

Calderdale MBC

Wards Affected All

Cabinet 10 October 2022



Calderdale Council Air Quality Strategy

Report of Director of Public Health

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The quality of the air we breathe has an important influence on the wellbeing of people, communities, the borough, and the whole planet. Good air quality and the things that are needed for clean air will help us achieve our Vision 2024. This is our aspiration to be a place where everyone can realise their potential; a place of talent and enterprise; kindness and resilience; and is distinctive; a place to live a longer life. Air quality is also an important contributor to our three organisational priorities: tackling the climate emergency, reducing inequalities and strong and resilient towns. The action taken to improve air quality will also contribute to the four outcomes in Calderdale's Wellbeing Strategy, and help reduce health inequalities.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Air Quality Strategy (Appendix 1) is to set out, at a strategic level, the Calderdale Council's aspirations for air quality and the actions that need to be taken to ensure clean air for all in Calderdale.

2. Need for a decision

- 2.1 A number of Calderdale Council's functions and services contribute to clean air. These combine in our role as place leader, working with communities and local partners to maximise quality of life in local neighbourhoods. The Air Quality Strategy aims influence decisions that the Council will make, which can impact on air quality.
- 2.2 Adopting the Air Quality Strategy requires approval by Council

3. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- 3.1 Recommend that Council adopt the Air Quality Strategy
- 3.2 Note the governance arrangements in place for the ongoing development and delivery of Calderdale Air Quality Strategy on the final page of the draft strategy

4. Background and/or details

- 4.1 Air pollution has a significant effect on public health, and poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Long-term exposure to air pollution (over years or lifetimes) reduces life expectancy, mainly due to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and lung cancer. Short-term exposure (over hours or days) can cause a range of health impacts, including effects on lung function, exacerbation of asthma, increases in respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions and death.
- 4.2 Calderdale Council has a number of responsibilities for and contributions to make to, air quality including Environmental Health, Public Health, Highways, Planning and Community Engagement. These combine in our role as place leader, working with communities and other local partners to maximise quality of life in local neighbourhoods.
- 4.3 The draft strategy describes out why air quality is so important in Calderdale, the local situation in relation to air quality and the key contributors to poor air quality in the borough. It also sets out our air quality goals and the strategic actions that we will take and what partners and communities can do to contribute to air quality.

The Aims and Objectives of the Draft Air Quality Strategy

- 4.4 The overall aim is to ensure Clean Air for All in Calderdale.
- 4.5 The objectives are:
 - I. To have a good understanding of air quality issues in Calderdale so that we can take an intelligence led approach
 - II. To ensure air quality is considered in everything we do
 - III. To raise awareness and understanding of air quality in Calderdale
 - IV. To design the physical and natural environment to improve air quality
 - V. To reduce pollution from vehicle journeys
 - VI. To protect the health of those most vulnerable to the harmful effects of air pollution
- 4.6 The draft strategy sets out the high level actions that the Council will take, and those that can be taken by partners and by individuals and communities to achieve the objectives and the goal of clean air for all.
- 4.7 Should it be adopted, governance of oversight of the strategy and co-ordination of its delivery, will be provided by two separate but interrelated Air Quality groups - one focussing on the strategic dimension and one concentrating on delivery at an operational level. The respective role of each group is set out in the draft Strategy.

5. Options considered

Option 1: Adoption of the draft Air Quality Strategy - recommended

- 5.1 Adoption of the strategy will demonstrate the Council's commitment to clean air. It will set a strategic framework that can influence decisions that the Council makes in relation to air quality, contributing to the three corporate priorities and the four Wellbeing Strategy priority outcomes

Option 2: Do Nothing – not recommended

- 5.2 Given the impact that poor air quality can have on the health and wellbeing of Calderdale residents and its contribution to our three corporate priorities, not adopting the Strategy will have negative consequences. It would result in non delivery of our statutory air quality responsibilities, potentially increased demands on local health and care services and inability to achieve our carbon

6. Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no specific revenue or capital financial implications arising from this report at this point. However, adoption of the strategy will influence service delivery and existing and/or future revenue and capital budgets. It will also inform the prioritisation of opportunities to bid for external infrastructure fundings.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that community engagement and communications will largely be delivered from within existing resources. Where required commissioning of external capacity for community led clean air projects will be funded from the Public Health Grant.
- 6.3 Co-ordinating the ongoing oversight and implementation of the strategy will be undertaken within existing staffing resources, through the governance structure set out on page 13 of the draft strategy.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 Key pollutants in outdoor air are regulated by the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010. These Regulations seek to control human exposure to pollutants in outdoor air to protect human health and the environment by requiring concentrations to be within specified limit values. In the event of exceedances, the Regulations require the publication of Air Quality Plans setting out "appropriate measures" that will ensure that the exceedance period is kept "as short as possible".

8. Human Resources and Organisation Development Implications

- 2.1 There are no HR implications

9. Consultation

- 9.1 The strategy has been developed by a group of officers from across the Council
- 9.2 In the development of the strategy, consultation took place with the Cabinet Members for Climate Change and Resilience and Engagement, Towns and Public Health.

10. Environment, Health and Economic Implications

- 10.1 The draft strategy sets out the impact that air pollution has on health and wellbeing and the health inequalities that it contributes to. Taking action to ensure clean air for all residents will also contribute to our carbon reduction aspiration and help make our towns attractive, safe and vibrant places.

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 Although air pollution can be harmful to everyone, some people are more affected because they live in a polluted area, are exposed to higher levels of air pollution in their day-to-day lives or are more susceptible to health problems caused by air pollution. The most vulnerable face all of these disadvantages.
- 11.2 Groups that are more affected by air pollution include:
- older people
 - children
 - individuals with heart disease or respiratory disease
 - pregnant women
 - communities in areas of higher pollution, such as close to busy roads
 - low-income communities
- 11.3 Children are more vulnerable to breathing in polluted air than adults because their airways are smaller and still developing. They also breathe more rapidly than adults, which means that they will take in more polluted air.
- 11.4 Studies have found links between living near busy roads and dementia, and that improving air quality reduces dementia risk.
- 11.5 There is also an important social justice challenge as evidence suggests that these vulnerable groups are responsible for less air pollution emissions but are impacted more by them.
- 11.6 An outline equality impact assessment has been undertaken (see appendix 2). Following the adoption of the Air Quality Strategy, a delivery plan will be developed and a comprehensive equality impact assessment of the delivery plan will be undertaken to inform its further development and delivery.

12. Summary and Recommendations

- 12.1 Long term and short term exposure to air pollution contributes to poor health and poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to health in the UK

- 12.2 Calderdale Council is responsible for a number of functions and services that can contribute to air quality and a strategic framework to guide the decisions that the Council makes can help improve air quality
 - 12.3 While the Council has an important contribution to make to clean air, the actions things that partners, communities and residents do can also help achieve clean air
 - 12.4 A draft strategy has been developed with the goal of Clean Air for All in Calderdale. It sets out the high level actions that the council will take and what partners and communities can do to contribute to good air quality
 - 12.5 Cabinet is asked to recommend that Council adopt the draft Air Quality Strategy
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The documents used in the preparation of this report are:

- 1. Calderdale Air Quality Strategy (Appendix 1)
- 2.
- 3.

The documents are available for inspection at: