

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

**Environment and Enforcement Committee**

**Air Quality Update**

**Report of:** *David Carter Environmental Health Manager*

**Wards Affected:** *All*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

1.1 At the meeting of the Environment and Enforcement Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017, Members requested a report to update on air quality in the Borough.

1.2 This report aims to update on general air quality in the Borough and also to consider arrangements for monitoring.

**2. Recommendation**

**2.1 Members note the contents of the report and instruct officers to investigate potential locations to redeploy the continuous monitoring equipment if considered appropriate and viable.**

**3. Introduction and Background**

3.1 Local authorities are required to monitor air quality in their areas and check compliance with the national air quality objectives.

3.2 Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions.

3.3 For Brentwood and most of the other local authorities the principal source of air pollution is road traffic, which generates nitrogen dioxide as a pollutant.

- 3.4 Monitoring of pollutant levels is undertaken using passive diffusion tubes, which are located at approximately 35 locations currently in the Borough.
- 3.5 Previous monitoring had indicated exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives for nitrogen dioxide, which had led to seven Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the Borough being declared in 2008.
- 3.6 Subsequent monitoring however indicated that four of the declared areas (primarily associated with the A12) had met the objectives consistently and these have therefore now been revoked following public consultation and in liaison with Defra.
- 3.7 Two of the remaining three AQMAs are sited near to the M25 at Brook Street and Nags Head Lane, with the third around the Wilson's Corner junction in Brentwood High Street.
- 3.8 Annual reports on air quality are prepared and submitted to Defra for approval; the most recent report was in October 2016; data for the 2017 report is being collated with Chelmsford City Council.
- 3.9 The most recent report has concluded that there are no exceedances of the Air Quality Objectives at relevant exposure, which has been accepted by Defra.
- 3.10 The Council has also been monitoring pollutant levels using continuous monitoring equipment sited in the Town Hall, however this equipment has had to be decommissioned because of the Town Hall refurbishment works which required the equipment to be removed.
- 3.11 Officers have been in discussion with Kings College, who maintain the London Air Quality Network which our monitoring equipment fed data into, to consider alternative locations for redeployment.

#### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The continuous monitoring equipment has been operating for several years at the Town Hall site. The equipment is now quite old and more liable to mechanical breakdown and will be difficult to repair, however it is currently operational and capable of redeployment.
- 4.2 Budget to maintain the equipment operation for this year has been provided, however additional costs would be incurred to relocate and install the equipment elsewhere.

- 4.3 Relocation will depend on
- A suitable location within the Borough providing relevant data.
  - Access to the site for calibration and maintenance as needed.
  - Power and telephone line/mobile phone access.
- 4.4 Providing continuous monitoring would enable more accurate local data but this is highly dependent on a suitable site being found which meets the needs of the air quality monitoring programme and is viable.
- 4.5 Alternatively, it would be more cost-effective to cease to operate this equipment and rely on existing diffusion tube monitoring alone to inform air pollution data.

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 The recommendation to investigate suitable locations is to enable continued use of existing equipment redeployed to provide useful data whilst the analyser continues to function.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 Consultation will be undertaken with the Environmental Research Group at Kings College to determine a suitable location that meets the EU criteria for monitoring sites, ideally sited within an Air Quality Management Area, i.e. Wilson's Corner.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

- 7.1 Environment and Housing Management
- 7.2 Enable communities to take a more active role in delivering a cleaner and safer environment.

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

**Name & Title: Jacqueline Vanmellaerts, Financial Services Manager (Deputy Section 151 Officer)**

**Tel & Email: 01277 312829 /**

**jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk**

- 8.1 Costs to provide an alternative monitoring location would need to be met from existing 2017/18 budget and ongoing maintenance costs to be incorporated into 2018/19 budget setting.

**Legal Implications**

**Name & Title:** Daniel Toohey, Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

**Tel & Email:** 01277 312860 / daniel.toohey@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

8.2 None identified

**9. Background Papers** (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

9.1 2016 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR)

**10. Appendices to this report**

None

**Report Author Contact Details:**

**Name:** David Carter Environmental Health Manager

**Telephone:** 01277 312509

**E-mail:** david.carter@brentwood.gov.uk