



Report of: Executive Member for Environment & Transport

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee	Date: 09 05 2019	Ward(s): ALL
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SUBJECT: Health and Care Scrutiny Committees' Health Impacts of Poor Air Quality – 12 month report back report

1.	Synopsis
1.1	Health and Care Scrutiny Committees conducted a review into the Health Impacts of Poor Air Quality which ran from July 2017 to March 2018 and evidence was received from a variety of sources. The committee's recommendations are directed towards several services in the council, the Whittington Hospital and the Health & Wellbeing Board. This report summarises actions being taken to address the recommendations.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	To note the progress made towards achieving the recommendations outlined in the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee's report into Health Impacts of Poor Air Quality.
3.	Background
3.1	In July 2017 the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee commissioned a review of the health impacts of poor air quality in the borough, and what further actions could be taken to tackle poor air quality and mitigate its detrimental effects on the health of residents.
3.2	The review ran from September 2017 until March 2018 and evidence was received from a variety of sources, including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Presentations from Council Officers in Public Health, Environment and Regeneration and from Islington Clinical Commissioning Group- Documentary evidence, including the findings of the Air Quality Review conducted in 2013, and the report on progress against the 2013 review's recommendations (May 2014)

	<p>– Information from external expert witnesses (Dr Ian Mudway, Kings College London; Sam Longman, Transport for London, and Andrea Lee, Client Earth)</p>
3.3	<p>The Scrutiny Committee’s final report on the health impacts of poor air quality, received by the Executive on the 19th April 2018, contained eleven recommendations covering a range of topics, including general information provision and awareness raising, the coordination of action within the local authority, and some specific project proposals.</p> <p>(http://democracy.islington.gov.uk/documents/s14911/Air%20Quality%20Scrutiny%20-%20Recommendations%20of%20the%20Health%20and%20Care%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf)</p>
3.4	<p>On 18th October 2018, the Executive responded to the recommendations contained in the Health and Care Scrutiny Committees’ report into Health Impacts of Poor Air Quality and largely accepted them.</p>
4.	Response to the recommendations
4.1	<p>Recommendation 1: Car transport - Roll out electric charging points as speedily as possible across the borough. Continue with the policy of increased parking charges for diesel vehicles. Implement a staged introduction of higher charges for higher polluting vehicles.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>Islington Council has made a commitment to install 400 electric vehicle (EV) charging points by 2021/2022. These EV charging points will help improve local air quality by encouraging people to switch to EVs, especially those people who lack off-street parking and cannot install their own charging point.</p> <p>There are currently 88 on-street EV charging points in the borough. Design work has already been completed for an additional 90 charging points which are scheduled to be installed in 2019 including the Council’s first batch of lamppost charging points. The Council is working with a wide range of suppliers to ensure a robust network of charging points is provided. We are also working with TfL to provide a network of rapid charging points which are especially important for the new electric taxis.</p> <p>As part of the budget process for 2019/20, fees have been increased, and new charges introduced, in order to further deter the use of diesel vehicles by charging methods. From 1st March, the short-stay diesel surcharge was increased from £2 to £3 per hour. From 1st April, all residents permits will be subject to an increased diesel surcharge of £120 per annum, which is an increase from £99.65. The Traffic and Parking Service will be reviewing other permit types during 2019/20, to determine whether further differential fee bands are necessary to drive changes in vehicle ownership.</p>
4.2	<p>Recommendation 2: Schools</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parking near schools: Implement a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to parking near schools for parents dropping off and picking up children from school, including abolishing the ‘10-minute grace’ informal rule currently applied, with the only exception being disabled/blue badge holders. b. Close roads near schools: At the beginning and end of the school day, as is currently being piloted in Hackney and Camden. c. Educate parents: Support schools to educate parents on the health benefits of walking and cycling to school. d. Air quality monitoring: Monitor air quality outside all schools (including PM2.5), and use results to leverage Local Safety Scheme funding from TFL, and to support applications for physical environmental improvements. <p>Progress:</p> <p><i>Parking near Schools</i></p>

