



**ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE: 14 SEPTEMBER 2023**

AIR QUALITY AND HEALTH PARTNERSHIP – ACTION PLAN

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the progress made to date against actions within the Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2020-24 and to detail the initial proposals for the development of an Action Plan for 2024-28.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The Air Quality and Health Partnership and associated Action Plan was the product of a series of recommendations from the Air Quality and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Chapter (2019-21) The case for action, recommendations and approach were noted by the Scrutiny Commission in September 2020 and approved, along with the Action Plan for 2020-24, by the Cabinet at its meeting in October 2020.

Background

3. The Air Quality Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2019) provided a clear set of recommendations for appropriate action around air quality linked to health outcomes across Leicestershire. Following these recommendations, a Partnership was formed of key organisations who would work together to improve air quality in the county and reduce the impact of air pollution on human health and the environment, contributing to a reduction in health inequalities.
4. The Partnership consists of representatives from:
 - i. Leicestershire County Council departments of Public Health, Research and Insight, Communications and Environment and Transport;
 - ii. District Councils (with a statutory duty to monitor air quality) - Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Melton Borough Council and North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council; and
 - iii. Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB).
5. The Action Plan for 2020-24 underpins a set of priorities for collaborative action from the Partnership over a four-year period in areas such as decisions made by the County Council's Environment and Transport Department (including active and

sustainable travel), planning and development strategies and proposals, community engagement, information sharing and campaigns and health considerations.

6. As identified above, actions to address the health impacts of air pollution can link closely to other local priorities such as those around active travel, health inequalities, community engagement and empowerment, sustainability, regeneration and growth. The Action Plan gives a key opportunity for various partners to meet to discuss air quality within Leicestershire in the context of health impacts on the population, explore partnership opportunities and potential co-benefits on local priorities. Many areas link to the County Council's Strategic Plan and its strategic outcomes.

Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2020-24 – Achievements

7. The Action Plan for 2020-24 has progressed well between 2020-23, with a number of achievements. These are summarised below. A full summary of work completed to date is detailed in the Appendix, which details progress made at the three-year mark for the period of the plan.

Key theme from JSNA	Progress
Air quality considerations in planning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Planning Group (SPG) agreed technical report, template Strategic Health Policy for Local Plans and common HIA threshold approach throughout Leicestershire. • Health considerations input into Local Highway Design Guide development. • Public Health embedded within the County Council's planning response process including National Infrastructure Projects such as Hinckley rail hub interchange. • Health in All Policies Officer (HiAP) started in Public Health June 2022- focusing on embedding HiAP throughout the county and Health Impact Assessments on planning applications. Supported Partnership with evidence related to active travel in polluted areas and key messages required.
Air quality considerations in environment and transport decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling and Walking Strategy for Leicestershire developed supporting the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS). Initial work to match to health data to Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs). • Leicestershire County Council good practice work with planning officers and

	<p>Active Together supporting ongoing opportunities to 'design in' access to, and use of, green space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five businesses received one-to-one support to develop Modeshift travel plan and accreditation, with thirteen businesses receiving sustainable travel grants. Links have been made to the new Workplace Health Officer in Public Health scoping a new workplace health offer including the wider determinants such as air quality and active travel.
<p>General communications with the public and organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Clear Air Day' and 'Ask About Asthma' Campaigns held annually and aligned with the national themes with common messages across organisations • Report received from Earthsense with overview of pollutants, polluters, hotspot areas and recommendations around next steps for the Partnership's work. • Making Every Contact Count (MECC) resources updated with new videos, information and guidance around healthy conversations on air quality
<p>Targeted communication and campaigns with priority, groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Earthsense report has started to inform this with recommendations around messaging with different population groups. • 'Health in All Our Decisions' training programme designed by HiAP Officer to support County Council staff to consider health impacts when submitting decision making papers.
<p>Health considerations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project to overlay University Hospitals Leicester data with air quality maps and Air Quality Management Area locations and explore links to emergency admissions for children and young people (related to viral wheeze and asthma). Early work has started to address findings in Oadby and Wigston. • Early work to explore role of indoor air quality. The Air Quality Partnership is establishing evidence base, main priorities, working closely to reduce the impact of indoor air pollution and

	to explore creating a set process for all partners to address risk.
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Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2024-28.

