

<b>Item No.</b> 8.	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 21 December 2020	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Report title:</b>		Air Quality Annual Status Report 2019	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All	
<b>From:</b>		Head of Regulatory Services	

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the contents of the Southwark Annual Status Report 2019 (ASR 2019), presented as Appendix 1.
2. That the Health and Wellbeing Board share their views on establishing a Air Quality steering group which reports into the emerging Climate Emergency Strategy oversight arrangements.
3. That the Health and Wellbeing Board note paragraphs 42 to 46 of the report and considers how Guy's and St Thomas' Charity can best support the work of the board through their Health Effects of Air Pollution programme, and identify opportunities for partnership working and collaboration.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4. The Environment Act 1995 required the UK Government to produce a national air quality strategy containing standards and objectives for improving air quality. The first national strategy was published in 1997.
5. The government revised the national air quality strategy in July 2007 and established a framework for achieving improvement in ambient air quality in the UK. It set health-based UK standards for 8 atmospheric pollutants with short and medium term objective levels. The national strategy identified actions national and international level to improve air quality, this included actions for local government.
6. The Environment Act 1995 introduced local authority duties for Local Air Quality Management (LAQM). Southwark completed the initial review and assessment and concluded the air quality objectives for Particulates (PM10) and Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) would not be met in the borough by the respective compliance dates of 2004 and 2010 without the creation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). An area was formally declared in Southwark in January 2003.

7. Having declared an AQMA, Southwark is legally required to produce an Air Quality Strategy (AQS) and Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The latest version of the AQAP was approved in July 2017. That plan committed the Council to 113 initial actions to improve local air quality and work towards meeting all the national air quality objectives in Southwark.
8. Southwark currently meets the national air quality objectives for all pollutants listed by the government with the exception of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)
9. Southwark has declared an AQMA for breaching the NO<sub>2</sub> objective limit and thus is required to have an AQS & AQAP. We are also required to produce an Annual Status Review (ASR) each year which includes the air quality monitoring data for the previous year and details of progress against the AQAP commitments. As air quality improvement is a fast moving area of both policy and technological advancement, the ASR is also an opportunity to add new actions to the AQAP and include actions that have been developed and/or delivered over the last year that were not listed in the original AQAP.
10. Following the ASR for 2018 further actions and modified actions and targets were suggested for addition to the AQAP. The proposed actions and targets were then consulted with the service areas responsible for their delivery, finalised and attached to the AQAP. Further additions and modifications are suggested for addition in the ASR for 2019. Following consultation with the delivery services, these, potential actions will also be added to the AQAP.
11. The ASR 2019 was submitted to the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for their information and comment. The GLA's comments on the ASR can be found at Appendix 2, from page 4.
12. Southwark's AQS & AQAP contribute to the Council's objectives of making Southwark safer, cleaner and greener and to improving the health of the borough.
13. The Council's Public Health Team has published a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Air Quality (JSNA-AQ), the recommendations of which have been included/are being considered for inclusion in the AQAP.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

14. The levels of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) are gradually falling across the borough as shown in the results for the automatic monitoring stations and at the diffusion tube locations. This trend is mirrored by a slow downwards trend in measurements from across London. Exceedance of the national air quality objective for NO<sub>2</sub> is still commonly found in busy road corridors in Southwark.

15. The levels of Particulate (PM10) are gradually falling across the borough as shown in the results for the automatic monitoring stations. This trend is mirrored by a slow downwards trend in measurements from across London. In Southwark, the levels of PM10 are well below the national air quality objective.
16. Southwark does not currently monitor PM2.5, a small fraction of particle known to impact on health or Sulphur Dioxide (SO2) but modelling and measured levels from elsewhere in the capital indicate that levels of these pollutants in Southwark are well below their national air quality objectives.
17. The majority of actions due in 2019 were delivered on target. Key actions met in 2019 include:
  - i. A reduction in emissions from Southwark Council's fleet vehicles, with 196 vehicles replaced, and procurement commenced for 11 full electric vehicles. Where diesel vehicles still have to be used, procurement is limited to Euro 6 emission standard vehicles;
  - ii. Southwark took part in vehicle idling awareness raising activities and has introduced vehicle idling enforcement. The Highways street works standard contract was amended to provide for anti-idling signage at temporary traffic signals. Ice cream van pitches in Southwark parks are now available for vans with electric hook up only, etc.;
  - iii. Southwark has introduced variable parking charges for lower emission vehicles for resident and staff parking permits and is working toward a similar regime for on-street and potentially estate parking;
  - iv. Southwark worked with the GLA to facilitate air quality audits at 2 primary schools and 3 nurseries and match funded the GLA grants to the schools to kick start the recommended improvement measures. 3 school streets were implemented and work was done with schools to promote school travel planning, considerably increasing the number of TfL Stars Gold accredited school travel plans;
  - v. Southwark continues to lobby and respond to local, regional and national consultations with a view of reducing emissions to air;
  - vi. Local air quality technical guidance for developers was updated and all planning applications with a potential air quality impact are scrutinised against the highest standards that can be reasonably imposed and defended; and
  - vii. Grant bids submitted in 2018 were largely successful meaning that more air quality improvement projects will be delivered in 2019/20.

