

HILLINGDON'S AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

Relevant Board Member(s)	Councillor Philip Corthorne
Organisation	London Borough of Hillingdon
Report author/s	Kevin Byrne LBH Health Integration Val Beale LBH Planning Specialists
Papers with report	Appendix 1 - Health and Wellbeing Board response to the Air Quality Action Plan consultation

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	This paper reports on the response made by the Board to the consultation on the Hillingdon Air Quality Action Plan 2019-2024.
Contribution to plans and strategies	The Hillingdon Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWBS) identifies air pollution and poor air quality as major contributing factors in increased incidence of respiratory disease.
Financial Cost	There are no costs arising directly from this report.
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Health and Wellbeing Board:

1. notes the response made on behalf of the Board to the consultation on the Air Quality Action Plan contained at Appendix 1.
2. agrees to receive periodic updates on the work being undertaken by the Council and Health services to reduce air pollution and to increase public awareness of air quality.

3. INFORMATION

Background Information

1. At the March meeting, the Health and Wellbeing Board noted that the Hillingdon Air Quality Action Plan would be issued for public consultation in the near future. It was recognised that there were areas in the Borough which were already predicted to be above the air quality limits for annual mean nitrogen dioxide even before considering the impact from other developments such as a third runway at Heathrow, or HS2.
2. It was agreed that the Health and Wellbeing Board would respond to the consultation. The deadline for responses was 19 April 2019 and a response from the Board was submitted

and is attached at Appendix 1.

3. The Hillingdon Air Quality Action Plan 2019-2024 was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 30 May 2019. Its development has considered the Mayor of London's guidance, has been the subject of an Inquiry by the Residents, Education and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee, and has been subject to both statutory and public consultation. The Plan will remain in place for 5 years when it will be reviewed again.
4. The Council has had an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) since 2004. It is a live document and progress has been reported annually to central Government. In common with all London boroughs, despite the actions taken, over the last few years air pollution levels have stopped improving in the more urban areas and now remain static. This is mainly a result of increased road traffic volumes, the increased use of diesel fleets and the non-compliance of diesel engines with the regulated vehicle emissions standards.
5. In recognition of the unique pollution challenges faced by London boroughs in terms of improving air quality, the Mayor of London introduced a London-specific local air quality management system. This came with guidance, new pollution maps and information along with a requirement to review all current Air Quality Action Plans.
6. As recognised in the Hillingdon Health and Wellbeing Strategy, exposure to poor air quality increases the incidence of acute asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) with respiratory disease being recorded as the third highest cause of death in Hillingdon. In terms of increasing public exposure, the resident population in 2016 was 309,300, with a forecast of 321,000 in 2021.

Consultation outcome in relation to health

7. The public consultation confirmed that elevated pollution levels, the impact of this on the incidence of asthma and on pre-existing respiratory conditions were all matters of grave concern to residents. The potential detrimental impact on children was specifically prominent in responses and actions to reduce this impact were supported as a priority for action. The Air Quality Action Plan sets out a clear set of actions which aim to reduce emissions and protect the public from exposure to pollution.

Working in partnership

Council-led

8. The public consultation supported requiring action as soon as possible in relation to schools, from the perspective of protecting children at school, on the journey to school and reducing the impact of the "school run" on traffic congestion in our local areas along with the issue of local pollution hotspots created by idling vehicles at drop off and pick up times. This focused action is supported by Public Health England¹ as important in reducing air pollution in the vicinity of schools and therefore reducing children's exposure accordingly.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-outdoor-air-quality-and-health-review-of-interventions>

9. There are examples of actions the Council is already taking in this regard, for example:
- the enforcement against vehicles idling in public places throughout the Borough;
 - the promotion of the parent parking pledge initiative to all our schools which includes a pledge to turn off vehicle engines;
 - the enforcement by CCTV of the School Keep Clear initiative which ensures safety near school entrances plus provides a mechanism to stop idling cars in close proximity to school gates; and
 - the progress of schools in the achievement of bronze, silver and gold TfL STAR awards for travel plans, improving air quality and reducing the school run associated traffic.
10. The Council is also part of a joint bid to the Mayor's Air Quality Fund for a project which will see a number of No Idling Action days in the Borough with a key focus on raising awareness through school assemblies and workshops and advertising campaigns focused at problem areas.

Partner-led

11. As part of the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board, health partners can assist in raising awareness of the issue of air pollution and in taking forward actions to reduce emissions from their own activities and help protect the most vulnerable communities².
12. The airTEXT pollution alert system provides a forecast by text/email of approaching pollution episodes and allows those most susceptible to take avoiding action and ensure their medication is at hand, this is free to all our residents who wish to sign up, our schools and GPs are automatically informed. We will be looking to our health partners such as the community asthma service and via the Asthma Friendly School programme to promote airTEXT further so our communities can plan safely ahead.
13. As a Council we will be leading by example in reducing emissions from our own Council fleet and our building operations and we will be asking our health partners to look at their own impacts and do the same. For example, the implementation of hospital staff travel plans to reduce individual car use, the use of, and promotion of, cleaner vehicle technologies where feasible to do so, reducing emissions from partners' establishments through the use of low emissions boiler technologies and energy savings schemes.

