

# Forest Heath District Council

(This report is not a key decision. This report has been subject to appropriate notice of publication under the Council's Access to Information Rules)

## Report of the Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

**CABINET**

**6 NOVEMBER 2012**

**CAB12/040**

### **LOCAL AIR QUALITY STRATEGY** (Key Decision Reference: JUL12(B)/07)

#### **1. Summary and reasons for recommendation**

- 1.1 In September 2007 the Council approved its first Local Air Quality Strategy to provide the best practicable protection to human health and the environment through effective local air quality management.
- 1.2 The 2007 strategy has now come to an end and the revised strategy builds on this work and outlines how the Council will manage local air quality in Forest Heath and deliver our statutory responsibilities.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 Cabinet are recommended to approve the revised Local Air Quality Strategy.**

#### **Contact Details**

Name:

Title:

Telephone:

E mail:

#### **Portfolio Holder**

Councillor Nigel Roman  
Environment and Waste

01638 712679

[nigel.roman@forest-heath.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.roman@forest-heath.gov.uk)

#### **Lead Officer**

Nicola Baker  
Head of Planning and  
Regulatory Services

01638 719423

[nicola.baker@forest-heath.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.baker@forest-heath.gov.uk)

### **3. How will the recommendations help us meet our strategic priorities?**

- 3.1 Delivering the revised strategy seeks to promote our strategic priorities by fulfilling our statutory responsibilities and maintaining good local air quality within Forest Heath. The Council's continued vision to embrace a clean, green and safe Forest Heath is compatible with the strategy's aims and objectives.

### **4. Key Issues**

- 4.1 Poor air quality reduces the life expectancy of everyone in the UK by an average of seven to eight months and up to 50,000 people a year die prematurely because of it. The Air Quality Regulations 2000 require all local authorities in the UK to review and assess air quality within their area.
- 4.2 The Council produced its first Local Air Quality Strategy in 2007 which detailed the way in which the Council would fulfil its statutory duties. The strategy contained various actions that were successfully implemented. The revised strategy builds on the successes of the previous strategy and includes further actions that will assist the Council in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities.
- 4.3 The Council is a lead regulator in the management of local air quality and Officers within Environmental Health carry out various activities to fulfil the Council's responsibilities.
- 4.4 Road transport is a major source of air pollution both nationally and locally. Environmental Health work in partnership with other organisations to maintain and monitor the quality of air in the district. Suffolk County Council and the Highways Agency are key partners and work with Officers to maintain air quality within Forest Heath.
- 4.5 Air quality and climate change are fundamentally interrelated. Many common pollutants are 'climate active' and by reducing emissions it will lessen the effects on the climate. A warming climate also threatens to make air quality worse, with the prevalence of harmful photochemical smogs. The most significant air pollutant, within the district is caused by emissions from vehicle exhausts.

### **5. Other options considered**

- 5.1 Even though there is no statutory requirement to produce a Local Air Quality Strategy, it demonstrates how the Council will fulfil its statutory obligations and assists in raising the awareness of an important public health risk.
- 5.2 Other options have been considered, such as producing a West Suffolk air quality management strategy. However, the revision of the 2007 strategy was considered to be the best option due to the time it would take to draft a West Suffolk strategy
- 5.3 The revised Strategy offers an interim solution although it is intended to produce a West Suffolk Strategy in the future.

## **6. Community Impact**

### **6.1 Crime and Disorder Impact** *(including Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998)*

6.1.1 There are no crime and disorder implications from the proposed air quality strategy.

### **6.2 Diversity and Equality Impact** *(including the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment)*

6.2.1 There are human rights or diversity implications from the proposed air quality strategy.

### **6.3 Sustainability Impact** *(including completing a Sustainability Impact Assessment)*

6.3.1 Air quality is interlinked with climate change and sustainability. The revised strategy recognises these relationships and aims to ensure that air pollution remains below nationally prescribed levels.

### **6.4 Other Impact** *(any other impacts affecting this report)*

6.4.1 The implementation of the revised strategy will have a positive impact on the community as a whole.

## **7. Consultation** *(what consultation has been undertaken, and what were the outcomes?)*

7.1 The revised strategy has been consulted on with partner organisations. The revised strategy has been received positively by Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk Environmental Protection Group. The Strategy was also reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 July who also requested that a copy of the Strategy be sent to all Members for comment. Details were sent out on the 13 August 2012 and no adverse comments have been received.

## **8. Financial and resource implications** *(including asset management implications)*

8.1 There are resource implications in terms of delivering the strategy's Action Plan. The resources will be provided using existing Environmental Health budgets. The Council's Environmental Protection budget includes the ongoing sum of £3,500 for Air Quality Monitoring and there is an amount of £27,937 provided for as a "one-off" sum in the same budget for Air Quality Management, arising from a previously approved Service Improvement.

**9. Risk/Opportunity Assessment** *(potential hazards or opportunities affecting corporate, service or project objectives)*

<b>Risk area</b>	<b>Inherent level of Risk</b> (before controls)	<b>Controls</b>	<b>Residual Risk</b> (after controls)
Statutory Responsibilities	Medium	Delivering the Strategy will help reduce the inherent level of risk.	Low
Reputational	Medium	The Council has a continued vision to embrace a clean, green and safe district. The delivery of the Strategy will help achieve this vision.	Low
Financial	Low	The delivery of the Strategy will be cost effective.	Low

**10. Legal and policy implications**

10.1 There is prescribed and detailed legislation that regulates air quality and places duties and responsibilities on the Council to manage air quality in its area.

**11. Wards affected**

11.1 Even though local air quality within Forest Heath is generally good, there are specific locations within the district that have been identified as having a greater need for monitoring and improvement. These areas are detailed within the strategy. The implementation of the associated Action Plan will seek to make improvements where needed.

**12. Background papers**

12.1 None

**13. Documents attached**

13.1 Appendix - Copy of the revised Local Air Quality Strategy.