



# B O S T O N

## B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

REPORT TO:	CABINET
DATE:	19 <sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2020
SUBJECT:	CONSULTATION OF BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DRAFT AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN.
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR YVONNE STEVENS
REPORT AUTHOR:	HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES
EXEMPT REPORT	NO

### **SUMMARY**

The report outlines details of the draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for Boston's two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA). The draft puts forward a range of actions to improve air quality in these areas and beyond over the period 2019-2024. Boston Borough Council is required to consult on the AQAP with a range of organisations and the wider community under the provisions schedule 11 of the Environment Act 1995.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is asked to agree to consult on the draft AQAP contained in Appendix A in accordance with the consultation plan in Appendix B. A further report on the results of the consultation and a final draft of the action plan will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration before adoption.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To ensure the Council fulfils its legal obligations in terms of air quality.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The development of an AQAP is a statutory requirement and therefore there are no alternative options. Consultation is also a statutory requirement.

## REPORT

- 1.1** 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 cancers. Additionally air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions.
- 1.2** Air Quality across the borough is generally good however there are areas within the town which are heavily impacted by traffic a major source of air pollution.
- 1.3** Boston Borough Council has declared two Air Quality Management Areas known as Haven Bridge Road AQMA (2001) and Bargate Bridge AQMA (2005) due to air quality in these locations failing to meet the UK air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide. This primarily arises from high usage of private vehicles for making short journeys within Boston. The declaration of an AQMA places a statutory obligation on the local authority to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP).
- 1.4** Boston Borough Council has previously developed an AQAP and whilst this has been updated periodically it is now very dated and this has been highlighted by DEFRA following submission of our latest Annual Status Report. Hence the development of the new action plan.
- 1.5** Action plans lay out how the local authority will look to positively make improvements in air quality in the AQMA's. These actions are both within and beyond the powers the council has alone. As such a number of the actions will rely on us engaging with our partners particularly Lincolnshire Country Council Highways, Public Health, the local community as well as departmentally across the council. This has occurred positively for some time already and the LCC and Public Health have been part of the officer steering group who have developed the new draft AQAP. LCC have also already incorporated a number of air quality related objectives with the Boston Transport Strategy 2016-2036 which looks not only at road infrastructure but also looks to promote a modal shift away from private vehicles for short journeys within Boston.
- 1.6** The report is presented as a draft in order that the final version might reflect the comments and suggestions of both statutory and non-statutory consultees including the local community. Consultation and public debate will help strengthen working links with partners and the public. We cannot improve air quality alone – we all need to be part of the solution.
- 1.7** The draft plan was considered by the Environment & Performance Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and the Committee

resolved to recommend that Cabinet agrees consultation on the draft Air Quality Action Plan in accordance with the consultation plan in Appendix B of the report.

## **CONCLUSION**

We have two Air Quality Management Area's (AMQA's) as a result of nitrogen dioxide levels being close too or in breach of national air quality objectives. Where such areas are declared it is a requirement the local authority provides an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) to improve air quality. Whilst Boston Borough Council have previously developed a plan this is now very dated and DEFRA have indicated we should look to provide a new plan going forward. A new draft AQAP has been developed in conjunction with LCC Highways and Public Health and as is required by the Environment Act 1995 we now wish to consult interested parties and the wider public on the action plan. We seek elected members support for the work undertaken to date and for this wider consultation exercise as described within the report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct cost implications associated with this decision as the consultation will be funded from existing agreed budgets.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Boston Borough Council is required to consult on the AQAP with a range of organisations and the wider community under the provisions schedule 11 of the Environment Act 1995.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

Transport has long been established as a large contributor to climate change and Government strategy is to try and move away from the reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles. This action plan looks to improved traffic flows within the town and encourage a modal shift to greener forms of transport. It is therefore positive in terms of its impact on climate change and supports national climate change initiatives

## EQUALITY AND SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS

None

## ANY OTHER IMPLICATIONS

A number of the actions under consideration in the plan also support other policies and strategies of the council relating to climate change, transport and health and wellbeing.

## CONSULTATION

Councillor Yvonne Stevens – Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

## APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A	Draft Air Quality Action Plan
APPENDIX B	Consultation Plan

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Local Air Quality Management –Technical Guidance TG16	<a href="https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/technical-guidance/">https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/technical-guidance/</a>
Local Air Quality Management – Policy Guidance PG16	<a href="https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/LAQM-PG16-April-16-v1.pdf">https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/documents/LAQM-PG16-April-16-v1.pdf</a>

## CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

Environment & Performance Committee	7 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
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