

Committee(s)	Dated:
Port Health and Environmental Services Committee Planning and Transportation Committee Health and Wellbeing Board	24 November 2015 15 December 2015 29 January 2016
Subject: City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015 – 2020 update	Public
Report of: Director of Markets and Consumer Protection	For Information

Summary

The City of London Corporation Air Quality Strategy 2015 – 2020 was approved by the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee in July 2015.

The strategy contains 10 policy areas, with 60 specific actions for improving air quality and reducing the impact of air pollution on public health. The strategy is an overarching document. The actions will be updated each year in line with statutory requirements. The strategy fulfils the City of London's statutory obligation to assist the Government and Mayor of London to meet European Limit Values for nitrogen dioxide and fine particles (PM₁₀). It also assists with the City Corporation's obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to improve the public health of its population.

Given its high profile, and the importance placed by the City Corporation on improving local air quality, a request was made for an update on actions within the Air Quality Strategy. A table containing action against each policy area is included as Appendix A, with further detail being provided on specific significant actions in the body of this report.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the on-going action to improve air quality in the Square Mile and reduce the impact on health.

Main Report

Background

1. Air pollution in London has both short-term and long-term effects on health. It is associated with cardiovascular and cardiopulmonary disease, lung cancer and respiratory disease. Children and the elderly are the most susceptible. A report published by the Mayor of London in August 2015 considered the impact of nitrogen dioxide on mortality across London. The research revealed that more Londoners have their lives cut short by air pollution than previously thought. It is

now thought that air pollution in London is responsible for the premature death of over 9,000 Londoners each year¹ .

2. The City Corporation has a statutory duty to assist the Mayor of London and the UK government in taking action to reduce levels of air pollution so that concentrations of pollutants do not exceed set limits. This duty is referred to as Local Air Quality Management.
3. Since April 2013, the City Corporation has had responsibilities for improving public health. This was introduced by Health and Social Care Act 2012. Public Health England (PHE) has conducted a Health Impact Assessment of the effects of fine particles (PM_{2.5}) on public health. PHE ranked air pollution as the 5th out of 12 causes of mortality risk across London.
4. The City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015 – 2020 outlines action that will be taken to fulfil the City Corporation's statutory responsibility for Local Air Quality Management, and for reducing the health impact of air pollution on residents and workers.
5. There are ten policy areas within the strategy. These are listed below. Appendix A details progress against each policy, with details of further work planned for the next 6 months.
 - Air quality monitoring
 - Political influence and commitment
 - Working with the Mayor of London
 - Working with other external organisations
 - Reducing emissions from transport
 - Reducing emissions from new developments
 - Leading by example
 - Recognising and rewarding good practice
 - Raising awareness
 - Air quality and public health

¹.

Current Position

Specific details on actions of note

6. Appendix A contains very brief information on action taken. Paragraphs 7 to 16 provide further details on specific actions of note.
7. Air quality is now on the Corporate Risk Register. A list of actions to demonstrate mitigation against the risk will be reported to the Audit and Risk Management Committee in March.
8. The City Corporation has submitted a number of bids for funding from the next round of Mayor's Air Quality Fund which runs from 2016 – 2019:
 - To investigate the feasibility and acceptability of different options to reduce emissions from diesel across the Square Mile.
 - To coordinate and roll out Cleaner Air Action Days across central London to deal with unnecessary vehicle engine idling.
 - To investigate the potential impact on air quality in central London of using standby diesel generators for 'short term operating reserve' in times of peak electricity demand, rather than just in emergency situations and for testing.

In addition to the above

- The City Corporation is part of a joint application to take action to deal with emissions from non road mobile machinery on construction sites.
 - The City Corporation is part of a joint application with Cheapside Business Alliance to reduce emissions of air pollutants in the zone.
9. Work has commenced to look at options for establishing a Low Emission Neighbourhood in the area that runs from Golden Lane, down through the Barbican and south to include the area covered by the Cheapside Business Alliance. This follows engagement work with residents and businesses in the area, which revealed a great deal of support for action to improve air quality. Transport for London has awarded the City Corporation £25,000 to investigate options and a report with recommendations will be produced by April 2016.
 10. The City Corporation is supporting a piece of air quality research by the independent think tank, Policy Exchange. The work will consider a range of potential policy options to address London's air quality problem. The options will be modelled quantitatively, and the report will identify the benefits in terms of air quality improvements and indicative costs.
 11. Drivers who leave engines idling continue to be educated and asked to turn off their vehicle engines whilst idling. Volunteers are being recruited to support this programme going forward, with specific idling engine action days planned for late November. Due to the success of the programme, the City Corporation has

applied for funding to roll it out across 8 central London authorities. The scheme has been shortlisted for the Air Quality Initiative of the National Fleet Hero's Award. The City of London Corporation's involvement in this programme was recently covered nationally on BBC One's 'The One Show'.

