

## COMMUNITY PDG

20 NOVEMBER 2018

### Air Quality Action Plan update

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Margaret Squires and Cllr Colin Slade

**Responsible Officer:** Simon Newcombe, Group Manager for Public Health & Regulatory Services

**Reason for Report:** To provide a progress report on the Air Quality Action Plan

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the PDG notes the report.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** The Air Quality Action Plan aligns with and directly supports a number of key themes in the Corporate Plan as follows:

- *Priority 1 Economy: Aim (other) - Act as a champion to improve local rail services*
- *Priority 2 Homes: Aim 3 - Ensure consideration is given to the public health impact of every development*
- *Priority 4 Environment: Aim 2 – Reduce our carbon footprint; Aim 3- Protect the natural environment*
- *The district Public Health Plan is a priority project within the Corporate Plan and air quality is a priority health inequality identified with the adopted plan*

**Financial Implications:** The plan encompasses measures ranging from small-scale initiatives through to major infrastructure projects such as the Cullompton Town Centre relief road. As such, the plan will be delivered through a variety of different mechanisms including the Local Plan Review and planning obligations such as s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in addition to Government infrastructure funds and the Devon County Local Transport Plan (LTP 3). There may also be opportunities to bid for future Air Quality Grant funding nationally though this is not certain.

As measures are formalised then these will be further assessed and provisional implementation costs identified where these costs are not already known. Major infrastructure proposals for example will be included in the Local Plan Review Infrastructure Plan and will outline estimated costs.

Overall, greater clarity on funding for specific measures and the plan overall will emerge once the timeline for the Local Plan Review examination and adoption is known, and from further consultation with Devon County Council (DCC) in respect of the emerging LTP3.

**Legal Implications:** The adoption and implementation of an Air Quality Action Plan (where an authority has designated one or more Air Quality Management Areas) is a statutory requirement under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 for Local Air Quality Management (known as the LAQM regime). Under the regime, Local Authorities (LA's) therefore have a duty to pursue measures which are designed to improve air quality. The thresholds for air pollution are set out in statutory UK Air Quality Objectives which in turn duplicate EU limit values and binding air quality standards.

Nationally, the UK is currently subject to EU infringement proceedings due to non-compliance with EU air quality standards (evidenced locally in the two formal Air Quality Management Areas in the district). Given that EU requirements are enshrined into UK law means that the Localism Act 2011 allows the Government (DEFRA) to recharge LA's with the cost of meeting these standards if it chooses to do so.

The remodelled statutory Government guidance to the LAQM regime places greater emphasis on delivery of effective intervention mechanisms to improve existing hot-spots and the need to mitigate for the effects of new development and any new public exposure to poor air quality.

**Risk Assessment:** In addition to meeting our statutory duties and the risk of financial penalties under the Localism Act 2011 if we fail to do so (see above), a failure to make improvements to air quality would be directly contrary to our adopted Public Health plan. Therefore, we would not address a priority health target locally. Furthermore, the successful implementation of an Air Quality Action Plan underpinning relevant Local Plan policies is essential to mitigate against the impact of significant new development district-wide and to deliver the wider community infrastructure benefits.

Given the inherent requirement to have planning obligation measures in place in order to deliver major parts of the plan then the successful implementation of the Air Quality Action Plan should be considered against the risks of an extended timeline for the Local Plan Review and the potential risk that the Local Plan is not found sound.

Air quality has an increasingly high profile in terms of both local and national policy in addition to wider reporting of the issue across regional and national media. In turn this is generating public awareness beyond local communities within our specific AQMA areas.

A failure to implement and deliver an effective Action Plan should also be viewed in this context in addition to our core statutory responsibilities.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** No equality issues identified in this report.

## 1.0 Air Quality Action Plan Measures

1.1 There are twenty-one measures identified in the Air Quality Action Plan (see attached Annex 1). The table provides an overview of what progress has been made since November 2017 (adoption of the plan). The measures range from small-scale projects such as car clubs, to large infrastructure projects such as the Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road.

