

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Date: 25th of February 2020

Wards: All

Subject: Air Quality Task Group & Action Plan update

Lead officer: Director for Environment and Regeneration, Chris Lee

Lead members: Councillor Tobin Byers, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health.
Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Transport

Contact officer: Jason Andrews, Air Quality & Contaminated Land Manager

Recommendations:

That Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel discuss and comment on the content of the report.

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This report is intended to provide an update of the Councils Air Quality Action Plan 2018 – 2023.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Air pollution is recognised as a major contributor to poor health with more than 40,000 premature deaths attributed to poor air quality across the UK each year, with over 9000 attributed to poor air quality in London.
- 2.2 Air pollution is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society including children and older people, and those with heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues, because areas with poor air quality are often less affluent.
- 2.3 Public Health England estimate that 6.5% of mortality in Merton is attributable to poor air quality.
- 2.4 Air quality has been identified as a priority both nationally and within London, where pollution levels continue to exceed both EU limit values and UK air quality objectives. Merton along with all London boroughs continues to breach the legally binding air quality limits for both nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀).
- 2.5 The air quality monitoring network run by Merton has shown that the UK annual mean NO₂ objective (40µg/m³) continues to be breached at a number of locations across the borough including Colliers Wood, Morden, Tooting and South Wimbledon. In some locations the NO₂ concentration is also likely to be in excess of the UK 1-hour air quality objective (200µg/m³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times per year) which indicates a risk not only to people living in that area but also for those working or visiting the area.

- 2.6 Pollution in Merton comes from a variety of sources. It includes pollution originating outside the borough, and, in the case of particulate matter, a significant proportion comes from outside London and even outside the UK. Obviously, the Council has limited control over this, however local sources are primarily from road transport and from development/buildings.

3 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The UK Government and the devolved administrations are required under the Environment Act 1995 to produce a national air quality strategy. This strategy sets out the UK's air quality objectives and recognises that action at national, regional and local level is needed, depending on the scale and nature of the air quality problem.
- 3.2 Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 and Part II of the Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 requires local authorities in the UK to review air quality in their area and designate air quality management areas (AQMA) if improvements are necessary. Where an air quality management area is designated, local authorities are also required to work towards the Strategy's objectives prescribed in regulations for that purpose. An Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) describing the pollution reduction measures must then be put in place. These plans contribute to the achievement of air quality limit values at local level.
- 3.3 Following the UK's departure from the European Union these powers have been transferred to UK law and currently there are no changes planned to this Legislation/Regulatory framework.
- 3.4 In the past few years the UK government has been successfully challenged by environmental lawyers from Client Earth. These challenges have been predominantly around the measures within the government's Clean Air Strategy and its implementation process and time periods. The government has recently revised its Clean Air Strategy. The revised Strategy refers to the strengthening of existing powers where necessary and the introduction of new powers for Local Authorities to further reduce air pollution from key areas such as transport, the home, farming and industry. Details of amended Local Authority powers will follow in the new Environment Bill and associated clean air legislation.
- 3.5 Although legal challenges on air quality have been levelled at central government, the same challenge and recommendations can equally be applied to the air quality responsibilities of any Local Authority. These challenges, along with the emerging health impact of poor air quality have given the agenda added impetus over the past few years. As well as the legal responsibility, a Local Authority has a duty to ensure the health and wellbeing of its residents, visitors and businesses.

Table 1: National Air Quality Objectives (UK)

Pollutant	Objective (UK)	Averaging Period	Date ¹
Nitrogen dioxide - NO ₂	200 µg m ⁻³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	31 Dec 2005
Particles - PM ₁₀	40 µg m ⁻³	Annual mean	31 Dec 2005
	50 µg m ⁻³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	24-hour mean	31 Dec 2004
Particles - PM _{2.5}	40 µg m ⁻³	Annual mean	31 Dec 2004
	25 µg m ⁻³	Annual mean	2020
	Target of 15% reduction in concentration at urban background locations	3 year mean	Between 2010 and 2020
Sulphur Dioxide (SO ₂)	266 µg m ⁻³ not to be exceeded more than 35 times a year	15 minute mean	31 Dec 2005
	350 µg m ⁻³ not to be exceeded more than 24 times a year	1 hour mean	31 Dec 2004
	125 µg m ⁻³ not to be exceeded more than 3 times a year	24 hour mean	31 Dec 2004

4. AIR QUALITY IN MERTON

- 4.1 Of the pollution that originates inside the borough, the main sources of NO_x are road transport (64%), Industrial/commercial Heat/Power (16%) and domestic Heat (11%) – Figure 1.
- 4.2 The main sources of particulate matter (PM₁₀) are road transport (30%), Construction – NRMM (26%) domestic biomass Wood burning (13%) and Road Resuspension (13%)– Figure 2. The main sources of particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) are road transport (30%), domestic biomass (24%) – Figure 3.

