

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL-1

FROM THE EXECUTIVE 7 NOVEMBER 2011

255 LOCAL AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT

It was reported that under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 there is a requirement for all Local Authorities to assess their local air quality and to predict future conditions against the national air quality objectives.

The review and assessment of local air quality takes place over a number of stages. The First Stage Review and Assessment carried out across the whole of the district concluded that further assessment would be required for carbon monoxide, lead, particulates and nitrogen dioxide. The Second and Third Stage review concluded that, with the exception of nitrogen dioxide, all of the national objectives would be met within the appropriate timeframe. With regards to annual average levels for nitrogen dioxide it was anticipated that the national objective would be exceeded in Lutterworth Town Centre and an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared in 2001.

Nitrogen dioxide which is associated with adverse effects on human health and at relatively high concentrations the pollutant can cause inflammation of the airways. Long term exposure to Nitrogen Dioxide may affect lung function and may also enhance the response to allergens in sensitive individuals. The main source of nitrogen dioxide in Lutterworth is traffic related.

Monitoring of the air quality both in Lutterworth and across the wider district has been carried out for several years however whilst the general air quality across the district is good, the levels in Lutterworth Town Centre have remained high and in 2008 it became apparent that the annual average levels of nitrogen dioxide outside of the existing AQMA may be breaching the national standard and further work was required to determine whether the boundary of the existing AQMA needed to be changed.

Consequently it was necessary to undertake a long term monitoring programme Based on the results of the monitoring in Lutterworth, there is now sufficient confidence to confirm that there is no requirement to extend the AQMA to the north along Leicester Road, however it is necessary to extend the area to the south of the existing AQMA. The proposed extent of the amended AQMA can be found in Appendix A attached

Once the extent of an AQMA has been confirmed an Action Plan must be developed to identify any potential actions which could reduce the pollutant levels in the local area. As the source of the pollution is traffic related, the Action Plan will look at cost effective measures which can be implemented to reduce the impact of vehicles in the local area. Whilst the duty to assess local air quality lies with the district authorities, guidance stipulates that the upper tier authorities should work closely with the district authorities to incorporate air quality Action Plans into the Local Transport Plan

RECOMMENDED that:

i) members approve the proposed amendment to the existing Air Quality Management Area for Lutterworth Town Centre to be sent out to the statutory consultees.

ii) Authorisation is given to the Head of Health and Enforcement Services to sign the Air Quality Management Area Order following the consultation process.

iii) Any representations received during the consultation process be taken into consideration during the further review process following the amendment of the Air Quality Management Area.

iv) Subject i) to agree that the existing Action Plan for the Air Quality Management Area be reviewed with Leicestershire County Council and be subject to public consultation

Summary of Reasons for the Recommendations

Under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 there is a requirement for all Local Authorities to assess their local air quality and to predict future conditions against the national air quality objectives.

Where a local authority believes that the national air quality standards are not going to be met they have a duty to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

Generally the air quality in the district is good however the annual mean national air quality standard for nitrogen dioxide is not being met in an area of Lutterworth and an AQMA was declared for this area in 2001. The location of the existing AQMA can be found in appendix A

In 2009 an updated assessment identified the potential exceedence of the national objective levels for nitrogen dioxide outside of the existing Air Quality Management Area. Consequently it was necessary to undertake further long term monitoring to confirm the initial findings and to determine the extent to which the current Air Quality Management Area should be extended.

The results of the detailed assessment confirmed that the existing air quality management area needs to be extended. The proposed Order for the amended AQMA can be found in appendix B.to the report

In addition following the amendment of the AQMA it will be necessary to review the Air Quality Action Plan for the area in conjunction with the County Council's Local Transport Plan.