

### **Food Safety Service Plan 2014/15**

The committee received the Food Safety Service Plan 2014/15. This report is produced to inform members of the work carried out by the Food and Safety team, in accordance with the food standards agency framework agreement on official controls by local authorities.

The Council have a statutory duty to ensure a Food Safety Service Plan is in place to comply with the Food Standards Agency requirements.

Members noted that a high number of premises in the Borough have a very good Food Hygiene rating. Only 42 premises out of 700 need improvement or urgent attention. This is a considerable achievement and shows that most premises serving food are delivering at a high standard.

Officers were thanked by the committee for the thorough and in depth report. If you require a copy of the Food Safety Service Plan 2014/15, please contact head of environmental health services, Nesta Henshaw.

### **Local Air Quality Management – Progress Report 2014**

The committee received a statutory progress report for 2014 in respect of air quality in the Borough and the work required as a result of the findings of poor air quality in areas of the Borough.

During the chairs meeting and the Public Protection committee meeting, several questions were raised regarding air quality and the possible areas suffering with high levels of pollutants. What are we doing to monitor air quality and how will we tackle issue?

These questions were addressed by the Team Leader of Environmental Protection, Darren Walters. Please see below:

#### **What are we doing to monitor air quality?**

We are currently monitoring for compliance against the statutory nitrogen dioxide annual mean objective across 38 locations across the Borough using passive diffusion tubes. These are positioned according to technical guidance and in the majority of cases will be representative of worst case exposure at relevant facades of properties (dwellings, schools etc.) These are used to provide a screening tool to show if further detailed investigations are required. The tubes not positioned on relevant facades form part of the national monitoring network. We also have an air quality monitoring station at Queens Gardens which monitors nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter. Real-time and historic data for this site can be found on <http://www.ukairquality.net/> The latest progress report gives trends across these locations since 2007 and also shows in which years exceedances have occurred. Our earlier reports can also be found at [www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/laqm](http://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/laqm)

Where exceedances of the statutory objectives are identified or predicted, the authority is required to undertake a further detailed assessment and this was reported to Public Protection in December 2013. Attached with this email is the earlier public protection report which discusses the findings of a Detailed and Further Assessment of air quality in four areas of the Borough which were found to exceed the legally acceptable levels. Appendices 3 to 6 will give you a non-technical summary of the issues in the areas of exceedance.

### **Improving the air quality in the exceedance locations**

We are about to embark on a formal consultation exercise concerning the required Air Quality Management Area Boundaries (AQMA's), which are required to be declared by law, these also cover the locations which are referred to in your report for consideration on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014. We are in the process of drafting information leaflets concerning this and these will contain details of the maps giving the boundaries of the proposed AQMA's. We hope to have the leaflets and letters available for distribution by mid-August.