Figure 1

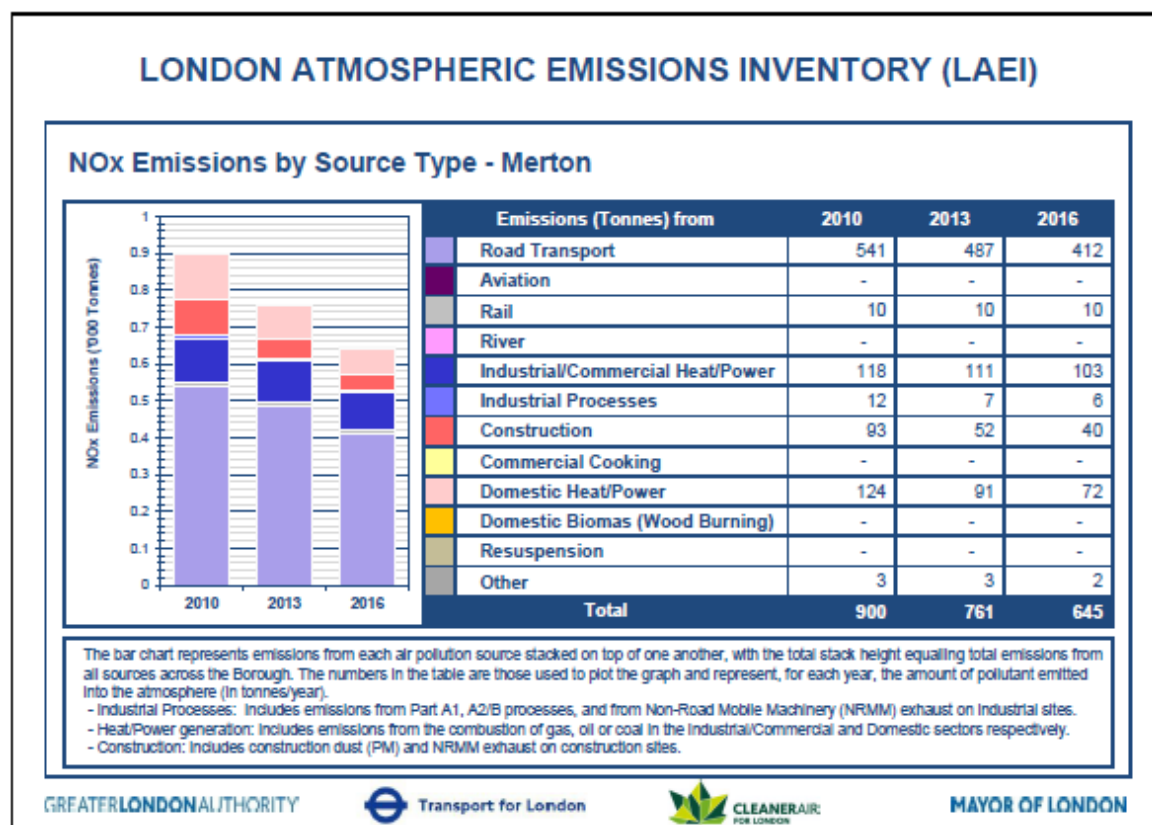


Figure 2

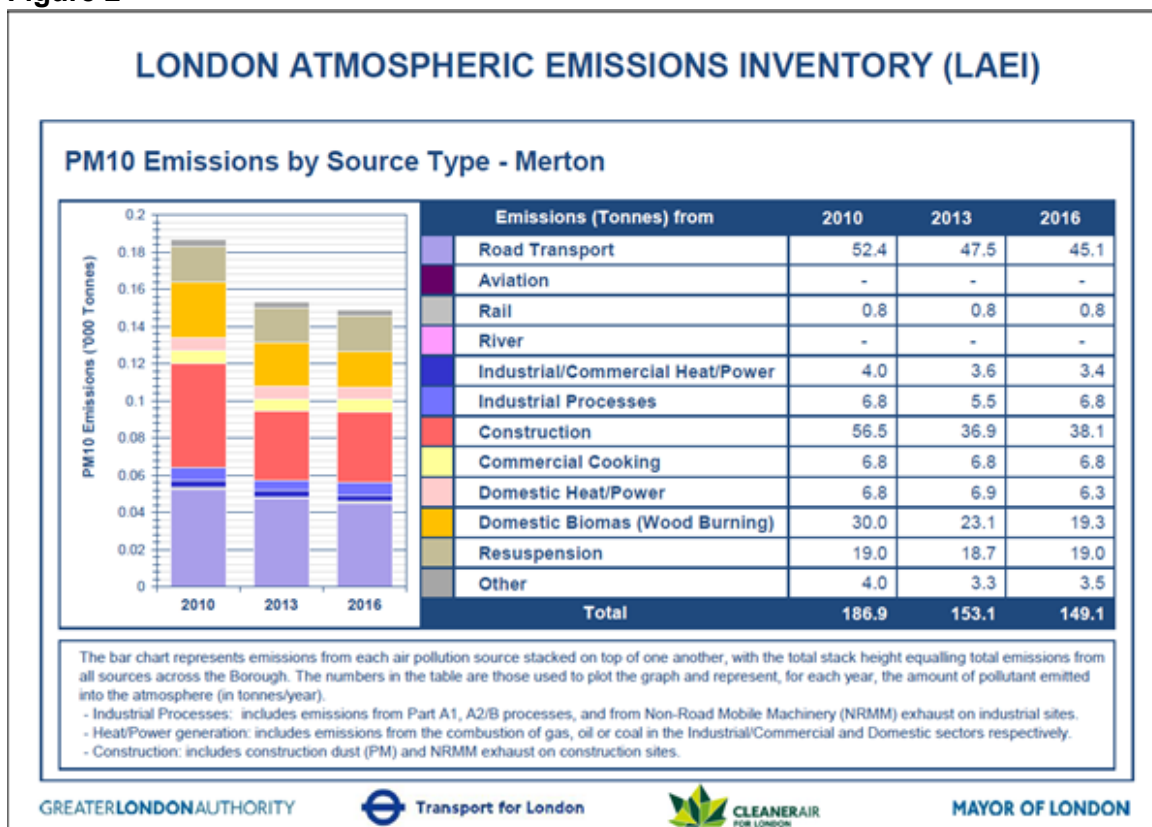
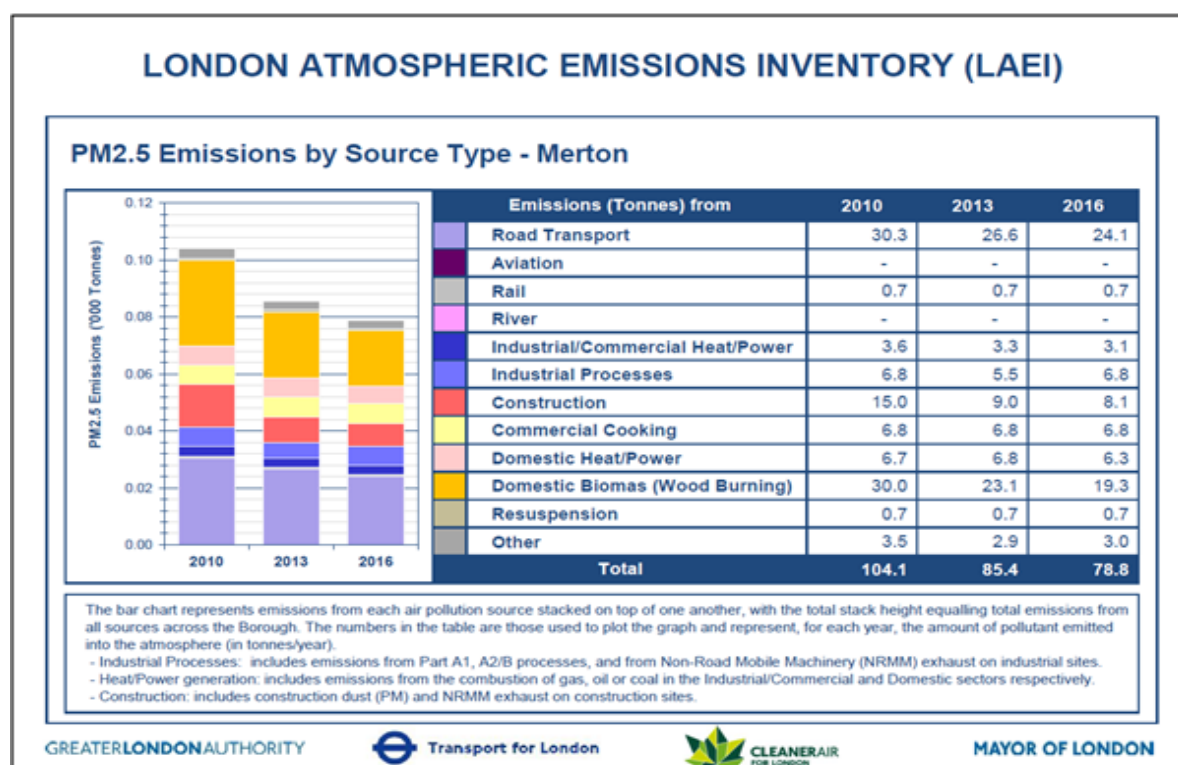


Figure 3



4.2 In respect of **road transport** sources, the London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) source apportionment data for the borough indicates that diesel vehicles contribute to approximately 90% of the NO_x emissions (based on 2016 modelled data). This supports the evidence from the dispersion modelling which indicates that the highest concentrations of both NO₂ and PM₁₀ are most closely associated with the main traffic routes and road junctions within the borough.