	<p>We are progressing discussions on implementing a zero-tolerance approach to parking near schools, this will involve a change in the existing policy. This will result in the removal of the ten-minute grace period.</p> <p>Close roads near schools We have implemented eight school streets and consulted on two more that are due to commence in June 2019. We have a target of fifteen schools for this financial year 19/20 and will be working with schools in the borough with the highest levels of pollution to create improved air quality on these streets at school start and finish times, during in term time only.</p> <p>Educate parents We provide information to schools and parents through the School Travel Plan programme, which encourages schools to sign up to the Transport for London STAR's programme which is an online tool that helps the schools to develop their own travel plans. As part of the school travel plan programme events such as 'walk to school' week are promoted and free provision of cycle training for pupils.</p> <p>We provide schools with advice on air pollution when requested and include messages on the benefits of active travel through our general communications on air pollution as well as any school-specific projects. In the last year, we have held a number of anti-idling events with or outside schools and these allow us to talk about air quality more generally. We will continue to look for further opportunities as funding allows. Previous projects have included walking maps, tv screens with information on pollution and ways to reduce it in the school's playgrounds at pick up time and pupils art competitions for Clean Air Day 2018.</p> <p>Islington Council, along with 12 other London boroughs, is piloting a "School Superzone" concept. We have identified a cluster of five primary schools in the Caledonian Road area and have been mapping environmental assets and harms – including poor air quality, and developing an action plan pulling together existing resources in order to take a holistic approach to healthy communities around schools.</p> <p>Air quality monitoring The Council has begun monitoring pollution outside every school in Islington. With the creation of new schools, this monitoring will increase. There is also monitoring of pollution inside some classrooms and playgrounds to give a better idea of the pollution levels children are exposed to whilst at school as opposed to when travelling to and from school.</p>
4.3	<p>Recommendation 3: Through traffic - Council to investigate a borough-wide neighbourhood cellular zoning policy to both reduce rat-running and overall traffic volumes.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>The Council is developing a Transport Strategy for 2019-2041. Within this strategy, the Council is developing policies, proposals and targets aimed at reducing car ownership and dependence and minimising the negative impacts of private car use. The Council will carry out a public consultation on the Transport Strategy in spring 2019 and the strategy is due to be adopted later in 2019.</p> <p>The Council has commenced a programme of Liveable Neighbourhoods for every residential area in the borough. The programme will deliver measures, such as road closures aimed at reducing rat running and traffic volumes, protected cycle routes, improved crossings and improvements to public spaces. So far proposals have been developed for Clerkenwell Green and the surrounding area, and for the Cally, which includes parts of Caledonian and Barnsbury wards. Developing proposals for a third neighbourhood will start in 2019.</p>
4.4	<p>Recommendation 4: Idling vehicles - Put up signs in zones where idling is a common problem asking people to switch off their engines. Investigate using Public Space Protection orders to give the Council greater powers to sanction engine idling, and also for the Council to enforce current legislation on engine idling more robustly. (See also recommendation 7 below).</p>

	<p>Progress:</p> <p>An assessment has been conducted of every school in the borough and additional anti-idling signs have been ordered where required and are due to be installed soon.</p> <p>The council has applied, with other neighbouring boroughs, to the Mayors Air Quality Fund to conduct an anti-idling project. As part of this a review into the different ways by other local authorities regulate idling, including Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs), will be conducted.</p>
4.5	<p>Recommendation 5: Communications strategy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Council to develop a communications strategy to inform and engage residents on the implications of poor air quality. b. Promote the use of mobile phone apps e.g. ‘Air text’ to advise residents of poor air quality days, and to assist those with respiratory problems. c. Promote the health benefits of active travel, walking, cycling, and the use of public transport. d. Educate residents about dangers of wood burning, open fires, and the impacts on air quality. e. Promote the issue of ‘less vehicles as well as less polluting vehicles’. <p>Progress:</p> <p>The Council is developing a communications plan to inform and engage residents on the implications of poor air quality. The recommendations have been incorporated into the draft Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan, which is soon to go to consultation. The accompanying communications plan will cover all of the points in this recommendation and also link closely with the new Transport Strategy communications plan.</p> <p>The Officer Forum (recommendation 6) will oversee the communications plan.</p> <p>The Officers from across the council will work together through the Officer Forum (recommendation 6) to oversee the communications plan. This will help to combine relevant air quality and public health communications into a coherent Air Quality Communications Plan.</p>
4.6	<p>Recommendation 6: Officer Forum: Given that the work on air quality is often fragmented across different Council departments, establish an officer forum in order to more effectively coordinate the work on air quality and the establishment and implementation of new strategies, with Forum proposals being approved by the executive.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>Terms of reference and proposed membership for an Air Quality Action Board are currently being drafted. The Air Quality Action Board will also have oversight of the Air Quality Communication Plan (Recommendation 5) as well as the Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan. This board will report regularly to the Executive Member for Environment and Transport. The Director of Public Health will chair the board.</p>
4.7	<p>Recommendation 7: Lobby the Government - Work with other London Boroughs and campaigning organisations to lobby Government to introduce a new Clean Air Act, to include car tax penalties for diesel engines, a scrappage scheme to support people to dispose of diesel vehicles, to make engine idling an immediate offence, and to standardise legislation to include Canals and Waterways.</p> <p>Progress:</p>

