

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Port Health and Environmental Services Planning and Transportation	9 May 2017 13 June 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Coordinated action to deal with unnecessary vehicle engine idling	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Markets and Consumer Protection Director of Built Environment	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Ruth Calderwood, Air Quality Manager	

### Summary

Vehicles that leave engines idling when parked are an unnecessary source of local air pollution. This has a negative impact on public health.

The City of London Corporation has powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to drivers who leave engines idling unnecessarily. However, due to the way the regulations and associated guidance are structured, the City Corporation has not been able to issue any Fixed Penalty Notices for this offence.

Consequently, the City Corporation has developed an alternative approach to deal with unnecessary engine idling. This report outlines the range of action that has been taken by the Department of Markets and Consumer Protection and the Department of the Built Environment, with the support of a range of residents, businesses and other organisations.

The coordinated action to deal with unnecessary engine idling is having a positive effect on driver behaviour. There has been a reduction in the number of vehicles found idling on City streets over the past two years.

Over 700 drivers have been asked to turn engines off on 'idling engine action' days. A further 73 organisations have received letters where a driver has been found with engines idling unnecessarily in the City. Permanent 'no engine idling' street signs have recently been placed in 16 roads that have been identified as hotspot areas.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:-

- note the report

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. 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. The City Corporation also has a responsibility to improve public health.
2. 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. One of the actions within the strategy is to reduce the amount of vehicle engine idling as it is an unnecessary source of local air pollution.
3. As the City has been designated an Air Quality Management Area, the City Corporation has powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices to drivers who leave engines idling unnecessarily. The City Corporation published its intention to do this in 2012. However, due to the way the regulations and associated guidance are structured, the City Corporation has not been able to issue and Fixed Penalty Notices for this offence. Consequently, the City Corporation has developed an alternative approach to deal with this problem.
4. The City Corporation is able to issued Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) for coaches idling in designated coach bays. Civil Enforcement Offices will issue a PCN if the offending coach company has already received a warning letter.

### **Dealing with idling vehicle engines**

5. The Departments of Markets and Consumer Protection and Built Environment have taken the following coordinated action to deal with unnecessary vehicle engine idling
  - The ineffectiveness of the existing Fixed Penalty Notice provision has been raised with Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs and Department for Transport
  - Officers respond to specific complaints about engine idling by visiting the area and speaking to drivers. This is undertaken by the Air Quality Team, Civil Enforcement Officers and Street Environment Officers that work outside normal office hours
  - Officers speak to drivers who leave engines idling as they walk around the City on other business. A range of staff across the organisation have been trained to do this.
  - Temporary A-boards and lamppost signs have been erected in 'hotspot' areas
  - Specific areas have been targeted with letter drops, for example businesses in Carthusian Street, where delivery vehicles were causing a problem

- City businesses are asked to support the City no idling policy, and incorporate it into delivery and taxi contracts. Posters have been provided for delivery bays.
- The no vehicle idling policy is built into City Corporation contracts
- The Chairmen of Port Health and Environmental Services and Planning and Transportation have written to the taxi body representatives asking for their members' support
- Close liaison with construction and demolition companies is undertaken to ensure that vehicles waiting to access sites don't leave engines idling. Posters have been provided for sites. The requirement to switch engines off has been incorporated into the City Code of Practice for Construction and Deconstruction.
- The City Corporation has been holding monthly 'no idling action days' where staff and community volunteers go out to speak to drivers with view to educating drivers so they automatically switch their engine off when parked. Businesses and the Cheapside Business Alliance support these events. Appendix 1 contains further details of about the action days, which have received wide media coverage. The programme has been rolled out to an additional 11 London boroughs due to its success.
- Information collated by Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) has enabled the Parking Department to write to 73 companies whose drivers are observed in the City with engines idling whilst parked.
- A message regarding engine idling is played to customers that pay for parking by telephone
- The Department for Transport has recently approved wording for permanent street signs. Following data collection on hotspot areas, permanent signs have been erected in 16 roads.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

6. The work on air quality supports Key Policy Priority KPP3 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'.
7. The work also supports delivery of the City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015 - 2020

### **Conclusion**

8. The City Corporation has been taking a wide range of coordinated action to deal with idling vehicle engines.
9. The action is having a positive impact in reducing the incidence of unnecessary engine idling in the City.
10. When the City Corporation commenced idling engine action days in March 2015, there was little awareness about air quality and the importance of switching engines off when parked. However, this has changed dramatically over time due

to a combination of the action taken by the City Corporation and the associated media coverage.

**Appendices:**

**Appendix 1:** Idling engine action days

**Background Papers:** City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015 - 2020

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