Figure 4. Source apportionment of transport NO_x emissions per annum

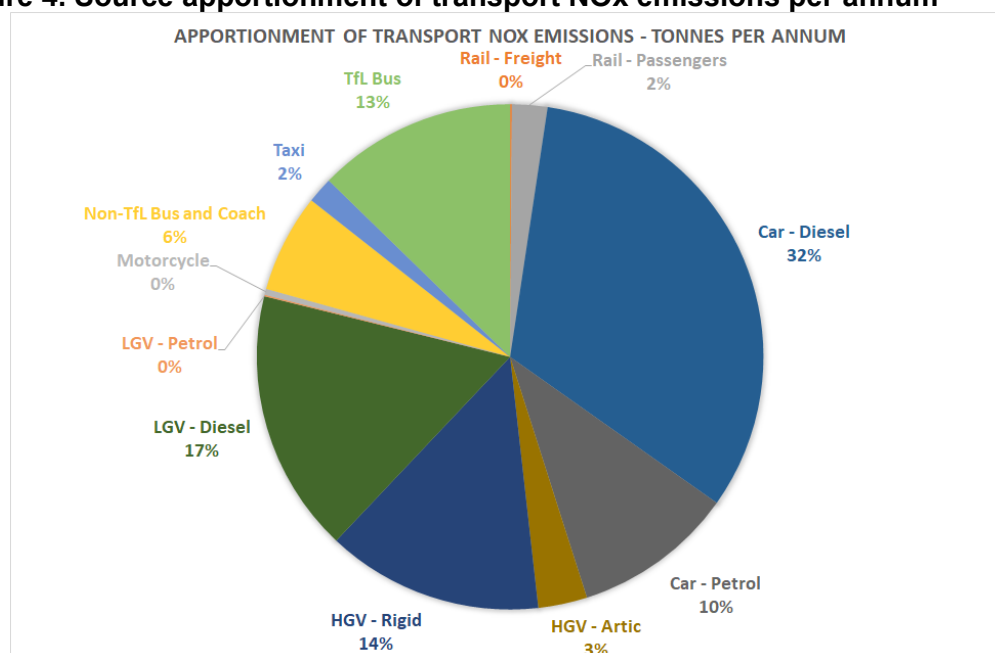
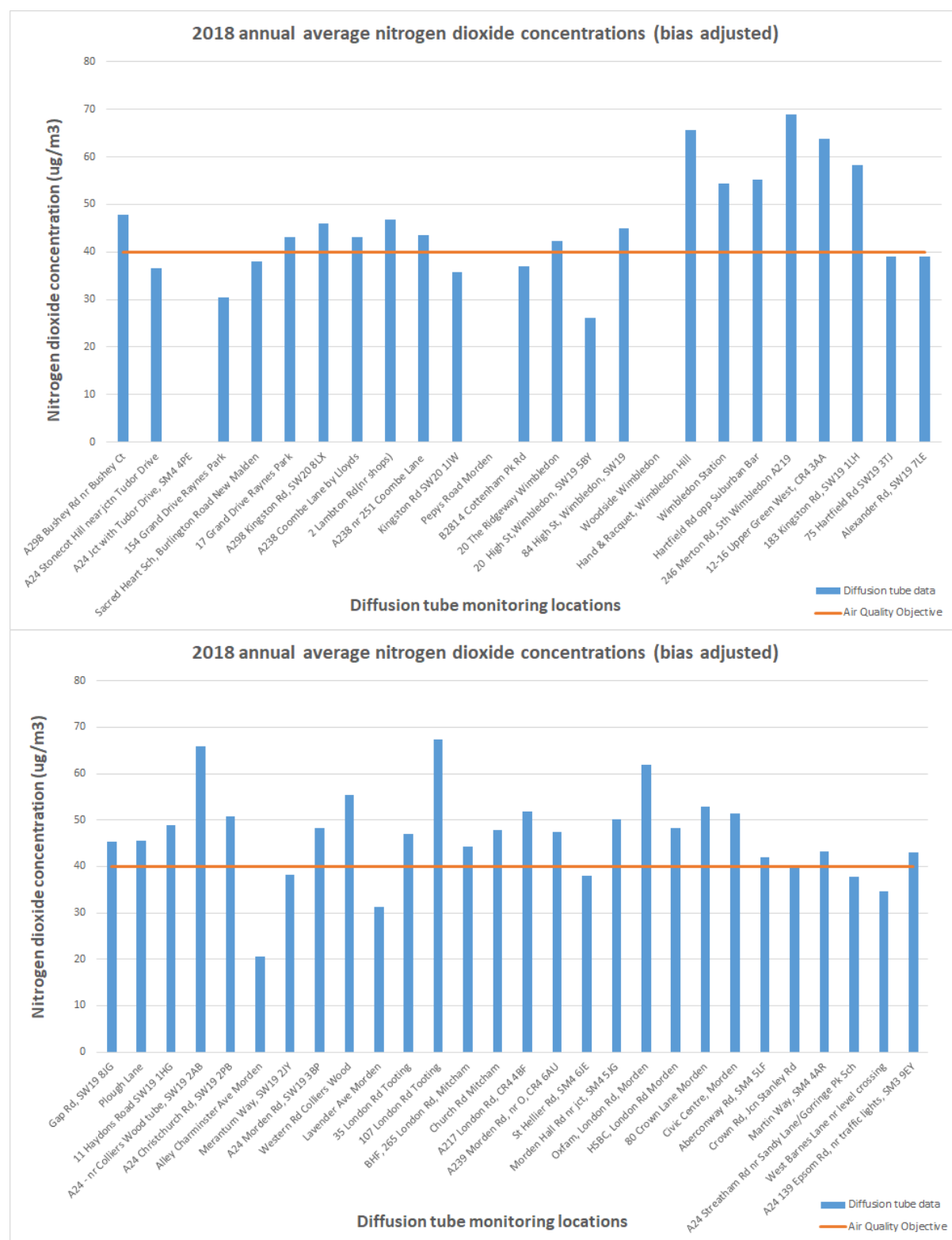


Figure 5. 2018 annual average bias adjusted nitrogen dioxide concentrations for all diffusion tube monitoring locations (presented across 2 charts)



5. OUR PRIORITIES

- 5.1 In recognition of the public health importance of the air quality agenda and the need to comply with the national air quality objectives within the Merton, the Council reviewed what actions we can and will take to tackle air pollution in the borough. Merton is not alone in this, many London boroughs have now, or are considering, a complete refresh of their action plans and a move towards many of the measures that Merton have and are continuing to implement.
- 5.2 Although there are limited measures we can take as an authority to directly influence polluting traffic, we have used the powers available to us to tackle this problem. These actions included the introduction of a diesel levy, this was based upon the realisation that diesel vehicles (particularly cars) contribute to a disproportionate amount of NO₂ within the borough. This was also one of the few levers that the Council can use to try to tackle one of the main causes of toxic gases within the borough. We are also currently reviewing parking charges in the borough as an additional measure to influence the move towards active travel, public transport and away from the most polluting vehicles. The Council are now exploring a number of emissions based parking charges that recognises local air quality as well as the climate change challenge faced by Local Authorities.
- 5.3 The priorities for the AQAP 2018-2023 are:
- a) *Establish and maintain an effective air quality group to ensure that the implementation of AQAP measures is coordinated effectively between relevant Council services;*
 - b) *Encourage the uptake of low emission vehicles and review and consider the introduction of an emissions-based parking levy, and review the effectiveness of such a measure over the next two years;*
 - c) *To identify the key causes of traffic congestion within our Air Quality Focus Areas and pollution 'hotspots' and to determine effective measures for improving traffic flow through those areas using detailed air quality and traffic management modelling tools;*
 - d) *To evaluate the air quality benefits and feasibility of introducing 'mini' Ultra-Low Emission Zones in the areas of the borough identified as having the poorest air quality;*
 - e) *To provide guidance to developers on the impact of development on air quality and ensure that approved schemes include effective mitigation and maximise the opportunity to improve infrastructure for sustainable transport options;*
 - f) *To formalise anti-idling enforcement in order to minimise emission from vehicles around key locations such as schools, taxi-ranks, Air Quality Focus Areas and hotspots;*
 - g) *To continue to work with schools, parents and students to improve awareness of AQ and to optimise parents' and children's desire and opportunity to adopt sustainable travel options;*
 - h) *To review Merton's air quality monitoring network to ensure that it effectively identifies areas of poor air quality and provides accurate data to enable us to evaluate air quality trends and the impact of AQAP measures.*