8. The current Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan covers the period until 2024, so it is now timely to start planning the new action plan for 2024 onwards. The new Plan for 2024-28 will continue to guide the collaborative work of the Partnership. Rather than a simple refresh of actions for 2024, there is now the opportunity to update the Plan based on recommendations from a Health Needs Assessment. Since the JSNA in 2019 was undertaken, there have been a number of factors contributing to this area of work, some related to place and behaviour (for example, travel modes, distances and frequency post-pandemic), and also strategically with the findings of the Chief Medical Officer report (2022) on air pollution. This report provides a number of key recommendations including work with Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) on staff training and increased awareness around air quality, and joint work on communicating monitored and forecasted pollution to key population groups vulnerable to harm. It also begins to explore the growing evidence base around air pollution and increased dementia risk.
9. A new Health Needs Assessment will inform the actions within the Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2024-28 along with updated data on air quality. The Health Needs Assessment will fully explore current data and intelligence. This will be an opportunity to consider progress made against the 2019 document (Air Quality and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Chapter (2019-21) Updated recommendations will then be embedding into the new action plan.

Resource Implications

10. There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations within this report. The Partnership and action plan are ongoing pieces of work and partners are asked to support delivery of the action plan using existing resources.

Timetable for Decisions

11. An update on final progress made against the actions of the 2020-24 Action Plan, alongside the draft action plan for 2024-28 will be presented to the Committee in Summer 2024 for comment, prior to submission to the Cabinet for approval.

Recommendation

12. The Committee is asked to note the progress made against actions detailed in the Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2020-23 and the proposed approach to the development of a new Action Plan for 2024-28.

Background papers

Air Quality and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2019).

<https://www.lsr-online.org/uploads/jsna-air-quality-2019-v10-final.pdf?v=1561477116>

Report to Scrutiny Commission 2 September 2020 – Air Quality and Health Joint Action Plan <https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=6177&Ver=4>

Report to Cabinet 20 October 2020 - Air Quality and Health Joint Action Plan (2020-24)

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s157168/Air%20Quality%20and%20Health%20Joint%20Action%20Plan%202020-2024.pdf>

Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan (2020-24)

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s157169/Appendix%20A%20Air%20Quality%20and%20Health%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

Chief Medical Officers Annual Report 2022: Air Quality

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chief-medical-officers-annual-report-2022-air-pollution>

Equality Implications

13. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Rights Implications

14. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report

Other Relevant Impact Assessments

Health

15. The work of the Air Quality and Health Partnership and associated action plan give a unique opportunity for Partnership members to consider air quality within the context of potential health impacts and health inequality. A new action plan based on updated data will allow this partnership work and dialogue to continue.
16. Some groups within the population are disproportionately at risk from pollution. According to the Chief Medical Officers Report (2022) 'Air pollution does not affect everyone equally. There are disparities in air pollution including by age, socio-economic gradient and ethnicity. These disparities are both by air pollution exposure and by vulnerability – for example pregnant women, children and those with health conditions are more vulnerable to harm, even if their exposure is the same as other population groups'. A new plan for 2024 will explore this in more detail with the aim of reducing inequality. These groups include children, older adults and those with long-term health conditions.
17. Through work with District Councils who monitor air quality, joint work can be explored to communicate risk to these populations affected, change behaviours for those contributing to and impacted by poor air quality and identify what Partnership organisations can do to reduce potential impacts, particularly on the most vulnerable.

Appendix

Air Quality and Health Partnership Action Plan 2020-24 – Summary of Achievements to date.

Officer(s) to Contact

Mike Sandys
Director of Public Health
Mike.sandys@leics.gov.uk
0116 3054239

Jenna Parton
Public Health Portfolio Lead
Jenna.Parton@Leics.gov.uk
0116 3057392