1.2 Planning obligation (s106) funding is a key mechanism in delivering many of the measures. There is ongoing dialogue between the s106 Monitoring officer and Public Health in relation to identifying new air quality projects and the release of funds for projects already earmarked.

1.3 A more detailed overview is provided below in relation to key major projects being progressed in both the Crediton and Cullompton Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's).

## 2.0 Crediton Feasibility Study scope and links to the Air Quality Action Plan

2.1 Early this year Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) worked with Crediton Town Council to provide s106 funding for a **Town Centre Traffic & Urban Realm Feasibility Study**. The study fully analysed the current traffic and urban realm conditions within the town centre and fringe area and presented a vision for the High Street which is based on clear aims and outcomes. In total £18K of s106 funding was provided to support the study.

2.2 The study area included a focus on the remaining areas of non-compliance with the statutory air quality objective for nitrogen dioxide at the High Street within the formal AQMA for the town. The AQMA Air Quality Action Plan specifically identified the need for a joined-up approach to parking, traffic management, impact of heavy goods vehicles and congestion in Crediton town centre (see plan measures 8 and 10).

2.3 Through a process of strategy and street engineering the study was to present a series of conceptual designs for various parts of the High Street and its approaches. This sets out the use of fresh thinking and 'informal street' design to

form a part of the design solutions. Public Health and Regulatory Services ensured that air quality constraints and potential solutions to the on-going traffic related problem within the town-centre were embed into the study scope and outputs. The study would look at innovative design approaches to mitigate the adverse effects of air pollution, including consideration of the wider impact of the eastern and western gateway approaches to the High Street.

2.4 The study, conducted by Phil Jones Associates, identified twelve aims, many which also support the broader aims of the Air Quality Action Plan such as reducing traffic speed, improving walkability and cycle access.

2.5 A draft report was completed in September 2018 and presented to key stakeholders for further feedback; Crediton Town Council, Devon County Council (Highways/Planning), Neighbourhood Planning representatives and other Mid Devon District Council officers. Further wider stakeholder consultations are planned to occur in October 2018 prior to public consultation.

### 3.0 **Crediton Feasibility Study outcomes and next steps**

3.1 The draft study has identified a number of key project areas which will improve the look of the streetscape, improve pedestrian access and safety, reduce traffic speed (but improve steady flow), and provide better options for parking and trade. Dependent upon funding there are a number of projects that could be advanced either independently or together. These can be summarised as follows:

- Western Gateway/St Laurence Green – arguably the most difficult project involving significant traffic signal, road surfacing (a new ‘roundel’ and speed reduction measures), bus stopping and pedestrian crossing points changes.
- Town Core – the study had divided this area into 3 parts, St Saviour’s Way/Searle St, Searle St/North St, and North St/Union Terrace. Design interventions include a courtesy pedestrian crossing, reconfigured bus stop with 2 vehicle passing, central median strip near Boots, footway extensions, tree planting, textured surface treatment to signal approach to High Street, rain gardens to mitigate flooding.
- Haywards/Holly Cross Church – this is also divided into potentially separate projects. A large primary school, church, art centre and

community centre are located here. This area has a lot of potential for series of 'place-making' schemes to highlight its civic nature.

- 3.2 Public Health and Regulatory Services have further requested that Phil Jones and Associates carry out detailed costings of the proposed measures and schemes identified in the feasibility study. Technical air quality modelling of the proposed measures will also be required to ensure the anticipated positive impacts will be delivered. Subject to confirmation, this work can be funded using additional existing pooled s106 air quality monies.
- 3.3 Following a final report the aim is to confirm distinct projects in consultation with the Town Council, local Members, Devon County Council, the Neighbourhood Plan representatives and our own planning team. The aim is to prioritise these projects against overall impact/deliverability using existing pooled s106 funding or as projects for future allocation from new development.