The consultation exercise is planned to run from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014 through to the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and will involve the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> September to 12<sup>th</sup> October 2014 (6 weeks)
  - **Newcastle Town Centre (3rd September 7-9pm Council Chamber)**
    - Newcastle Town Centre AQMA stakeholders meeting (TRL to facilitate with Borough Council Staff). (Invitees – Council Leader, Portfolio Holder, Elected members for Town/Maybank/Porthill/ Wolstanton Ward, County Councillor, Staffordshire Highways, Staffordshire County Public Health Lead, Stoke on Trent City Council AQ officer, Town Centre Business Forum, Town Centre Businesses. GP Surgeries in the area, Local Planning Authority Committee Chair, Head of Planning, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent LEP chair. Local bus operators / TAXI association, Keele University, Planning Policy officers from Stoke and Newcastle
    - Newcastle Town Centre AQMA public road show – Market day, Morrison's / Sainsbury's. (Borough Council) Will need materials to help deliver the message in an easy to understand format.
    - Each property / business in affected area or which may have a role to play in developing AQAP to receive leaflet.
  - **May Bank Wolstanton Porthill (3<sup>rd</sup> September 7-9pm Council Chamber)**
    - Maybank Wolstanton Porthill AQMA stakeholders meeting (TRL to facilitate with Borough Council Staff). (Invitees – Council Leader, Portfolio Holder, Elected members for Town/Maybank/Porthill/ Wolstanton Ward, County Councillor, Staffordshire Highways, Staffordshire County Public Health Lead, Stoke on Trent City Council AQ officer, Highways Agency, Stoke on Trent Highways. Town Centre Business Forum, Wolstanton Chamber of Trade Businesses. GP Surgeries in the area, Local Planning Authority Committee Chair, Head of Planning, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent LEP chair. Local Bus operators
    - AQMA public roadshow – ASDA Morris Square / Porthill Library / (Borough Council) Will need materials to help deliver the message in an easy to understand format.
  - **Kidsgrove (5<sup>th</sup> September Victoria Hall)**
    - Maybank Wolstanton Porthill AQMA stakeholders meeting (TRL to facilitate with Borough Council Staff). (Invitees – Council Leader, Portfolio Holder, Elected members for Kidsgrove Ward, Kidsgrove Town Council, County Councillor, Staffordshire Highways, Staffordshire County Public Health Lead, Stoke on Trent City Council AQ officer, Highways Agency, Stoke on Trent Highways. Town Centre Business Forum, Wolstanton Chamber of Trade Businesses. GP Surgeries in the area, Local Planning Authority Committee Chair, Head of Planning, Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent LEP chair, local bus operators

- AQMA public roadshow – ASDA Morris Square / Porthill Library / (Borough Council) will need materials to help deliver the message in an easy to understand format.
  - Kidgrove Town Council meeting
- Madeley (single address)
  - Proposed personal letter to householder and owner, meeting with Keele ward member (Green Party Member), Consultation letter to LPA / County / Councillors / Highways Agency / Public Health.

We will also be going out to meet the public in shopping areas and supermarkets to seek their views as well as providing a website which will give further information and to enable comments to be made. The dates will be published in the leaflets. We are hoping to have these available for issue in the next two weeks. All feedback received will be taken into account and we hope to take a report to the 22<sup>nd</sup> December Public Protection Committee to formally declare the Air Quality Management Areas.

Public awareness will also be raised through an article in the Reporter (scheduled for distribution between the 25<sup>th</sup> August to the 31<sup>st</sup> August), and a local press release. Both the local Sentinel and Radio Stoke have shown an interest in this issue in the recent past.

#### **Improving air quality**

Once we have the AQMA's in place, we will then be in a position to develop air quality action plans which are designed to identify projects which can be achieved to improve air quality This is something which will need to be developed in partnership with others such as the highways agency, county highways, colleagues within the city, local planning authority.

We also plan to develop an air quality strategy for the borough which is intended to safeguard and improve air quality and again this will be developed in consultation.

#### **Planning and Air Quality**

All planning applications are screened for their impacts on air quality or to assess how existing air quality will impact upon the development and we have an established Local Planning Validation List which gives advice to developers on this subject. Where considered appropriate to do so, developers are required to submit air quality assessments with their applications; these typically explore traffic impacts and construction impacts on air quality.

Once we have the AQMA's in place, air quality in these areas will become a material consideration in determining a planning application in accordance with the NPPF. We are looking to develop guidance / polices to achieve improvements in air quality and not to increase exposure

We are also raising the issue with Planning Colleagues to assist in the development of the joint Local Plan and to achieve policies which support us on air quality.

#### **The M6 Motorway and air quality**

We have only identified one property affected by air quality which exceeds legal levels which is Collingwood, adjacent to the motorway bridge at Madeley. This is exceeding the annual mean air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide by a very narrow margin. We hope to engage with the Highways Agency to see improvements and will request that they take air quality along this route into account in developing any highway schemes.

It is considered that traffic related emissions will see an overall reduction as time moves on due to improvements in engine technology and pollution control measures driven by European legislation. The results obtained at this site do not identify any risk of exceeding the short term hourly objective for nitrogen dioxide (as one may expect to see if traffic is queuing or is heavily congested).