	<p>We have taken every opportunity to lobby the government on many of the above issues. In particular, our responses to the Defra Clean Air Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan consultations included the actions recommended above.</p>
4.8	<p>Recommendation 8: Mayor of London’s Clean Air Strategy: Support the Mayor’s strategy in order to improve air quality and to reduce traffic, and to urge the Mayor to support additional funding for schemes to improve air quality in Islington.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>The Council supports the Mayor’s air quality schemes where possible. For example, distributing information to residents and businesses in the borough in preparation for the launch of the Mayor’s Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in April. We also responded to all of the Mayor’s consultations on ULEZ, Environment Strategy and the Clean Air Strategy when they were released 2016-18.</p> <p>In January the Council applied for seven schemes in the latest round of the Mayor’s Air Quality Fund. Results are due in May and if successful funding lasts for a maximum of three years.</p>
4.9	<p>Recommendation 9: Whittington NHS Trust - Islington CCG and NHS Trusts should ensure that energy efficiency is considered and implemented, wherever possible, in all future proposals and strategies for the Whittington NHS Trust, and as already identified in their current Estates Strategy.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>Energy Services have recently finalised a feasibility study building a new heat network in the Archway area, which would involve connecting the hospital. Discussing inclusion of energy efficiency and air quality consideration in campus redevelopment.</p>
4.10	<p>Recommendation 10: Health and Wellbeing Board policies: HWB to incorporate air quality considerations into its future policies, given the impact of poor air quality on health and the costs of the provision of services to deal with combating respiratory diseases.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on Air Quality has been updated and will be used by the Health and Well-being board particularly when delivering on its priorities of ‘Best start in life’ and ‘Long term conditions’.</p>
4.11	<p>Recommendation 11: Changes to the Parking Permit Surcharge: That the Executive Member’s response report include consideration of applying a parking permit surcharge on SUVs because of their detrimental impact on the environment.</p> <p>Progress:</p> <p>Officers were unable to find a method of readily identifying SUV vehicles in order to apply any form of surcharge. The normal vehicle look-up methods do not identify vehicle types as being SUV or non SUV. Without such a method, any surcharge would have to be applied by a manual look up of each permit application, and that is not in accord with the council’s aims of reducing administration costs and enabling customer self-serve processes.</p>
5.	Implications
	Financial implications:
5.1	The progress against the recommendations has been funded from a variety of sources, including external grant funding and allocations, and, council capital and revenue resources. These financial implications have been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy budget planning process.
	Legal Implications:

5.2	The recommendations should be considered in the light of the council's general duty to take such steps as it considers appropriate for improving the health of the people in Islington. (section 2B National Health Services Act 2006). Further, Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 requires local authorities in the UK to review air quality in their area and designate air quality management areas if improvements are necessary. Where an air quality management area is designated, local authorities are also required to work towards the Strategy's objectives prescribed in regulations for that purpose. An air quality action plan describing the pollution reduction measures must then be put in place. As required, detailed legal advice and assistance will be provided on the implementation of the individual recommendations.
	Environmental Implications
5.3	Although there may be some environmental impact from capital works improve air quality, such as installing signs or EV charge points (which result in energy and material use and the generation of construction waste), the works have a long-term positive environmental impact in terms of enabling electric vehicle usage and improved air quality.
	Resident Impact Assessment:
5.4	<p>The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.</p> <p>Where the proposals in this report may have equalities implications and other implications for residents. Resident Impact Assessments (including assessment of equalities implications) will be undertaken as before implementing relevant policies.</p> <p>However, an initial assessment suggests that there will not be any negative impacts on residents. Measures to increase air quality are most likely to have a beneficial effect on those who tend to be more economically disadvantaged or vulnerable.</p>
6.	Conclusion and reasons for recommendations
6.1	This report details the progress made since April 2018 when the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee report into the Health Impacts of Poor Air Quality was first published.

Signed by:

Executive Member for Environment & Transport Date

Appendices: Health Impact of Poor Air Quality – Report of the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee
Background papers: None

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