

Member Briefing

Number: 1096

Title: Low Emission Strategy Consultation

Summary: A public consultation on the Council's Low Emission Strategy is due to commence on 9 October 2017 and run for 12 weeks finishing on 5 January 2018.

Over the past two years, the Council has been involved in the process of developing a Low Emission Strategy (LES). Following extensive internal consultation, a joint working group produced a draft strategy in June 2017. The LES aims to deliver improved air quality throughout the whole borough by targeting fine particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) emissions.

Local authorities are responsible for public health and have an important role to play in improving air quality. It is estimated that there is a loss of life equivalent to 290 deaths a year within the borough as a result of poor air quality. In addition to this there are many more hospital admissions and demands on the NHS, GP surgeries and pharmacies resulting from air pollution. Improving air quality would therefore release capacity across a range of health services as well as having a direct positive impact on the health of our residents.

In July 2015, the Health and Wellbeing Board formally supported the development of the LES and a joint notice of motion was also supported at Full Council in December 2016 to create a Cheshire West Air Quality Action Plan. The LES fulfils this request by Members.

The LES primarily targets traffic emissions and industrial emissions are excluded on the basis that road transport emissions are the main issue and that industry is already heavily regulated so that the Council has no further scope to reduce such emissions.

The draft LES is based upon three key principles for the reduction of emissions.

- Shift: change mode from cars to public transport, cycling and walking.
- Avoid: reduce vehicle kilometres driven, emissions from stationary vehicles, chimneys and construction.
- Improve: improve the vehicle technology to reduce emissions and specifically low emission vehicles.

With these in mind, a total of 46 actions are identified that consist of one or more of the following:

1. promoting the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles
2. promoting sustainable transport
3. promoting an air quality neutral approach to new development
4. seeking to prohibit poor practice
5. promotion and dissemination of information to raise awareness of air quality issues to empower people to make their own choices.

A consultation pack has been compiled that will be published on the Council's website. It will be publicised by means of a media release, through social media channels and by direct community engagement through the locality teams. A number of stakeholders will be consulted directly.

The consultation exercise is extensive and will enable all relevant parties throughout the borough and beyond to comment and provide important feedback. A consultation report will be published as an appendix to the Cabinet Member Report.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks starting on Monday 9 October 2017 and finishing on Friday 5 January 2018. It is intended that the strategy will be finalised no later than the end of March 2018.

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