6. LEADING THE AIR QUALITY AGENDA

- 6.1 Merton is now recognised nationally as one of the leading Local Authorities for its work on air quality, leading on innovative and ground-breaking initiatives that extend beyond our borough boundaries.

6.2 The Council has made brave and sometimes controversial decisions to tackle pollution in our borough, something we will continue to do. We have implemented a diesel levy linked to our parking permit system and are coordinating our air quality work with internal partners and shaping policies that can push behavioural issues such as parking and planning.

6.3 We are delivering industry leading regional and national initiatives such as our work reducing pollution from the construction industry in London. This project in partnership with the Mayor of London is directly tackling the most polluting equipment on large construction sites throughout London. The early phases of the project in South London was so successful that in April 2019 it was extended to cover all London boroughs. This scheme is the world's first Low Emission Zone for the throughout the UK and other major cities across the world. Early project evaluation (April 2016-2019) indicates a reduction in emissions equivalent to removing 250,000 cars from the road, this is predicted to triple by project end in April 2022.



This project is also shortlisted as a 'finalist' in the well-respected LGC Awards.

6.4 We are a key partner in the 'School Neighbourhood Approach Pilot - (SNAP)', formerly 'Schools Superzones'. Colleagues from 3 different directorates; Children, Schools and Families, Environment & Regeneration, and Public Health are collaborating to shape a local 'whole systems' approach to improve the environment in and around a school across broad themes: The food around us; Moving around; Feeling safe; Spaces and places (includes air quality); and Communications and enablers.

6.5 The Regulatory Services Partnership (RSP) spans three important London boroughs and brings together officer expertise and good practice in the air quality industry. It will provide for air quality initiatives across a wider geographical area, give a greater voice for lobbying and could attract considerable resourcing through grants and other funding.

6.6 In November 2019 the London Borough of Merton were successful in their bid for funding to support a project to improve air quality as part of the LGA behavioural insights programme. The project will deliver a trial to tackle idling vehicles in close proximity to primary schools. The project is being led by the Public health team, working closely with the Air Quality team within Environment and Regeneration directorate. It is hoped established relationships and local intelligence, together with behavioural science expertise, will generate insights that will inform further work by the council in this area and beyond.

7. AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE (FEBRUARY 2020)

7.1 In 2018, Merton published its current Air Quality Action Plan 2018 – 2023 (AQAP). This was developed in response to recommendations made by the 2017 Air Quality Task Group.

The AQAP received a warm welcome from both the air quality industry and the public alike. It was innovative in its design and the way in which it communicated this vital agenda to all levels of the community. This Action Plan is a living document subject to constant review and evaluation and will continually incorporate best practice and developing technologies in the world of air quality. The Plan is split into **nine** separate themes and contains some 70 action points.



7.2 Theme - Monitoring Air Quality (Action Points 1- 9)

All actions are on target as of January 2020.

To facilitate the change to smarter monitoring the refresh of lamppost columns in Merton will include plugin facilities for new devices.

We continue to operate two continuous air quality monitoring stations in the borough which produce high quality nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter data. The diffusion tube network remains at 50 locations across the whole borough and has yielded good data capture in 2018 / 2019.

In August 2019 diffusion tube monitoring commenced at all schools in the borough to assess which schools are in areas of poor air quality and therefore require continued monitoring.

7.3 Theme - Reducing Emissions from Building & Developments (Action Points 10 – 22)

All actions measures are on target, AQ will form a stand-alone part of the Local Plan, this is currently undergoing various stages of consultation with adoption planned for Winter 2021. Initial feedback has been very positive. To support the New Local Plan an Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document is currently being developed.

Section 106 payments to fund Air Quality actions are being sought from all relevant developments. Funding from the diesel levy continues to support the Principal Air Quality Officer post which helps deliver the Action Plan and build close relationships with partners including planning colleagues, and strengthening links between the planning agenda and air quality.

Air quality focused training sessions for Development Management Officers and Councillors are due to be scheduled in the first half of 2020 to increase understanding around AQ and planning.

7.4 Theme - Reducing Emissions from Road Transport (Actions 23 -32)

Most action measures are on target (See Matrix). The Plan is aligned closely with the review of the parking charges throughout the borough and the AQ team is working closely with Public Health colleagues to ensure that the review of parking and charging in the borough is closely aligned to both the health agenda and air quality initiatives.

