

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	STREETS AND ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE
DATE OF DECISION	2 April 2024
REPORT TITLE:	Air Quality Action Plan 2024-2029
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	<p>NICK HIBBERD, CORPORATE DIRECTOR SUSTAINALBE COMMUNITIES REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY</p> <p>KAREN AGBABIAKA, DIRECTOR OF STREETS & ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINALBE COMMUNITIES REGENERATION & ECONOMIC RECOVERY</p>
LEAD OFFICER:	LINDA JOHNSON, POLLUTION TEAM MANAGER
LEAD MEMBER:	MAYOR JASON PERRY, EXECUTIVE MAYOR OF CROYDON
DECISION TAKER:	CABINET
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	N/a
KEY DECISION? [No
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION? <i>(* See guidance)</i>	No
WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report concerns the Council’s new Air Quality Action Plan 2024–2029.
- 1.2 Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people and those with heart and lung conditions.

- 1.3 Since 2002, the whole of Croydon has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) due to exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) air quality objective. As such we have a statutory requirement to produce an Air Quality Action Plan. Croydon has produced four Air Quality Action plans with the latest plan ending in 2022.
- 1.4 The Executive Mayor of Croydon's Business plan 2022–2026 sets out priorities to ensure Croydon is a place of opportunity for business, earning and learning by supporting the regeneration of Croydon's town and district centres through investment and grants, ensuring that Croydon is a cleaner, safer and healthier place, a borough we're proud to call home and that people can lead healthier and independent lives for longer.
- 1.5 The Councils' priorities for the Air Quality Action Plan 2024–2029, in no particular order are:
 - a) Work towards the 2005 WHO guidelines for PM_{2.5} with a target of compliance deadline by 2030 and review the emerging policies from the GLA in respect of the 2021 WHO guidelines
 - b) Increase the network of air quality monitoring across the borough
 - c) Continue to engage schools with the introduction of Croydon Healthy School Streets (this can include traffic calming measures, Air Quality audits and increase of green infrastructure working with Trees for Cities).
 - d) Ensure enforcement of Non-Road Mobile Machinery (NRMM) air quality policies in Croydon.
 - e) Minimise emissions from construction and develop draft Section 106 guidance for air quality and planning;
 - f) Continue to raise awareness and encourage behaviour changes through air quality campaigns
 - g) Assess potential impact of installing Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) infrastructure (increase uptake of electric vehicles and ensure electric vehicle charging infrastructure provision and maintenance keeps pace with growth in Croydon)
 - h) Reduce emissions from wood burning – reduce particulate emissions from wood burning in the home by an awareness campaign
 - i) Assess the wider role of fleet within the services the Council provides to ascertain compatibility with the Council's air quality aims.
 - j) Provide new cycling and walking infrastructure and assess air quality impacts of new infrastructure.

- 1.6 The action plan sets out how the Council will effectively deliver against the above themes and priorities, thereby improving air quality issues that are within its control and through leading by example. However, it is important to recognise that these are local drivers reduced at tackling air pollution and that air pollution by its very nature is cross boundary.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Streets and Environment Sub-Committee is recommended:

1. To note this report and the content of the draft Air Quality Action Plan at Appendix 1 and
2. To provide comments on the draft Air Quality Action Plan prior to it being presented to Cabinet on 15 May 2024

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As Croydon has declared an Air Quality Management Area there is a statutory requirement to submit an Air Quality Action Plan designed to improve air quality within the area in accordance with statutory requirements and Secretary of State guidance.
- 3.2 Once the plan is agreed the Council is required to undertake the consultation process on the actions identified within the draft plan.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 Air quality is an important Public Health issue in London. It contributes to shortening the life expectancy of all Londoners, disproportionately impacting on the most vulnerable.
- 4.2 The whole of Croydon has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) since 2002 due to exceedances of the nitrogen dioxide air quality objective. As such the Council has a statutory requirement to produce an Air Quality Action Plan. Croydon has produced four Air Quality Action Plans, with the last plan ending in 2022.
- 4.3 With the focus on air quality so high the time is right to produce an integrated five year action plan to focus on local actions the Council can take to reduce emissions and minimise exposure of air pollutants to those who live and work in Croydon.
- 4.4 There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often the less affluent areas. Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. The Administration is committed to reducing the exposure of people in Croydon to poor air quality in order to improve health.
- 4.5 The aim is to reduce exposure to air pollution and to raise awareness for residents and those who work in Croydon. It has been estimated that up to 40% of pollution in Croydon is from outside London and Europe therefore actions to reduce pollution in Croydon are limited. Engagement with residents and businesses is required to reduce exposure to air

pollution and to raise awareness to change behaviour by encouraging people to walk and cycle more.