Monitoring progress

14. In addition to the normal reporting on the Air Quality Action Plan, progress on the above Council and partner-led actions can be reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

4. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial costs arising from the recommendations in this report.

² <https://www.wearecognitive.com/project/essential-message/barts-nhs-air-quality>

5. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendations?

The framework proposed will enable the Health and Wellbeing Board to drive forward its leadership of health and wellbeing in Hillingdon.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Statutory and Public consultation on the Hillingdon Air Quality Action Plan 2019-2024 was undertaken in 2019.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

6. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Hillingdon Council Corporate Finance comments

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and confirms that there are no direct financial implications arising from the report recommendations

Hillingdon Council Legal comments

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

Hillingdon Air Quality Action Plan 2019-2024 - Response from the Health and Wellbeing Board, April 2019

1. The Health and Wellbeing Board welcomes the opportunity to respond to the public consultation on the Air Quality Action Plan 2019-2024 (AQAP). Pollution and poor air quality are increasingly linked with respiratory disease, including asthma in children, and it is right that there should be a strong local focus on air quality.
2. The AQAP clearly recognises the detrimental health effects of air pollution on residents in Hillingdon and sets out a clear set of actions which aim to reduce emissions and prevent public exposure to pollution.
3. The AQAP has been informed by the review of air quality carried out in 2017/18 by the Residents' and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee and takes into account the recommendations made in the Committee's report and endorsed by the Council's Cabinet in July 2018. The AQAP has also been developed to take into account the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which notes that poor air quality increases the incidence of acute asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and that respiratory disease is the third highest cause of death in Hillingdon.
 - The Health and Wellbeing Board would welcome periodic updates on the progress made in implementing the actions set out in the AQAP 2019-2024. We would particularly welcome updates on measures to address poor air quality and exposure to pollutants in schools.
4. The Board remains concerned that there are areas in the Borough, along the road network and around Heathrow Airport, which have exceeded the limits for annual mean nitrogen dioxide levels since 2013. The AQAP takes useful steps to address the problems and the Health and Wellbeing Board supports the priorities set out in the AQAP.
5. We particularly welcome the intention to prioritise reducing exposure to pollution and improving air quality around schools, focussing initially on those in areas where air quality is poorer and where schools are close to busy roads. We agree that the AQAP should maintain a strong focus on Hillingdon school travel plans.
6. The identification of Focus Areas within Hillingdon in order to take better account of emission sources will result in the pollution caused by new developments and congested roads being taken into account in planning and transport processes and policies. We note that concentrations of particulate matter have been measured as meeting the current Air Quality Standards, but we welcome the intentions in the AQAP to continue to consider the impact of both types of emissions and work towards reducing emissions and concentrations of both nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter.
7. We note the AQAP's commitment to work to reduce emissions from operations at Heathrow Airport, which is already a major source of emissions, and to work with both Highways England and TfL to seek to address emissions from motorways and the strategic road network. HS2 construction work will increase construction traffic and we

also welcome the AQAP's recognition of the need to engage with HS2 Ltd on air quality monitoring.

8. The commitment to working across the Council to coordinate plans and deliver benefits for improved air quality is certainly to be welcomed, as are the commitments to work with organisations responsible for road networks and major infrastructure projects. It is right that the AQAP should note the continued working with central and regional government and with neighbouring boroughs.

- The Health and Wellbeing Board would also welcome stronger links with public health and stronger engagement with health partners, for example regarding travel plans and monitoring at hospitals.

9. The Airtext service offers a way for local people to access air quality information, which may be particularly useful for those who may be vulnerable to poor air quality because of their location or because of a respiratory condition. The AQAP includes targets to increase the numbers of residents signing up to the Airtext service. We note that the Action Plan includes actions on raising public health awareness, including supporting and promoting the Airtext service and implementing measures to reduce exposure to pollutants in schools near busy roads. The AQAP also includes actions to increase the number of schools engaging with the community asthma service and to promote the TfL STARS scheme, which school engagement with encourages walking, scooting and cycling to schools.

- The Health and Wellbeing Board would welcome updates on the progress of work to promote the take-up of the Airtext service, particularly among those who may be particularly at risk from poor air quality because of where they live or work or because they already have a respiratory condition that could be worsened. The Board would also welcome periodic updates on progress on school engagement with the community asthma service and the TfL STARS scheme.