The Council's third Local Implementation Plan (LIP) sets the course as to how we will meet the Mayor's Transport Strategy and incorporates a number of delivery targets, including targets on car ownership and air quality. The LIP funding will focus on Vision Zero and Healthier Streets and covers 18 individual initiatives. Vision Zero aims to ensure that deaths and serious injuries from all road collisions are eliminated and Healthy Streets/Healthier People sets out to rebalance our streets and environment. Improving the street environment and promoting healthier lifestyles through more walking and cycling will be essential in delivering these outcomes.

The exploring and implementing of Clean Air Zones has been funded from April 2020 and delivered through the Local Implementation Plan. This is a complex piece of work and will be delivered in three stages.

The Council is committed to extending 20MPH speed limit zones throughout the borough, although the direct benefit to reducing air pollution is generally unclear, these zones do assist in creating an environment that is attractive to walking and cycling and improved safety.

In 2020 the Pollution Team will be funding a study into 20MPH zones and air quality as part of its wider work throughout the partnership boroughs.

7.5 Theme - Raising Awareness (Action Point 33-39)

Merton has funded the hosting of the Love Clean Air website until 2024 and is subscribed to airTEXT until 2021. We held successful annual events for both Clean Air Day and Car Free Day and will continue to support these National events.

The profile of Anti-Idling has been raised through our continued commitment to the Mayor of London's Idling Action project and the launch of a dedicated Council webpage. The Communications Team have Air Quality as a regular feature in My Merton and actively promotes campaigns such as the recent Clean Air Challenge.

Closer links have been established with our Public Health colleagues and nearly all initiatives are joint actions between the teams. Regular meetings are ongoing at officer level to explore links between Public Health & Air Quality teams.

7.6 Theme – Working Together (Action Point 40-48)

A borough-wide steering group has been established using the existing Environment Sub-Group as a foundation.

The Council supports the Mayor's Transport Strategy proposals to clean the bus fleet but believes the target of doing this in outer London by 2041 is not ambitious enough. The Council will continue to lobby to see this target brought forward and for more all-electric buses to be placed on outer London streets sooner.

Briefing sessions for Councillors and Planning colleagues will be an action picked up in February 2020

7.7 Theme – Leading by Example (Action Point 49 – 54)

Parking Services is fundamentally reviewing its fleet of vehicles. This project is aimed at reducing the number of vehicles and move towards the use of public transport. The remaining fleet will be all electric and secured through procurement in 2019/20.

The Team are working with colleagues in Climate Change and fleet managers to ensure that the Councils own vehicles are as clean as possible.

7.8 Theme – Innovation & Technology (Action Points 55-58)

Officers play an active role in the industry annual conference on new monitoring technologies. The Pollution Team will be procuring new portable monitoring equipment which can be deployed anywhere in the borough.

Merton has applied for a number of external grants relating to air quality and are leading on a London wide initiative to reduce emissions from construction sites. There is much interest around reliable low-cost portable sensors (air quality monitors). We will be procuring a market leading portable monitor which is capable of measuring the main pollutants of concern (nitrogen dioxide and particulates) to trial with the view to install at the Harris Academy Site, High Path.

7.9 Theme – Tackling Pollution (Action Point 59-64)

Merton Council is part of the pan-London Idling Action project which is an initiative funded in part through the Mayors Air Quality Fund (MAQF). There are several deliverables including; campaign events, school assemblies and business engagement. The Communications team are a key partner in the call for volunteers to support campaigns and reporting progress via social media channels.

A council based 'anti-idling' webpage was launched in November 2019 to provide information and details on campaign days. It will be a living page to be updated following events to share progress and best practice. A key element on the webpage is an anti-idling pledge form, ten pledges have been made so far.

We are looking for a coordinated approach with communities to tackle idling hot spots in the borough. We have a commitment to deliver several organised anti-idling events each year, training and materials will be provided by the Council. The Communications Team will support the promotion of events via social media channels.

Anti-idling was a main element of Merton's January Clean Air Challenge
<https://www.merton.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/pollution/air-quality-and-air-pollution/cleanair> .

Three Idling Action school engagement events were held in 2019 and two so far in 2020. Funding is in place through the Idling Action project for a further 10 school events over the next 2 financial years. Additional events will be scheduled by the Air Quality Team on an ad-hoc basis.

In addition to the Idling Action project the council has a joined-up approach across Air Quality, Public Health, Parking Services and Future Merton to engage schools on the topic of idling. An anti-idling banner / poster / leaflets competition is to be offered to primary schools and banners will be provided to schools if they are wanted.

At the end of 2019 we were awarded additional funding for an anti-idling behavioural insights project to improve air quality as part of the LGA behavioural insights programme. The project will deliver a trial to tackle idling vehicles in close proximity to primary schools. The project is being led by the Public Health team, working closely with the Air Quality team within Environment and Regeneration directorate. It is hoped established relationships and local intelligence, together with behavioural science expertise, will generate insights that will inform further work by the council in this area and beyond.

In 2019 around 200 anti-idling signs were installed at schools, taxi ranks and level crossings. Currently around half of all schools in the borough have signs outside or in close proximity, coverage will be increased to every school in the coming months. Signage is due to be improved at Wimbledon Taxi rank and a joint Council/TfL taxi driver engagement event is in discussion.

In December 2019 Civil Enforcement Officers received training to support the dissemination of the anti-idling message at schools. Officers also took part in the two idling events in 2020, a welcome addition to our program.

Initially and due to the limited enforcement options, we are using the anti-idling agenda to raise awareness and change behaviour.