12. As part of the Bank Area Improvement project, to assess the impact of traffic changes on local air quality, 20 tubes which monitor nitrogen dioxide have been placed on posts in the streets in and around Bank junction. A continuous, more accurate NO_x analyser will be placed in Lombard Street, near to the junction in the New Year. Air quality monitoring is planned in this area for the next four years.
13. Detailed air quality monitoring is also planned for the area covered by Cheapside Business Alliance. The members of the alliance have expressed an interest in understanding how local levels of pollution vary, and to locate any 'hot spot' areas.
14. The City Corporation continues to liaise with the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) over air quality policy. A copy of the latest letter sent by the Chairman of Port Health and Environmental Services to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment and Rural Affairs, together with his response, is attached as Appendix B. A round table discussion with the Parliamentary Secretary of State and key City businesses that champion air quality has been organised for December 2015, at the Minister's request. A response to Defra's consultation on their draft Air Quality Plan has been submitted and is attached as Appendix C.
15. The Mayor of London has introduced new air quality emission controls for equipment used on construction and demolition sites. The equipment is referred to as Non Road Mobile Machinery. These requirements are being enforced across the City via the planning process. The new legislative requirements have caused confusion amongst the industry so the City Corporation plans to hold an event in the January 2016 to explain the new controls to industry representatives.
16. Air quality is being embedded into procurement policies. Addison Lee, the providers of the current corporate taxi contract, has agreed to use petrol hybrid vehicles as default for City employees, with a requirement that drivers switch the engines to electric mode if possible when driving in sensitive areas of the City.

Beech Street

17. Fine particles (PM₁₀) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) are monitored in Beech Street. Both the annual average and daily average limit values for PM₁₀ are met. This is partly due to the washing regime detailed in paragraph 18. The health based limits for both the daily average and annual average nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) limit value are not met. The annual average NO₂ level to date for 2015 is 90µg/m³, the limit value is 40µg/m³. This is an increase on previous years. As of 6th November, 154 hours had exceeded the hourly limit of 200µg/m³ in 2015, the limit is 18 hours in any one year.

18. Washing Beech Street helps to keep down levels of fine particles. Currently, washing takes place on Monday through to Friday between 06:30am and 08:00am. In addition, the carriageway and footway are washed every Friday night. The walls, panels and signs are also washed twice per year.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. The work on air quality sits within Key Policy Priority 3 of the Corporate Plan: 'Engaging with London and national government on key issues of concern to our communities such as transport, housing and public health' Working with the Mayor of London on air quality is specifically mentioned as an example.

Implications

20. Project work contained within the strategy is being funded using the following sources: the Mayor's Air Quality Fund (MAQF), Local Implementation Plan funding and Section 106.
21. The City Corporation has received £280,000 over three years (2013 – 2016) for air quality improvement work in the Square Mile and a further £100,000 over three years to work with Bart's Health NHS Trust. It has also recently received £25,000 funding to investigate options for establishing a Low Emission Neighbourhood in the Square Mile. All three sets of funding are from the Mayor's Air Quality Fund.

Conclusion

22. Improving air quality is an important priority for the City of London Corporation. Through its latest Air Quality Strategy, the City Corporation is involved in many local and strategic projects designed to improve air quality, and reduce the impact of air pollution on health, both in the Square Mile and across Greater London.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Progress with actions within the City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015 – 2020.
- Appendix B – Letter from the Chairman of Port Health and Environmental Services to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Environment and Rural Affairs, together with his response.
- Appendix C – City Corporation response to the Defra consultation on the national Air Quality Plan to be submitted to the European Commission.

Background Papers

The City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015 – 2020.

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