18. Outside of Regulatory Services, there has been good liaison with other service areas with the responsibility for delivery of AQAP actions. The increased active involvement of Public Health, Parking, Highways and Transport Planning in delivery of the AQAP is notable.
19. Some actions are not yet achieved. They include:
  - i. The target to include Southwark's Air Quality technical guidance in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) was not met due to delays in the adoption of the New Southwark Plan, the intention to deliver planning policy changes remains and this will move forward following the adoption and approval of the New Southwark Plan;
  - ii. The number of schools with a Silver STARs accreditation for their school travel plan has fallen partly due to schools that were Silver now achieving Gold. Overall there has been a significant improvement in the number and grade of school travel plan accreditation/s;
  - iii. Smarter driver training has not yet been included for the induction of all Southwark Fleet drivers;
  - iv. The target for air quality neutral developments approved was not met, but it is expected that performance in this regard will improve once appropriate SPDs are in place; and
  - v. The planned media campaign to raise public awareness regarding air quality issues was not executed in 2018 but was very successfully delivered in 2019.
20. New actions suggested for adding to the AQAP following consultation include:
  - i. A proposal to develop a cross-departmental air quality steering group or similar. This is in order to better manage the delivery of the AQAP commitments, the school air quality audits and other ongoing air quality improvement projects. The group could also ensure effective prioritisation of work streams, improved co-ordination of action, strengthened cross-service links and improved the capture of all relevant actions from across the council. This is hoped to be finalised when the reporting arrangements for the Climate Emergency work streams are finalized; and
  - ii. Air quality improvement projects around schools, to reducing private vehicle use, to address significant point sources e.g. Rotherhithe Tunnel) and to assess the feasibility of area heat and power schemes are under consideration.

21. The UK met the limit value for hourly mean Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) in all but two zones. Six zones were compliant with the limit value for annual mean NO<sub>2</sub>. The remaining 37, including London, exceeded this limit value. London is expected to be the last region to meet the current air quality objectives. All the actions in the AQAP, and more, will need to be achieved as we work towards meeting the air quality objective for NO<sub>2</sub> in Southwark.
22. The air quality objectives for Particulates, Carbon Monoxide, Sulphur Dioxide, 1,3-Butadiene, Benzene and Lead continue to be met in Southwark, but, there are still many roadside locations where NO<sub>2</sub> levels exceed the annual mean objective limit.
23. Overall there has been a measurable improvement in air quality in Southwark and across London in 2019.
24. Progress on delivery of the AQAP is good. Many actions are being delivered on target, with only a few complex actions delayed in their delivery e.g. those involving planning policy and district heating. The intention to deliver these actions remains.

### **Policy implications**

25. The AQAP was devised to be a living document, updated each year by the outcomes of the annual ASRs. This ensures the AQAP remains relevant and up to date over its 5 year lifespan by ensuring:
  - i. All actions of significance are captured, including actions undertaken that were not originally in the action plan;
  - ii. As actions become achieved or out-dated their targets can be revised; and
  - iii. If Southwark becomes aware of new ideas, knowledge or initiatives they can be considered for incorporation.

### **Community impact statement**

26. All sectors of the community are affected by local air quality. A report by the Environment Agency found that areas of poor air quality significantly correlate with areas of deprivation. There are a number of deprived wards within Southwark that meet the Government definition of areas of deprivation. (Source - Official National Statistics).
27. Mortality linked to particulate air pollution is higher in Southwark than in London or England, accounting for 6.9% of all deaths in 2019.

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health England website:

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/air#page/4/gid/1/pat/6/par/E12000007/ati/102/are/E09000028/id/30101/age/230/sex/4>

28. 13,600 patients in Southwark have an asthma diagnosis and 4,400 patients have a diagnosis of chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. People with long term health conditions are vulnerable to air pollution as there is evidence their conditions are exacerbated by exposure to pollutants.
29. The impact of poor air quality on health has been noted during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK.

## **Consultation**

30. Southwark's Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan 2017-22 was consulted extensively before being approved for adoption by the Council in July 2017.
31. The 2019 Annual Summary Report (ASR) was compiled with information from across all the departments and service areas responsible for delivery of the actions and from Southwark's air quality monitoring data, with further supporting data from the London Air Quality Network.
32. Comments were sought from the Director of Public Health, and these have been included within this report.

