

Update on Council Motion on Air quality 29th October 2020

Council acknowledges that poor air quality has harmful effects on human health, especially on the health of the elderly, the infirm and young children; Council recognises that urgent action needs to be taken to tackle air pollution. Council commits to increasing its air quality monitoring across its council area, including of harmful PM2.5s, PM10s and ammonia; Council will create an air quality action plan and adopt World Health Organisation standards for PM2.5; Council will bring forward draft policy options for discouraging the installation of fossil fuel heating and wood burning stoves in all new planning projects. Council will devise a set of criteria to be agreed by Members above which an air quality assessment will be required to accompany planning applications; Council will organise a series of seminars to upskill members on Current Air Quality issues. Council will write to all other councils urging them to pass a similar air quality motion; Council will write to the Northern Ireland Executive asking for an update on the effectiveness of the air quality monitoring station at Brooke Park since the station was moved from its original location at the junction of Creggan Road and Marlborough Terrace; Council will underline to the Executive the urgent need for a NI Clean Air Act to include WHO threshold for PM2.5

Actions	Update
<p>1. Increase air quality monitoring across the council area, including of harmful PM2.5s, PM10s and ammonia;</p>	<p>Council is in the process of locating a PM₁₀ monitor at a fixed location in Newtownstewart a further portable monitor has been purchased to monitor PM_{2.5}/PM₁₀. This is in addition to current PM monitors located at Rosemount Springhill and Strathfoyle. Ammonia is not a pollutant monitored by the Council, this is currently undertaken by DAERA sites located at Lough Navar, Hillsborough and Coleraine. Details of ammonia monitoring can be found at the following web link which contains an interactive map for all UK monitoring networks https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/interactive-map?network=namn</p>
<p>2 Create an air quality action plan and adopt World Health Organisation standards for PM2.5;</p>	<p>Environmental Health is still awaiting feedback from DAERA on its 2019 Air Quality Progress Report following independent validation. Feedback on the progress report shall action planning to progress. We note that the Clean Air Strategy Public Discussion Document also requests that Action Plans be reevaluated by April 2020 (assumed to be actually April 2021). It is envisaged that Action Plans can be reviewed by this time and brought to members for their comment. The adoption of the WHO standard for PM_{2.5} will require further consideration to ensure implemented measure can meet the target level. Any reduction in PM exposure shall improve the impact on health.</p>

3 Bring forward draft policy options for discouraging the installation of fossil fuel heating and wood burning stoves in all new planning projects (EH/Planning) and
4 Devise a set of criteria to be agreed by Members above which an air quality assessment will be required to accompany planning applications (EH/Planning)

Further discussions are required in relation to this with Planning Officers. The Clean Air Strategy Public Discussion Document discusses the introduction of a ban on the use of bituminous coal unseasoned wood.

Council's Planning Development Service consult regularly with Environmental Health on major planning applications that could impact on air quality. Environmental Health refer to current guidance published by the institute of air quality management (<https://iaqm.co.uk/text/guidance/air-quality-planning-guidance.pdf>) and although not formally adopted as policy this guidance provides excellent advice in the assessment of the impacts of development on air quality.

The LDP draft Plan Strategy has incorporated a substantial initial section on General Development Principles and Policies that locally-applies the principles of the Strategic Planning Policy Statement for NI (SPPS); this section includes relevant 'air quality' sections including Health & Well-being in addition to sustainable development, biodiversity, natural environment, climate change, etc.

In Policy GDPOL 1, all planning applications will be assessed against various amenity criteria including air quality – with 2 pages specifically addressing the air quality issue (p 96-98). Planning does, and in the future, contribute to the improvement and protection of air quality – through its consideration in Planning applications and with the better, more-sustainable location of homes, employment, facilities, etc., encouraging transport modal shift and green infrastructure.

5 Organise a series of seminars to upskill members on Current Air Quality issues

Officers within Environmental Health hope to have a programme developed for March 2021.

6 Council will write to all other councils urging them to pass a similar air quality motion

Completed

7 Council will write to the Northern Ireland Executive asking for an update on the effectiveness of the air quality monitoring station at

Completed and see response from DAERA Minister dated the 1st December 2020. Members may wish to note that the air monitoring station within Brooke Park was moved to its current location to facilitate the wider development of the Park. The Monitoring of NO₂ at the Creggan Road site

Brooke Park since the station was moved from its original location (Creggan Road and Marlborough Terrace;)

ceased on 31/05/2015. The owner of the property had started to undertake major refurbishment of the premises rendering the site unsuitable due to safety reasons. Monitoring of air quality at this junction still continues using Nitrogen Dioxide diffusion tubes.

8 Letter to the Executive – urgent need for a NI Clean Air Act to include WHO threshold for PM2.5

See response from DAERA Minister dated the 1st December 2020 which refers to the current Clean Air Strategy Public Discussion Document. In the draft response to this document it is recommended that WHO standards for PM2.5 be accepted. The Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 is out of date and needs reviewed/replaced as part of a wider clean air bill required to incorporate recommendations of the final clean air strategy.