The District Council will need to consider this technical report when assessing applications for development within AQMA 8 and AQMA 14.

Key Implications

Financial

N/A

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

It is a legal requirement for the District Council to declare Air Quality Management Areas where monitoring indicates that air quality fails to meet specified objective levels. The District Council has a legal duty to identify and implement measures to improve air quality/ reduce receptor exposure within an AQMA. These measures are outlined within our existing Air Quality Action Plan 2022-2027

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Net Zero Implications

Whilst the District Council's Air Quality work aligns and supports our Net Zero ambitions, the decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment

Environmental Impact

This report supports the District Council's commitment to improving air quality.

Appendices

Appendix A - Detailed Assessment of Swanley AQMAs- November 2022

Background Papers

- [Air Quality Action Plan 2022 | Sevenoaks District Council](#)
- [2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report | Sevenoaks District Council](#)

Richard Morris

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - Planning & Regulatory Services