

**Report of: Environmental Health Business Manager**

**To: EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2006**

**Item No:**

**Title of Report: Local Air Quality Management –  
Central Oxford Air Quality Action Plan**

### **Summary and Recommendations**

**Purpose of Report:** To agree the Air Quality Action Plan for the Central Oxford Air Quality Management Area.

**Key Decision:** Yes

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor John Tanner (Environment)

**Scrutiny Responsibility:** Environment Scrutiny

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report Approved by:**

The Environment Portfolio Holder)

The Environmental Health Business Manager

Legal and Democratic Services Business Manager: (Jeremy Franklin).

The Finance and Asset Management Business Manager: (Andy Collett).

**Policy Framework:** This work reflects the Council's Vision of improving performance and working with others to deliver shared goals. It specifically contributes to the strategic priority of improving the quality of the environments where people live and work and the Community Strategy theme of working to create a better living environment.

**Recommendation:**

The Executive Board is asked to RECOMMEND Council to adopt the Air Quality Action Plan for the Central Oxford Air Quality Management Area.

## **Introduction**

1. At its meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2005 the Executive Board approved the draft Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for the Central Oxford Air Quality Management Area. The Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was declared because assessments of air quality predicted that the national annual mean air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide of 40 microgrammes per cubic metre ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) was not likely to be met by the target date of December 2005. The objective is very challenging however it is not an absolute requirement that it be achieved by December 2005.
2. The main source of the pollution in the AQMA is from road traffic. Guidance from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) states that, where road traffic emissions are the largest single contributor to pollution in the AQMA, the AQAP should be integrated with the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The next LTP, setting out the five-year strategy (2006-2011) for the co-ordination and improvement of transport is currently being prepared by Oxfordshire County Council.

## **Air Quality Action Plan**

3. The AQAP, a requirement under The Environment Act 1995, puts forward a range of actions to improve air quality in the Central Oxford Air Quality Management Area. A copy of the AQAP has been circulated separately to members. A copy has been placed in the members' room and further copies are available on request.
4. At its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006 the Executive Board considered the response to the public consultation on the Draft Air Quality Action Plan and agreed a number of actions to improve air quality in the AQMA. After further (City - County) officer consultation these actions have been incorporated into the AQAP including details of who is responsible, and where possible the costs and dates for implementation for the actions.
5. The main action proposed is that a feasibility study should be carried out for the introduction of a Low Emission Zone (LEZ) for certain streets in the AQMA. This would ensure that only vehicles meeting minimum emission standards would be allowed to enter designated parts of the city centre.
6. Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council will jointly fund the cost of the LEZ feasibility study and the findings will be reported back to the Executive Board.

## **Recommendations**

The Council will need to adopt the AQAP at its meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2006. It will then be submitted to DEFRA for approval, and the Department for Transport as part of the final LTP. Any final amendments recommended by the Executive Board will be made before the AQAP is adopted by the Council and submitted to DEFRA.

7. The Executive Board is therefore recommended to agree the Air Quality Action Plan for the Central Oxford Air Quality Management Area.

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## **Glossary**

**AQAP:** Air Quality Action Plan.

**AQMA:** Air Quality Management Area.

**DEFRA:** Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

**LEZ:** Low Emission Zone

**LTP:** Local Transport Plan

**µg/m<sup>3</sup>:** microgrammes per cubic metre.