



<b>Report to:</b>	Climate and Environment Advisory Committee 13 September 2021
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b>	Cllr Brian Milnes
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Soraya Hashemi

## Air Quality Update

### Executive Summary

1. This report underpins the priorities in the current Business Plan, largely under the 'Being Green to our Core' priority. The plan contains actions:

2.

Agree and deliver our strategy and actions needed to protect and improve the air quality of our district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategy and action plan revised (Quarter 1)</li><li>• Air quality monitor in place to gather data at one new location (Quarter 1)</li><li>• Complete a review of how and where we monitor air quality (Quarter 2)</li></ul>
--	--

3. The drafted Air Quality Strategy was presented to the Committee and was accepted to be presented to and approved by the Cabinet. This, however, was not proceeded due to Covid-19 Pandemic. The full Strategy is presented as Appendix A.
4. In addition, the decision for Revocation of our Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is presented in this report and reflected in the drafted Strategy. This was supported by Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) following approval of our Annual Status Report (ASR) 2020 and was reflected in detail in our Annual Status Report 2021. The Annual Status Report 2021 was submitted to Defra in June 2021 and is awaiting feedback. The full report is presented as Appendix B.
5. This report also presents an update on the review of our air quality monitoring network and presents the findings of our first Zephyr monitor installed near the Harston and Newton Community Primary School in late 2020. The full report is presented as Appendix C.

### Recommendations

6. The committee is invited to review the reports and comment on the updates provided.

## Details

7. It is recognised that Members consider air quality a high priority as part of the council's green to our core. As such, a new Air Quality Strategy has been drafted and will be presented for approval to the Cabinet. This Strategy outlines a new approach to monitor and improve the air quality across the district and to ensure both the new and existing communities are considered to benefit a better air quality district wide.
8. The drafted Air Quality Strategy was previously presented to the Committee and was accepted to be presented to and approved by the Cabinet. This, however, was not proceeded due to Covid-19 Pandemic.
9. The drafted Strategy presented as Appendix A includes the update on revocation of our Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which was supported by Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) in approval of our annual report in 2020. This was also discussed in detail in our 2021 annual report which is presented as Appendix B.
10. Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) are locations where levels of air pollution above the human health thresholds are considered likely. South Cambridgeshire has declared one in 2008. However, none of the pollutants monitored within our AQMA, i.e. Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and Particulate Matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), have reached a level above the human health thresholds since 2014.
11. If the local authority has 5 years of data that supports that the air quality limit has not been exceeded, the AQMA should be revoked. Defra (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) has recommended that we revoke our AQMA.
12. A review of the existing monitoring network has been completed aiming to identify the likely hot spots as the result of major developments in the district. In early 2021, work has started to update the monitoring network to reflect this review, including the relocation of some existing monitoring equipments and the procurement of new automatic continuous monitors. The new automatic monitors are aimed to be in place and operational by end of December 2021.
13. A hotspot monitoring initiative is underway using a new technology known as Sensors (Zephyr). These are portable monitors that run on solar power and can be deployed on lampposts. These indicative real-time monitors will let the Council to test the reliability of alternative technologies for air quality monitoring and conduct short term studies in different areas of concern such as schools.
14. The first Zephyr was installed in Harston village near the Harston and Newton Community Primary School in late 2020. A minimum of six months data was collected for the Harston study and the results show that no levels of pollution above human health thresholds are recorded near the school. A full report of this study is presented in Appendix C.
15. Another two Zephyrs have been purchased since and been installed at different schools. It is intended that for each study area a report will be published similar to the Harston report and be presented to the committee once completed.
16. A new data portal is been set up for the Zephyrs enabling the public to access real-time data from these monitors. We are working with the provider to resolve some minor issues before releasing it on our website.

## **Alignment with Council Priority Areas**

### **Being green to our core**

17. See paragraph 1.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Air Quality Strategy 2021

Appendix B: Annual Status Report 2021

Appendix C: Harston Zephyr Study 2021

## **Report Author:**

Soraya Hashemi – Scientific Officer Air Quality  
Telephone: 01954 713640