

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Port Health and Environmental Services	2 July 2013
Subject: City of London Air Quality Progress Report	Public
Report of: Director of Markets and Consumer Protection	For information
<p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>The City Corporation has a statutory obligation to monitor air quality and assess the data against health based objectives.</p> <p>The annual average objective for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is not being met across the City, and is up to three times the required limit adjacent to busy roads. The daily average fine particle (PM₁₀) objective is met everywhere except adjacent to the route that runs from Victoria Embankment through Upper and Lower Thames Street to Tower Hill. In 2012, this objective was also breached in Beech Street tunnel. As pollution levels exceed the set objectives, the City Corporation has a statutory obligation to develop and implement a programme of actions to improve air quality.</p> <p>This report presents an annual report, which has been submitted to the Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Greater London Authority (GLA), containing air quality data and progress with air quality policy in the City during 2012/13.</p> <p>The publication of the air quality data and progress report ensures that the City Corporation meets its statutory requirements for reporting on, and taking action to improve air quality.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <p>I recommend that your Committee receives the attached Air Quality Progress Report (Appendix 2).</p>	

Main Report

Background

1. Air quality targets are defined in European legislation as limit values. The UK Government has a duty to ensure that air quality in the UK meets the limit values.
2. The limit values have been adopted into domestic legislation by the UK government as air quality objectives. The City Corporation has a statutory duty to work towards the objectives. By doing so, we assist the Government in meeting the European Union (EU) limit values.
3. The City Corporation has a statutory obligation to monitor and report on air quality concentrations and compare the results to the air quality objectives. As the air quality in the City does not meet the objectives for nitrogen dioxide and fine particles, the City of London has been declared an Air Quality Management Area. An Air Quality Strategy was published in March 2011 outlining additional action that would be taken in pursuit of the objectives. Appendix 1 contains a table summarising progress with actions in the Air Quality Strategy.

4. A report detailing the results of air quality monitoring, and progress made with actions in the Air Quality Strategy during 2012/13, is attached to this report as Appendix 2. The air quality data has been compared to previous years. The report has been approved by both the GLA and Defra in fulfilment of Part IV of the Environment Act 1995.

Air quality during 2012

5. Levels of air pollution in the City of London during 2012 were broadly similar to 2011. However, there was a noticeable increase in nitrogen dioxide and PM₁₀ in Beech Street tunnel. This is the first year that the 24-hour average PM₁₀ objective was breached in the tunnel since 2007, which is likely to be due to an increase in tunnel traffic as a result of local road closures.
6. Nitrogen dioxide levels continue to be high in the City. Particularly high levels were seen at Walbrook Wharf roadside, which is adjacent to Upper Thames Street. This site is subject to a high volume of traffic and low dispersion due to street canyon effects.
7. Fleet Street also continues to experience elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide. In addition to a high volume of traffic, there are a large number of buses and taxis along Fleet Street and, like Upper Thames Street, it is a street canyon. The western side of the City also has higher overall levels of pollution than the east due to its proximity to the central point of London.
8. The annual objective for PM₁₀ was met at all sites; however the 24-hour mean objective was exceeded at both Beech Street and Upper Thames Street (roadside sites). The annual average concentration of PM_{2.5} in Farringdon was below the limit value of 25 µg/m³.

Progress with the Air Quality Strategy

9. The City Air Quality Strategy was published in 2011 and will be updated by January 2015. Good progress has been made on a wide range of actions in the Strategy. Key achievements during 2012/13 include:
 - Air quality is listed as one of the priorities in the City Health and Wellbeing Strategy
 - A project was initiated to try and reduce the amount of pollution associated with taxis, by improving taxi rank use to reduce the amount of taxi running (plying for hire)
 - An analysis of the potential impact on air quality of a 20mph speed restriction in central London was undertaken by Imperial College London
 - A comprehensive vehicle emission testing programme, to assess real world vehicle emissions, was commissioned by the City
 - The City of London won the 2012 Green Fleet Award: Public Sector Fleet of the Year
 - £193,000 in air quality grant was obtained for a range of air quality improvement work
 - The City continued with the CityAir programme to engage businesses in air quality, and this was rolled out to other London boroughs
 - The City ran two separate successful award schemes to recognise innovation and good practice in air quality improvement
 - The City worked with the Greater London Authority on their Clean Air Zones for Schools programme

- The City continued to implement a range of measures to reduce the amount of unnecessary vehicle engine idling in the City.

Work programme for 2013/14

10. The GLA has awarded the City of London £280,000 over three years for air quality improvement work. This funding, which is part of the Mayor's Air Quality Fund, will be used towards the following projects:
 - a pilot freight management project
 - reducing emissions from taxis
 - community engagement, which will include community monitoring of local air quality
 - working with air quality champions in the construction and demolition industry
 - reducing personal exposure to poor air quality
 - targeted action to deal with idling vehicle engines
 - improving the health outcomes of residents and workers, in line with the City of London Health and Wellbeing Strategy
11. The City has been awarded an additional £100,000 from the Mayor's Air Quality Fund on behalf of the City Corporation and London Boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. This is to work with St. Bartholomew's National Health Service Trust to engage health care professionals so they can reach out to 'at risk communities' and improve the health outcomes of exposure to poor air quality.
12. Following the successful vehicle emissions testing programme in 2012, the City obtained further funding from Defra and has appointed King's College London to undertake further testing of vehicle types and technologies to enhance our understanding of real world vehicle emissions.
13. The City will launch a CityAir smart phone application in autumn 2013 to notify users when pollution levels are high and appropriate steps that can be taken to reduce exposure to the pollution.
14. The City will continue to work with Sir John Cass School on an air quality education programme for the children and measures to reduce exposure to high levels of pollution.
15. The Clean City Awards Scheme will have an air quality category for 2013 to mark European Year of Air.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

16. The City Corporation is strongly committed to improving air quality. This work supports Key Policy Priority 3 in the Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017, which outlines a commitment to engage with London and national government on the main issues of concern to our communities.
17. Implementing policies to improve air quality supports the following aims of the City Together Strategy:
 - Supports our communities
 - Protects, promotes and enhances our environment
18. In terms of impact on sustainability, improving air quality will make a positive contribution to reducing carbon emissions and reducing pollution. It will also encourage the

City to be more environmentally aware and works towards enhancing and encouraging preventative health measures.

Conclusion

19. The City of London continues to experience high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide. Air quality at busy roadside locations does not meet the PM₁₀ daily Limit Value. Good progress is being made on a wide range of actions outlined in the City's Air Quality Strategy. The City Corporation continues to fulfil its statutory obligation in relation to air quality management.

Background Papers:

The City of London Air Quality Strategy 2011 – 2015, presented to the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee, March 2011

Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of progress with actions in the City of London Air Quality Strategy

Appendix 2: The City of London Air Quality Progress Report, April 2013

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