

Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Commission

21st February 2019



Report of: Colin Molton, Executive Director Growth and Regeneration

Title: An Update on the development of the Clean Air Plan for Bristol

Ward: Citywide

Officer Presenting Report: Alex Minshull, City Innovation and Sustainability Manager

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 962 1751

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Scrutiny Commission are asked to note the progress of the wider Clean Air Plan and the Nitrogen Dioxide Compliance Plan.



1. Summary

Bristol City Council is developing a Clean Air Plan for Bristol. This will aim to improve air quality in the city generally, and specifically will include a detailed plan to achieve compliance with the legal limits for nitrogen dioxide at roadsides in the city.

Following a statutory Direction and funding from Government, the City Council has been undertaking a substantial amount of work on the development of the plan to achieve compliance with legal limits for nitrogen dioxide. This work has not yet been completed. Discussions with Government are on-going.

The wider Clean Air Plan will address other pollutants such as particulates and how they can be reduced in the city. Actions are being developed and agreed with City Council services and partners.

2. Policy Context and Timetable

Significant areas of central Bristol lie within the Bristol Air Quality Management Area which was designated in November 2011 due to breaches in the legal limits for nitrogen dioxide. This is a similar situation to other British cities where road traffic causes breaches in legal standards.

In July 2017 Bristol City Council, and other councils, were directed by Government to undertake a Feasibility Study and develop a Plan to deliver compliance with legal limits for roadside nitrogen dioxide in the shortest possible time.

In March 2018, Cabinet approved the Strategic Outline Case emerging from the feasibility study and agreed to proceed with more detailed analysis of 5 different types of Clean Air Zone. This would lead to the Final Plan and its Outline Business Case.

The Cabinet report provides further background and details of the options. It can be found at: <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s19804/Clean%20Air%20Plan%20-%20Cabinet%20Report%20and%20Appendices%20-%20Final%20with%20Early%20Measures%20Fund%20included%20-with%20legal.pdf>

2. Current situation

The work on the Outline Business Case for the Nitrogen Dioxide Compliance Plan has taken longer than initially anticipated and so the City Council was unable to submit the Plan by the requested date of December 2018. The Minister wrote to the Mayor in January 2019 requesting the Outline Business Case be submitted by 21st February 2019.

The City Council is working with Defra in continuing detailed technical work on the Outline Business Case to explore fully all possible options. This includes ensuring that the proposed option would be effective and would not have significant adverse impacts, in particular on people on low incomes.

Senior officers met with the Government's Joint Air Quality Unit on 11th February 2019 to discuss progress on the Outline Business Case.

3. Wider Clean Air Plan

Alongside the Government directed work on the Nitrogen Dioxide Compliance Plan the City Council is developing a wider Clean Air Plan to reduce the levels of other pollutants such as particles, in order to reduce harm to people's health.

The wider plan covers emissions from transport, solid fuel burning (coal and wood), combined heat and power and gas boiler plant emissions, industry (including Avonmouth Docks), short term operating reserve plant (electricity generators), non-mobile road machinery and construction and demolition activities.

As well as considering how to control emissions sources more effectively, the plan will consider best practice options in building design and layout in order to minimise exposure to existing pollution wherever possible.

The key pollution sources have been identified and possible mechanisms to control them in the future have been developed by considering examples of best practice in other cities. Draft actions are being developed in consultation with the relevant services and partners to develop an effective plan.

4. Public Engagement Activity

A significant amount of activity has been undertaken in recent months to talk with citizens and stakeholders about air quality – at meetings, events, schools, and a new website www.cleanairforbristol.org.uk. This includes a comprehensive set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

All of the council's air quality data is hosted on BCC's [open data platform](#). Users can download, chart, map and analyse data from the continuous monitoring network and diffusion tubes. A user – friendly [dashboard](#) has been developed to help users navigate the data, which goes back to 1998 and is more than one million observations.