## **COMMENTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

33. The AQAP and ASR are welcomed and strongly supported for the collaborative approach and the work that is taking place across service areas and organisations to improve the health of local neighbourhoods.
  34. Air pollution poses a significant environmental risk to public health, with long-term exposure contributing to ill health and premature death.
  35. Air pollution contributes to health inequalities as exposure to poor air quality has a greater impact on certain groups. Residents with respiratory conditions have a higher risk of ill health as air pollution can exacerbate their symptoms. For those with heart conditions, air pollution raises the risk of cardiovascular events. Children and older people are both more vulnerable to the health effects of air pollution due to vulnerabilities associated with their age<sup>2</sup>. Communities living in areas with poorer air quality and low income groups are also disproportionately impacted<sup>3</sup>
  36. To tackle air pollution and protect our most vulnerable residents, we are taking a public health approach to creating healthier environments with an overt focus on areas with the poorest air quality.
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37. Through the School Superzones project, colleagues across Public Health,

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<sup>2</sup> Air Quality in Southwark. Southwark's JSNA. Southwark Council: London. 2017.

<sup>3</sup> [PHE. 2018. Health matters: air pollution.](#)

Highways, Transport Policy, Planning, Environmental Protection and Regeneration have taken a partnership approach to working with our Walworth Superzone School, University Academy of Engineering Southbank. School Superzones are 400m radius zones around schools in which actions are taken to address aspects of the urban environment to create healthier places for children and young people to live, learn and play.

38. Significant engagement has been undertaken (see Appendix 3) with children and young people through the Superzones work, culminating in an enhanced understanding of how children and young people perceive their local environment.
39. The School Superzones partnership has supported the development of additional projects within the Walworth area, including a successful bid to The Mayor's Air Quality Fund to deliver a Low Emission Neighbourhood in Walworth. In the last six months. Experimental traffic orders have been used to implement transport measures to reduce traffic across the neighbourhood. Additional measures to improve air quality will be implemented over the next year. It is anticipated that the layering of interventions will lead to a significant improvement in the local environment.
40. We are also working with external partners to shape healthier environments in Southwark. Guy's and St Thomas' Charity have partnered with Sustrans to explore how the built environment can increase children's physical activity through the West Walworth Space Change project. Sustrans are working with the Council and the local community to co-design street interventions that will encourage children's active travel and play. Whilst the project is primarily funded through the Charity's childhood obesity programme, there are clear co-benefits for our ambitions to improve air quality in the area.
41. Over the next year, we will build on this work and continue to collaborate to improve environments and create healthier places across Southwark.

#### **CASE STUDY: GUY'S AND ST THOMAS' CHARITY HEALTH EFFECT OF AIR POLLUTION PROGRAMME**

42. Guy's and St Thomas' Charity (GSTC) is an independent, place-based foundation. Our purpose is to work with Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and other partners to improve the health of people in the London boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark.
43. We are in the first year of a ten-year programme to explore how people's health is affected by air pollution, and test solutions to mitigate these effects. We want to improve the health of the people whose health is most impacted by poor air quality. Over the next ten years, we will partner with other organisations to deliver projects, do research and share what we

learn to influence change at local, borough, city, national and international levels.

44. In the develop stage of the programme we are seeking to:
  - i. Create a compelling case for change by generating high quality evidence;
  - ii. Engage and amplify voices of those most impacted;
  - iii. Reduce exposure to air pollution in environments people spend their time; and
  - iv. Work with businesses to find equitable solutions to reducing emissions.
45. We are working with a number of partners on local projects, including Southwark Council, Guy's and St Thomas's NHS Foundation Trust and The Social Innovation Partnership. Over the course of 2021, we are keen to expand our work with local authorities in the following areas:
  - i. Expanding the GLA's work on school air quality audits to other environments where we know groups vulnerable to the health effects of air pollution spend their time (nurseries, supported housing, care homes);
  - ii. Testing ways to address non-traffic sources of pollution (e.g. commercial cooking near schools, addressing domestic wood burning); and
  - iii. Testing ways to incentivise residents to give up or trade in cars in the run up to ULEZ expansion.
46. GSTC would like to understand how our programme can better support the work of the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board, through the following questions:
  - a. Is more evidence or insight needed on the health impacts of pollution to drive action in Southwark? If so what evidence is needed?
  - b. Where do you think are the greatest opportunities for collaboration and partnership working?
  - c. Where could Guy's and St Thomas' Charity add the most value to work already underway locally?

## SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

47. This report is for noting, and no advice has been sought from other officers.

## APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Air Quality Annual Status Report 2019
Appendix 2	GLA comments on ASR 2019
Appendix 3	Insights gained from Schools Superzones and Spacechanger projects
Appendix 4	Impact on Health & Wellbeing
Appendix 5	Guy's and St Thomas's Charity Air Quality & Health Programme

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Caroline Bruce, Strategic Director of Environment and Leisure
<b>Report Author</b>	Paul Newman, Environmental Protection Team Leader
<b>Version</b>	6 Final
<b>Dated</b>	10 December 2020
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>	
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>
Director of Public Health	Yes
Director of Law and Democracy	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	14 December 2020