

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL AIR QUALITY FINAL PLAN - DECEMBER 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 New Forest District Council was issued with a Ministerial Direction as directed under the Environment Act 1995 requiring the submission to the Secretary of State of an Initial Plan by 31 March 2018 and an Air Quality Final Plan by 31 December 2018.
- 1.2 The Initial Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on 29 March 2018.
- 1.3 The Air Quality Final Plan advises a preferred option which details how compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive for nitrogen dioxide as an annual mean will be delivered in the New Forest in the shortest possible time.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Air pollution is a national public health priority and of all environmental factors, it has the largest impact on health in the UK. Being attributed to over 40,000 deaths nationally, it has health effects across the life course; from underdevelopment of the unborn baby through to dementia in the later years of life.
- 2.2 Nitrogen dioxide and particulates are the pollutants mostly associated with road transport. Public health data¹ advises approximately 100 deaths per year in the New Forest are attributable to long term exposure to particulate matter alone.
- 2.3 Southampton City Council was named as one of five cities in the Government's 2015 Air Quality Plan² required to deliver compliance in the shortest possible time and has been working since then to develop a suitable scheme.
- 2.4 In July 2017, the Government published the UK Plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations³. The Plan used national modelling to identify a further 23 local authorities, including New Forest District Council, who were in exceedance of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentration ($>40\mu\text{g m}^{-3}$) in relation to the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive.
- 2.4 The UK Plan required the identified local authorities to develop local plans to detail how compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive would be delivered in the shortest possible time.
- 2.5 The national model identified an exceedance in the New Forest on a short stretch (less than 1km) of the A35 at Totton up to the boundary with Southampton City Council on the Redbridge Causeway.

3. NEW FOREST BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The exceedance identified in the New Forest is viewed as an extension of the exceedance identified on the Western Approach into Southampton City. New Forest District Council and Southampton City Council have been working closely as part of an agreement through a Memorandum of Understanding, to develop plans to deliver nitrogen dioxide compliance in the shortest time possible in their own areas.
- 3.2 New Forest District Council is only responsible for ensuring compliance is met in its own area. Any implemented options to reduce nitrogen dioxide concentrations must not have a detrimental air quality impact on surrounding areas including neighbouring authorities.
- 3.3 Detailed and complex local air quality modelling has been undertaken to determine local nitrogen dioxide roadside concentrations around Totton; A35, A326 and A36. The local model predicts concentrations in subsequent years up to 2020 when compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive is expected.
- 3.4 The Final Plan has been developed in accordance with Government guidance and consultation with the Joint Air Quality Unit (a body comprising of the department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department of Transport). The Final Plan contains evidence of the work completed and conclusions reached.
- 3.5 New Forest District Council has engaged with stakeholders throughout the development of the Final Plan, including Hampshire County Council, Totton and Eling Town Council, Members, local businesses and residents.

4. KEY OUTCOMES

- 4.1 The local model determined:
- lower roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations in the model domain compared to the national model which originally identified the exceedance on the A35.
 - New Forest District Council will be compliant with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive for nitrogen dioxide by 2019 in a business as usual scenario.
 - the introduction of additional options will not bring forward compliance.
- 4.2 New Forest District Council's preferred option is to continue with a **business as usual scenario**.
- 4.3 New Forest District Council has identified additional work which will progress local air quality further including;
- Monitoring and evaluating nitrogen dioxide levels on the A35 in Totton to ensure compliance is met.
 - Developing working partnerships with interested stakeholders, other authorities including Southampton City Council and Hampshire County Council, local businesses and communities.
 - Forwarding schemes across the district with the aim to improve local air quality.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 New Forest District Council is under Ministerial Direction to deliver an Air Quality Final Plan to show how compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive for nitrogen dioxide will be met.
- 5.2 Detailed local modelling has determined that compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive will be met in 2019 in a business as usual scenario, and the introduction of additional measures will not bring forward compliance any earlier.
- 5.3 New Forest District Council's preferred option is a business as usual scenario.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications from adopting this Final Plan.

7. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are none.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Any implications are addressed in the Final Plan.

9. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are none.

10. ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL COMMENTS

- 10.1 The comments of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be reported orally at the meeting. The Panel met on 13 December 2018, after the publication of this report.

11. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS

- 11.1 For our environment and our health there are few things more important than the air we breathe. I see this report and the submission of the related Final Plan, not as the end point with the achievement of meeting compliance with the European Air Quality directive in the shortest time possible but as the beginning.

As stated in our Final Plan we will continue to work to maintain and improve air quality throughout the New Forest District and take the opportunity to work

with neighbouring authorities in relation to air quality for the benefit of our residents.

I wish to thank Rachel Higgins and Joanne McClay for their dedication and commitment throughout the last year to complete this report and associated Final Plan.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 That the Air Quality Final Plan for New Forest District Council (December 2018), as attached as Annex A and its supporting Appendices, is supported and commended to the Portfolio Holder for submission to the Secretary of State before 31 December 2018.

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Background papers:

The Final Plan (Attached)

References:

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/332854/PHE_CRCE_010.pdf

²<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-in-the-uk-plan-to-reduce-nitrogen-dioxide-emissions>

³<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2017>