- 4.6 Some of the proposed actions will be delivered within existing budgets by officers however some of the actions require funding, which will potentially be sourced from:
1. Planning Section 106 Obligations (air quality, transport and public health)
 2. Local Implementation Plan (transport related measures)
 3. Mayors' Air Quality Fund (MAQS)
 4. DEFRA air quality grant
 5. Public Health funding
- 4.7 The aim of the new Air Quality Action Plan is to have an integrated approach to include Transport and Public Health measures. Some of the actions will be building on existing successful actions and some are new. The key priorities considered are detailed in point 1.5 above.
- 4.8 This administration is committed to providing clear and strong leadership in Croydon. The Council will explore a wide ranging set of options, via our forthcoming consultation exercise, which will be reflected in our new Air Quality Action Plan.
- 4.9 Air Quality in Croydon was discussed at the Streets & Environment Scrutiny sub-committee on 1 November 2023. Initial ideas of the above priorities were discussed and also further information regarding funding of these priorities was provided. Although the committee's recommendations are still to be formally agreed they will be signed off before the AQAP is finalised so will be taken full account of as part of the consultation process and development of the final action plan.
- 4.10 Croydon Council cannot develop this plan in isolation and will need the active support and participation of residents, businesses and partners if the council is to succeed in improving air quality in our borough.
- 4.11 The Council will work closely with the GLA to formulate its final plan. Building on Croydon's past excellent record, the council will continue to lead the way in London and intend to become an exemplar borough, sharing its ideas and results across the city via the South London Cluster Group and pan-London meetings.

Risks

- 4.12 There is a risk that if this report is not approved, action to tackle poor air quality in the borough will not progress at the pace it is required to thus the Council may not meet its statutory duty.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 N/A

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 In developing/updating the action plan the Council will consult with other local authorities, agencies, businesses and the local community to improve local air quality. Schedule 11 of the Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities to consult the bodies listed below:

- The Secretary of State
- The Environment Agency
- Transport for London and the Mayor of London (joint response)
- All neighbouring local authorities
- Other public authorities as appropriate
- Bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate
- Residents and businesses eg. residents associations and local BID's

In addition, consultation will be undertaken via:

- Croydon's Air Quality Steering Group*
- Public notices in Council offices
- Council Communications Team
- Public Health
- Imperial College – Environmental Research Groups
- Local community groups
- Mums for Lungs local representative

Croydon's Steering Group will meet regularly with senior officers from the following teams in the group's regular membership:

- Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing
- Public Health
- Strategic Transport
- Strategic Planning
- Highways
- Carbon Neutral Team

- Independent Travel

6.2 Other services/teams will be invited to the Air Quality Action Plan Group meetings when items relevant to their delivery responsibilities are placed on the agenda. This includes -

- Legal Services
- Parking Services
- Parks
- Ecology & Trees
- Development Control
- Children's Services & Educational Development
- Housing Services
- Fleet Management
- Communications Team
- Procurement

6.3 Consultation on a draft Air Quality Action Plan will include:

- Details of which pollutants the authority will be taking action on, and an indication of the pollutant emission source/s;
- What other local authorities are doing or will need to do to meet the action plan's objectives;
- The timescales for implementing each proposed measure and the emissions (and concentration, if possible), reductions expected by the end of the relevant review and assessment round (or by the specified date in the 2000 Regulations); and
- Details of other individuals, bodies or agencies whose involvement is needed to meet the plan's objectives and what the authority is doing to encourage their co-operation.

6.4 In addition to the above the council proposes to engage with the public to garner their ideas on how we can best tackle this issue. Many of the ideas are likely to include the need for people to change their current behaviour so it is important that we understand how we can best support and achieve this.

6.5 Secretary of State guidance indicates that whilst Local Authorities should decide the timescale for consultation the recommendation is that the consultation exercise should take place over an eight to twelve week period.

6.6 The final AQAP will be completed following the consultation process and the report to Cabinet on 15 May 2024 is to recommend that the Corporate Director of Sustainable Communities, Regeneration and Economic Recovery be given delegated authority to consider the responses received during the consultation and, in consultation with The Executive Mayor of Croydon, to approve the Croydon Air Quality Action Plan 2024-2029 for adoption.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 The Executive Mayor of Croydon's priorities are detailed in the Corporate Plan, and highlight which outcomes the report and decision related to: Mayor's Business Plan 2022 - 2026 (croydon.gov.uk)