

Committee Port Health and Environmental Services	Dated: 16 July 2018
Subject: Draft Clean Air Strategy Consultation	Public
Report of: Director of Markets and Consumer Protection	For Decision
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Summary

Defra has published a draft Clean Air Strategy for consultation. The document sets out actions that government intends to take to improve air quality by reducing pollution from a wide range of sources. The report is consulting on the following themes:

- Understanding the Problem
- Protecting the Nation's Health
- Protecting the Environment
- Securing Clean Growth and Innovation
- Action to Reduce Emissions from Transport
- Action to Reduce Emissions at Home
- Action to Reduce Emissions from Industry
- Leadership at all Levels

The pollutants addressed are fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), ammonia (NH₃), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs). The consultation is intended to inform the final Clean Air Strategy and detailed National Air Pollution Control Programme, to be published by March 2019. The draft City of London Corporation response is appended to this report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- approve the draft response to the Clean Air Strategy, subject to comments received within two weeks of the committee meeting.

Main Report

Background

1. Defra has launched a consultation on the draft Air Quality Strategy. The consultation closes on 14th August 2018. The consultation can be found at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environmental-quality/clean-air-strategy-consultation/>

2. This draft document is the latest in a series of national air quality strategies. The first Air Quality Strategy was adopted in 1997, and subsequently replaced by two further strategies, the second in 2000. The most recent, The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland was published in 2007. These strategies have all addressed ambient air quality in the outdoor environment.
3. The draft Strategy proposes a range of promising, and in some cases ambitious ideas, though it lacks detail and doesn't include timescales for delivery. It addresses many of the points raised by the City Corporation in its response to previous consultations on national air quality policy.

The Consultation

4. Views are being sought on the actions being proposed to reduce air pollution generally from a range of sources, its effects, and for further suggestions.
5. The most notable omission in the Clean Air Strategy a detailed coverage of measures to tackle road transport, which contributes approximately 57% of NO_x, 56% of PM₁₀ and 69% of PM_{2.5} emissions in the City of London. The draft strategy instead refers to the Clean Growth and Industrial Strategies and more relevantly a forthcoming 'Road to Zero' Strategy for dealing with emissions from road transport, along with its NO₂ plan 'Tackling nitrogen dioxide in our towns and cities'. However, the later document was heavily criticised for the absence of concrete proposals, and its lack of recognition of the important role that national government has in delivering improvements.
6. The draft Clean Air Strategy includes proposals to:
 - Create new legal powers for local government to deal with non-transport sources of pollution.
 - Implement regulations to improve existing powers to deal with prohibited cheat devices for road vehicles.
 - Compel manufacturers to recall vehicles and machinery for any failures in their emissions control system and make tampering with an emissions control system a legal offence.
 - Tackle fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), by halving the number of people exposed to levels greater than 10µg/m³.
 - Create a new statutory framework for Clean Air Zones (CAZ) to simplify current arrangements regarding Air Quality Management Areas, CAZs and Smoke Control Areas.
 - Tackle wood burning by prohibiting the sale of the 'most polluting' fuels and introduce cleaner stoves.

- Examine the use of non-road 'red' diesel.
- Work with the devolved administrations to develop a detailed National Air Pollution Control Programme as required under the National Emissions Ceilings Directive for publication in 2019.

Consultation

7. The following Departments have been consulted in the development of this draft response:

- Remembrancers
- Built Environment
- Open Spaces
- Children and Community Services

Corporate & Strategic Implications

8. The draft Clean Air Strategy supports the aims and objectives of the City of London Air Quality Strategy 2015–2020, in addition to many other corporate policies and strategies. It also goes towards addressing air quality, which has been identified as a corporate risk.

9. It supports two key Corporate Plan outcomes:
- a. 'People enjoy good health and wellbeing'
 - b. 'We have clean air, land and water.....'

Conclusion

10. Defra has published a draft Clean Air Strategy to tackle a range of pollutants from different sources. The Strategy proposes a range of promising, and in some cases ambitious ideas. However, overall the measures are not detailed and mainly in the form of pledges, with limited timescales included. The draft response to the strategy is appended to this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Clean Air Strategy consultation response

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