#### 4.0 **Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road**

- 4.1 The current phase for this project is a joint MDDC and DCC public consultation over potential route options. The delivery of a new relief road is considered an important highway intervention to not only bring forward sustainable growth in the Cullompton area, but also address environmental concerns within the town centre in connection with congestion, poor air quality and resultant impact upon townscape attractiveness and public health.
- 4.2 The consultation is due to close on the 25 October 2018 and there has been a welcome response rate and a number of well attended exhibitions in Cullompton and Kentisbeare. More information is currently available [<here>](#).
- 4.3 The Council anticipates that the majority of the cost of the road would be funded by the Housing Delivery Fund . This funding is subject to an on-going due diligence process with Homes England over the Council's bid submission.
- 4.4 The relief road also forms part of more extensive infrastructure necessary to deliver the growth planned within the Cullompton area in the longer term and would unlock the first phase of the proposed garden village to the east.

#### 5.0 **Culm Valley Garden Village**

- 5.1 To ensure the Culm Valley Garden Village project delivers its ambitions, it is anticipated that a number of Working Groups will need to be set up, and will

consider a range of issues including sport and recreation, health and wellbeing, self/custom build and modern construction techniques, developing a “Smart” Garden -Village with employment and innovative delivery mechanisms.

5.2 Public Health and Regulatory Services officers and Devon County Council Public Health officers are engaged in the process predominantly around health and well-being, including air quality considerations.

## 6.0 Recommendation

6.1 That the report is noted.

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### **Circulation of the Report:**

Cabinet Members with responsibility for Public Health (Cllr Margaret Squires) and Community Well-being (Cllr Colin Slade)  
Members of the Community Policy Development Group  
Leadership Team  
Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration  
Group Manager for Financial Services  
Group Manager for Performance, Governance and Data Security  
Audit  
Legal  
Crediton Town Council

### **List of Background Papers:**

Crediton Traffic and Urban Realm Feasibility Study (PJ Associates September 2018 draft)

## Annex 1 – Table of Air Quality Action Plan measures with progress (up to October 2018)

Measure		EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Progress to Date
1	Community Car sharing schemes	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Car and lift sharing schemes	MDDC	s106 contribution allocated under Air Quality Pending release of funds To be considered for Garden Village
2	Community run and/or private E-bikes schemes	Alternatives to private vehicle use	Other	MDDC in partnership with Town Councils and Communities	s106 contribution allocated under Air Quality Pending release of funds To be considered for Garden Village
3	Secure cycle parking facilities in Town Centres and at key transport hubs	Promoting Travel Alternatives	Promotion of cycling	MDDC Rail Network DCC	s106 contribution allocated under Air Quality Pending release of funds To be considered for Garden Village
4	Marketing campaign to reduce high street parking/promote car parks/raise awareness	Public Information	Leaflets, social media, internet, street posters	MDDC, DCC and Town Councils	s106 contribution allocated under Air Quality Pending release of funds To work alongside implementation of projects taken forward in the Crediton Feasibility study
5	Develop EV charging network	Promoting Low Emission Transport	Alternative refuelling infrastructure	MDDC	2 EV charging units installed at each Leisure centre across the district Further units to be installed pending release of s106 funds – a number of Council owned parking areas are suitable for further installations Included in Local Plan strategic developments
6	Taxi Licensing conditions	Promoting Low Emission Transport	Low emission policy	MDDC	Existing EURO engine standard emission/vehicle age requirements remain in place. Licensing policy is under review and will include provision of any enhancements

