

COUNCIL 30th November 2022

Cabinet 10th October 2022

47 CALDERDALE COUNCIL AIR QUALITY STRATEGY

Councillor Patient, Cabinet Member with responsibility for Climate Change and Resilience, presented a written report of the Director, Public Health that sought consideration to recommend to Full Council the adoption of the Calderdale Council Air Quality Strategy. The purpose of the Air Quality Strategy, contained at Appendix 1 of the report was to set out, at a strategic level, Calderdale Council's aspirations for air quality and the actions that needed to be taken to ensure clean air for all in Calderdale.

Air pollution had a significant effect on public health, and poor air quality was the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Long-term exposure to air pollution reduced life expectancy, mainly due to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and lung cancer. Short-term exposure could cause a range of health impacts, including effects on lung function, exacerbation of asthma, increases in respiratory and cardiovascular hospital admissions and death.

The draft strategy described why air quality was so important in Calderdale and set out the Council's air quality goals and the strategic actions the Council would take, and what partners and communities could do to contribute to air quality.

The report outlined background information, options considered, consultations, and financial, environmental, health, economic, equality, and diversity implications.

Councillor Patient advised that there were factors which were outside of the Council's control, such as residents' car usage and what they chose to do at home. He further advised that the Strategy would be implemented in 2 ways by a separate strategic group and operational group.

During discussions, Members commented on the useful information contained in the report on what communities and partner organisations could do to improve air quality, and on the importance of influencing public transport providers, as residents were turning towards car use due to unreliability of public transport.

Councillor Leigh MBE attended the meeting and addressed Cabinet. He asked how Cabinet rationalised ambitions to clean air alongside plans in the Lower Valley for 12-15 thousand new houses, which could equate to up to 20 thousand more vehicles. He further asked Councillor Patient to clarify whether Calderdale Council had the ability to declare Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). In response, Councillor Patient advised that Calderdale Council had the same responsibilities regarding AQMAs, however the Strategy allowed for other measures to be implemented to tackle air quality. He further advised that there were assumptions in terms of car use and impact, the aspiration was to negate those assumptions.

Councillor Hutchinson attended the meeting and addressed Cabinet. He spoke about the effects of particulate matter on health, the use of wood burning stoves and their impact in the UK. He commented that the Strategy lacked ambition on tackling the use

and standards of wood burning stoves. In response, Councillor Patient added that wood burning was likely to increase as residents tried to combat the rising costs of fuel. He advised that the Strategy was a working document to be built from, and any perceived lack of ambition could be added.

Councillor Smith attended the meeting and addressed Cabinet. She advised that the introduction of the incinerator would increase levels of 2.5 particulates and asked why they were not being monitored. She asked whether the impacts from the Corridor Improvement Plan were being monitored, and commented on the particulates from electric vehicles, which were not pollution free. She also asked how the Council could remedy the mistrust in Sowerby Bridge around air quality management. Community groups were committed to having clean air and the Council needed to resolve issues and regain community engagement. In response, Councillor Patient advised that various decisions were still being made in the 1st stage of the Corridor Improvement Plan. He advised that Council were aware of the issues with electric vehicles, and that the Strategy could be reviewed to consider monitoring 2.5 particulates. He commented that community engagement was the 2nd pillar in improving air quality and welcomed discussions around working ideas into the Strategy.

Councillor Hey attended the meeting and addressed Cabinet. He commented on air quality monitors in East Calderdale which were recording high levels and was concerned that planned building as part of the Local Plan could make the situation worse. He commented that the Strategy had a lack of additional resourcing. In response, Councillor Patient advised that the aim was to go beyond AQMAs and look at other methods to manage exceedances. He advised that involving extra staff was not the only answer to resourcing, it was important to involve communities and partner organisations; air quality could not be solved by the Council alone.

***RESOLVED that:**

(a) it be recommended to Council that the Calderdale Council Air Quality Strategy be adopted; and

(b) the governance arrangements in place for the ongoing development and delivery of Calderdale Council Air Quality Strategy, contained on the final page of the draft Calderdale Council Air Quality Strategy, be noted.

(Part 47 (a) only)