Anti-idling training has been offered to all local councillors. Unfortunately, a session scheduled in January was cancelled due to committee calendar changes and availability following the General Election. A new date will be secured in early 2020.

The anti-idling agenda needs to be pulled together into an overarching strategy to link together communications plans, project actions, community actions, school actions, parking enforcement and behavioural change initiatives. A new strategy will be developed in spring 2020 to be delivered and reviewed throughout the length of the Action Plan.

7.10 Theme – Our Schools (Action Point 65 – 70)

The Mayors primary school air quality audit programme has concluded. Merton Abbey Primary School successfully installed screening and planting in line with the audit recommendation.

Further school audits are to be considered following air quality monitoring. Nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube monitoring commenced in August 2019 and will be reviewed in early 2020. Schools which are found to be in areas of poor air quality (exceeding the annual air quality objective of 40µg/m³ nitrogen dioxide) will continue to be monitored and offered an Air Quality Audit.

Three School Safety Zones (formerly referred to as School Streets) have been implemented with a fourth due for implementation in 2020. These zones prohibit non-residential vehicles outside the school during drop-off and pick-up times.

The Air Quality team continue to work with Public Health colleagues on the 'SNAP' project, which not only looks at air quality but also includes health and well-being initiatives.

There is much activity around anti-idling at schools.

8.0 ADDITIONAL BOROUGH ACTIVITIES IMPROVING AIR QUALITY

8.1 All departments in the Council can and are taking steps to improve air quality in the borough, this includes creating a local environment which is attractive to cycling, walking and active lifestyles.

8.2 Car Clubs

There are currently 2 car club providers in the borough. Each uses a different operating model; Enterprise Cars run a traditional car club from dedicated on-street bays with about 200 Merton members and by far the largest is Zip Car Flex with around 70 flex cars operating in the borough on a daily basis plus a round 20 dedicated bays. Launched between April and June 2017 the Flex scheme now has over 7200 Merton members. This so-called floating car club model is proving popular with residents. A third car club Ubeequo is with a third expended to launch in April 2020. Based on independent survey data car clubs can:

a) **Reduce car ownership**

New members owning at least 1 private vehicle has decreased from 43% to 39% and for longer term members, this proportion decreased from 39% to 31%. **Reduce car purchases** - 41% of flexible members said they would have bought a new car had they not joined a car club, which equates to just under 12,000 deferred car purchases by flexible car club members. 53% also reported that they are not less likely to buy a private car in the next few years.

b) **Reduce older & diesel vehicles**

The average private car sold by flexible car club members is a seven year old petrol vehicle. Flex also reduced the number of trips made by diesel, with 42% of vehicles sold by flexible car club members being diesel.

c) **Reducing car usage**

The average change in annual household car mileage reported by longer-term members after joining was a decrease of 286 miles.

- 85% of members use another shared mobility service alongside their car club reflecting the growth in the shared economy.
- Both Flex and Roundtrip members change their behaviours similarly on joining with both reducing their private car use and slightly increasing walk and cycle trips.
- Flexible car club cars have a higher occupancy of 2.0 people, compared to 1.6 people for private vehicles.

d) **Catalysing Electric Vehicle Adoption**

49% of respondents have used an electric car club vehicle, of which 84% rated the experience as 'good' or 'very good'. This shows how car clubs are introducing Londoners to electric driving and working towards normalising electric vehicles by breaking down the barrier to entry that is fear of the unknown in electric driving.

Source - COMOUK annual car club survey.

8.3 Electric Vehicle Charging Points

There are currently 143 publicly accessible charge points (7kw) spread across the borough which equates to 0.73 chargers per 1000 residents. These charger are able to charge a typical electric vehicle in 3-4 hours. As part of the Go Ultra Low City Scheme (GULCS) Merton proposes to trial a number of lamp column chargers in 2020 aimed at overnight parking.

8.4 Transport for London

We are continuing to work in partnership with TfL on a number of joint initiatives aimed tackling traffic and transport with a view to prioritising active transport and creating an environment attractive to walking and cycling. In partnership with TfL we are supporting a network of 20 rapid chargers (50KW) across Merton which will be capable of charging a vehicle in 15- 30 minutes. TfL have already delivered 5 rapid chargers and a further 2 chargers are planned for St Georges Road and The Broadway, which are currently going through the statutory consultation process. These rapid chargers are mainly aimed at taxi and other high usage vehicles but can be used by any motorist.

8.5 Road Safety Education & Travel plans

Future Merton Road Safety Education Team provide a range of programmes and training for school children and the local community. Partnership working with schools, Met Police and Cycling Instructor provides events such as Changing Places for pedal cyclists and motorcyclists, advising on blind spots and road positioning. Other road safety training programmes are Kerbcraft, practical on road child pedestrian training modules for year 2 pupils, and Junior Travel Ambassadors and Youth Travel Ambassador projects which promote sustainable travel and healthier lifestyle choices. These are also part of the TfL Stars School Travel Plan Programme. Currently Merton has 33 schools engaged or achieving Stars Accreditation, of which 10 are Gold Level, 8 Silver Level, 11 Bronze Level and 3 are engaged and working toward accreditation. Air Quality is also of concern as it affects children's health i.e. asthma, lung infections and events have been provided in 2 schools to raise awareness of pollution and emissions on health and how to reduce levels by reducing car engine idling and car usage.

