

CABINET

15 DECEMBER 2015

AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN – ADDENDUM REPORT

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jane Chitty, Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation

Report from: Richard Hicks, Director of Regeneration, Community and Culture

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Summary

To set out the comments of the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee which considered this report on 10 December 2015.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Environmental Protection Officer advised the Committee that the Council had a statutory duty under the requirement of the Environmental Act 1995 to produce an Air Quality Action Plan to work towards improving the air quality within three designated Air Quality Management Areas.
- 1.2 Public consultation on the Plan had been carried out between 8 June – 30 August 2015 following which 108 completed surveys and 19 individual letter replies had been received. Arising from the survey, the top three priorities identified were as follows:
- Encouraging greater use of public transport
 - Promoting cycling and walking
 - Procurement of low emission vehicles.
- 1.3 The Environmental Protection Officer advised the Committee that the approval of the Air Quality Action Plan was a matter for the Cabinet to determine and a report was due to be considered by the Cabinet on 15 December 2015. The options available to Cabinet were outlined in the report along with the implications of each option.

1.4 The Committee discussed the report and the Environmental Protection Officer responded to a number of issues raised including:

- Consultation with DEFRA on the Air Quality Action Plan
- Discussions with Arriva on the Green Bus Fund
- Reduced pollution certificates for HGVs and buses
- Achieving Euro 6 emission standards
- Roadside testing
- Use of pollution eating patches for diesel vehicles
- Car sharing
- Provision of electric car plug in points
- Air Quality Management Areas
- Bids for potential funding if the Air Quality Action Plan is approved
- The relationship between the aims of the Air Quality Action Plan and the performance monitoring data for average journey times across Medway
- The issue of air quality when considering planning applications.

1.5 The Environmental Protection Officer confirmed that he would respond direct to Members outside of the meeting on a number of the issues highlighted above.

1.6 It was noted that whilst there was limited external funding available for air quality projects, applications for such funding could only be made if a local authority had an Air Quality Action Plan.

1.7 The Committee noted the Air Quality Action Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to the report to fulfil the Council's statutory duty under the requirements of the Environment Act 1995 and support referral to Cabinet for approval on 15 December 2015.

1.8 It be noted that the Environmental Protection Officer will respond direct to Members on the following issues:

- The Green Bus Fund
- Reduced pollution certificates for HGV's and buses
- Achieving Euro 6 emission standards

1.9 Cabinet be advised that should the Air Quality Action Plan be approved this Committee supports Officers proactively seeking external funding as soon as possible.

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