Measure		EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Progress to Date
7	Eastern Relief Road Cullompton and additional M5 junction	Traffic Management	Strategic highway improvements	MDDC DCC Highways	Successful Homes Infrastructure fund bid (£10M for Junction 28 improvements) subject to due diligence  Current negotiations with Homes England re: reallocation of funds from J28 to Town Centre Relief Road  Route Options Report published August 2018  Public Consultation September – October 2018
8	Coordinated approach to enforcement of anti-idling, illegal parking	Traffic management	Anti-idling enforcement and illegal parking	MDDC DCC	Crediton Feasibility Study commissioned by Town Council and supported by MDDC - draft produced September 2018. Includes traffic calming measures through re-design of streetscape, pedestrian route improvements including key High Street crossings points.
9	Kings Mill Industrial site traffic management Cullompton Junction 28	Traffic management	Congestion management	MDDC DCC Highways	See Measure 7  Minor work on the junction has occurred and reports are positive for major transport company's access to motorway. This has resulted in reducing traffic backing up to enter motorway.
10	Parking and traffic flow measures	Traffic management	Congestion management	MDDC DCC	Crediton Feasibility Study commissioned by Town Council and supported by MDDC - draft produced September 2018. Includes traffic calming measures through re-design of streetscape, pedestrian route improvements including key High Street crossings points.
11	Cullompton/ Wellington Rail link feasibility study	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Public transport improvements- interchanges stations and services	MDDC and Taunton Deane	MDDC are working with partners to develop a strategic outline business case.
12	ECO Stars fleet management and recognition scheme	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Vehicle efficiency	MDDC	As of October 2018 there were 64 members in the scheme (16 local) covering a total of 2,809 vehicles.

Measure		EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Progress to Date
13	Bus stop infrastructure	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Public transport improvements- interchanges stations and services	MDDC DCC	Early planning is considering a new bus interchange linking with a new railway station. Potential to move Falcon bus stop and incorporate into the Cullompton Relief Road Route.
14	Review of bus stop locations and routes	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Public transport improvements- interchanges stations and services	MDDC DCC	Improved bus set down/pick up points are outlined in the Crediton Feasibility study which will impact upon traffic flow (buses holding up general traffic).
15	Improving footpath and cycling paths In major towns	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Cycle and walking network	Town Councils MDDC DCC	Crediton Feasibility Study commissioned by Town Council and supported by MDDC - draft produced September 2018. Includes detailed designs on walkability and access for people with disabilities in the High Street.
16	Road surfacing	Transport Planning and Infrastructure	Consideration given to lower polluting road surfacing within AQMA areas as opportunities arise	DCC	A range of road surfaces have been put forward in the Crediton Feasibility study which will slow traffic and reduce pollutants.
17	Mid Devon Local Plan	Policy guidance and development control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	MDDC	Supplementary Planning Document on Air Quality and Development adopted May 2008 COR14 (Cullompton) Promote the removal of through traffic by completing a relief road system and implementing air quality action plan initiatives; COR15 (Crediton) Promote a reduction of traffic on congested streets and improve local air quality by enhancing walking and cycling opportunities around the town, implementing air quality action plan initiatives, promoting improved public transport links and providing a link road between the A377 and Lords Meadow Industrial Area.

Measure		EU Category	EU Classification	Lead Authority	Progress to Date
18	Culm Valley Garden Village development and major infrastructure projects	Policy guidance and development control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	MDDC DCC Highways	Public Health Devon and MDDC Public Health and Regulatory Services are stakeholders in the consultation and are strongly lobbying for measures that will mitigate air pollution such as good walk and cycle routes, electric vehicle infrastructure, good public transport connections to Cullompton/Exeter, open spaces and tree planting.  Several key public health/planning documents have been forwarded to the Culm Valley Garden Village Project team.
19	Planning Policy DM8 Parking	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Other Policy	MDDC	Subject to on-going Local Plan inspection process
20	Planning Policy DM6 Transport and Air Quality	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Other Policy	MDDC	Subject to on-going Local Plan inspection process
21	Planning Conditions on Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension	Policy Guidance and Development Control	Air Quality Planning and Policy Guidance	MDDC	Update requested from Area Planning officer