8.6 Bikeability

Cycle training is provided to school children and adults at beginner, improver and commuter levels. Balance Bike is valuable training for younger children who cannot cycle and we provide training bikes in socio-economic areas for school children. Scooter training is a popular pre-cursor to cycle training as it develops balance skills as progression to cycle training. Cycle training for adults increased by 6% in 2017 and numbers in the group training sessions at weekends have also increased.

8.7 School Safety

As well as supporting schools to develop their school travel plans we have an annual rolling programme to introduce road safety and access improvements outside schools. Interventions include localised 20mph speed limits; vertical deflections such as a speed table and buildouts; review of existing parking restrictions including school keep clear zigzag markings; school children alert lights; other school related road markings etc. Last year we made safety improvements outside nine schools. The Councils wider roll out of 20mph speed limits will help create a street environment where people feel safer to walk and cycle thereby supporting improved health outcomes for everyone.

8.8 Accessibility

As part of our annual accessibility programme we regularly respond to requests made from vulnerable road users. Last year we introduced safe crossing points such as central islands, zebra crossings and pedestrian phase at existing signals in seven locations across the borough. We have also introduced a number of footway widening schemes and pram ramps.

8.9 Cycle schemes

In partnership with the Mitcham Common Conservators, last year we introduced a much-needed shared space (pedestrians and cyclists) along Croydon Road and in recent months we completed a similar route along Beddington Lane. Through LIP3, the Council is intending to deliver new safer cycling routes.

8.10 **Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ)**

During last financial year we introduced 9 CPZs across the borough which included new zones and the extension of zones in Wimbledon Village, Raynes Park, Colliers Wood, Mitcham and Morden. Extending the CPZ's means that the borough can apply actions such as the diesel levy to more vehicles in the borough.

8.11 **Morden town centre**

Merton council is working in partnership with TfL to design and deliver public realm improvements with the Mayor's Healthy Streets agenda being a core priority. As part of our shared public realm with TfL in Morden, we are committed to relocating the bus stands at Morden station to drastically improve air quality and provide new public space.

8.12 **Greener Borough**

Merton is fortunate to have abundant green spaces and parks with a rich biodiversity and mix of trees, including along many of our streets. Trees can help to improve air quality and mitigate climate change and through screening helps to support a more appealing walking environment and improve physical and mental health. The Council will continue to seek ways to maintain and enhance our green infrastructure.

8.13 **Public Health**

A key theme for the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which is currently being refreshed to cover 2019-24 (led by the Health and Wellbeing Board), is **Healthy Place**. We want to focus on how we can create an environment that allows all Merton residents to flourish. This will include a vision to make walking and cycling easier and more accessible options in the borough.

8.14 **Healthy Streets Everyday**

This is cross London project led by the Cross River Partnership delivering pedestrian-priority healthy streets with a focus on car usage reduction through a range of initiatives such as Car Free Day / Clean Air Day / School Safety Zones (formerly referred to as School Streets).

9. **FUTURE STEPS AND PRIORITIES**

9.1 The AQAP is a 'live' document that brings together actions that the Council as a whole can and should be taking to tackle air pollution in the borough. It is subject to changes and challenges facing the boroughs need to tackle this public health concern.

9.2 The AQAP will run for the next 3 years and will focus on delivering the actions and reviewing these actions on a regular basis. It will incorporate changes in the air quality agenda and embrace new innovations and technologies.

9.3 The plans to introduce a new extended ULEZ in London although welcomed for tackling polluting vehicles needs to be assessed carefully, we need to ensure that the impact on our borough is positive and that action we take compliment or may even help expand the zone and its ambitions.

9.4 The governments new Clean Air Strategy 2019 suggests new powers for Local Authorities, whilst we warmly welcome greater powers to control air pollution in Merton, the resourcing required to implement and enforce any new legislation will need to be considered. Active discussions are currently underway throughout Councils to define what these powers will look like and how these could be used to address the air quality

agenda. We will continue to lobby for new laws and powers to support the new Environment Bill

9.5 The possibility of Heathrow expansion will impact upon a significant number of London boroughs. In Merton the direct impact of air pollution and noise is significantly less than other boroughs, however we need to ensure that we fully engage in the consultation process and ensure the best outcome for our borough for both air quality and noise. We will encourage residents to have their say on this important subject.

9.6 We intend to actively take those steps available to us as an authority to tackle air pollution rigorously. This will include reviewing and levying polluting activities where we can, reviewing policy and charging mechanisms to incentivise change. We will consider what new regulatory framework is available to us to tackle through traffic in the borough using Clean Air Zones and specifically in our focus areas and locations of poor air quality. Funding from the Local Implementation Plan from 2020 to consider the introduction of Clean Air Zones has been secured and will start with an initial scoping report in the Summer of 2020.

10. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

None for the purposes of this report.

11. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

None for the purposes of this report. The air quality action plan was subject to public consultation.

12. TIMETABLE

None for the purposes of this report. The progress of the Air Quality Action Plan is set out in this report

13. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

The profile of air quality has significantly increased over the recent years. Merton's pollution team have been very successful into tapping into funding streams to deliver projects and actions across the Regulatory Partnership and throughout London. That said, this project work and higher demand for actions from boroughs has a significant impact on Revenue staffing for the service. The resource implications of any additional statutory responsibilities will need to be carefully considered and budgeted for to ensure effective action to tackle air quality can be delivered.

14. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

None for the purposes of this report. Air quality management is a statutory duty for local authorities

15. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

None for the purposes of this report.

16. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None for the purposes of this report.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None for the purposes of this report.

**18. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED
WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

Air Quality Action Matrix February 2020

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