

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCRUTINY PANEL 4 - EMISSIONS STRATEGY (ACTION PLAN)

Monday, 10 October 2016

PRESENT: Councillor Sam Shaw (Chair); Councillor Gareth Eales (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Aziz, Julie Davenport, Terrie Eales and Brian Sargeant

OFFICERS Ruth Austen, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager
Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

MEMBERS

OF THE PUBLIC Graham Croucher, Saint James' Residents' Association
Steve Miller, Northants Green Party
Tony Clarke, Northants Green Party

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

The Chair welcomed all to the inaugural meeting of Scrutiny Panel 4 – Emissions Strategy (Action Plan.)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

3. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESS

Mr Graham Croucher, Saint James' Residents' Association, addressed the Scrutiny Panel commenting on the effect on health that poor air quality has. He gave the Scrutiny Panel details of mortality rates and the link to air deprivation. He referred to the proposed gasification plant for the St James' area. Mr Croucher added that other partners also have a key role in air quality and Local Authority vehicles and taxis should be low emissions. There should be alternatives available that take traffic off the roads.

Mr Steve Miller, Secretary, Northants Green Party, and a resident of Kingsthorpe, addressed the Scrutiny Panel commenting that the Northants Green Party had measured air quality over the last six months. He went on to refer to the Borough Council's Low Emissions Strategy, particularly the two actions to reduce the number of pollutant vehicles on the road and for there to be "cleaner" vehicles by 2020. Mr Miller referred to Leicester that had allocated bus lanes; Rushcliffe's cycling policy and Mansfield's work with the Health Authority. This was something that should be investigated in Northampton. The Strategy does not refer to traffic reduction.

Mr Tony Clarke Northants Green Party, addressed the Scrutiny Panel commenting that 1:20 deaths in Northampton are attributed poor air quality. This is around 300 deaths a year. Poor air quality is an invisible killer. Mr Clarke felt that there needed to be wider consultation on the Strategy and should include schools and businesses. He expressed concern that the Cabinet Member had incorrectly referred to pollutant gases and the legal emissions limit. Mr Clarke concluded his address by referring to the six published air quality management plans advising that there are more than six such plans.

The Chair thanked Mr Croucher, Mr Miller and Mr Clarke for their addresses. He invited them to attend future meetings to provide information.

4. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The Scrutiny Panel scoped its Review – Emissions Strategy (Action Plan), as attached at Appendix A.

The scope was approved and would be presented to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 November 2016 for approval.

The meeting concluded at 6:25 pm



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BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

SCRUTINY PANEL 4 – EMISSIONS STRATEGY (ACTION PLAN)

1. Purpose/Objectives of the Review

- To provide Scrutiny input into the Action Plan for the Council's Emissions Strategy

Key lines of Inquiry:

To increase Councillor and public understanding of air quality issues in Northampton

To understand the causes and impact of air pollution

To understand the actions being taken to reduce air pollution in Northampton

To understand the actions being taken by partners to reduce air pollution in Northampton

To provide recommendations for the production of the Action Plan for the Council's Emissions Strategy, which will identify ways of improving air quality in Northampton

Examine all current air quality management areas to ensure they are performing. To see if they can be improved and consider all other factors and future factors in moving forward

2. Outcomes Required

- To make informed recommendations regarding the production of the Action Plan for the Council's Emissions Strategy

3. Information Required

Background data, including:

- Presentation to set the scene: "Overview of air quality in Northampton"

- Relevant national, other background research papers and relevant Legislation
- Relevant data:
 - Hotspots and trends
 - Draft Low Emissions Strategy 2016/17
 - Statistical data, including national comparison
- Best practice and successful initiatives in both Northampton and elsewhere
- Case studies
- Witness evidence:

Internal

- Cabinet Member for Environment, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
- Head of Planning (Planning Policy), NBC
- Senior Environmental Health Officer, NBC

External

- Consultant, Low Emissions Strategies Ltd
- Director of Public Health, Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)
- Residents' Groups
- Northamptonshire Green Party
- Highways/Transport choices, NCC
- Carbon Management Team, NCC
- Electric Corby
- Stage Coach/Uno
- Freight Transport Association

4. Format of Information

- Background data
- Background reports and presentation
- Best practice data
- Desktop research
- Evidence from expert external witnesses
- Evidence from expert internal witnesses

5. Methods Used to Gather Information

- Minutes of meetings
- Desktop research
- Officer reports
- Statistical data
- Presentations
- Examples of best practice
- Witness Evidence:-
 - Key witnesses as detailed in section 3 of this scope

6. Co-Options to the Review

Representatives from two Residents' Associations in Air Quality Management areas to be approached to be co-opted to this Review

7 Considerations for Community Impact, such as health, equalities and human rights

This Scrutiny Review will gather evidence with the aim of providing Scrutiny input into the Action Plan for the Emissions Strategy. It will seek to put forward informed recommendations to all relevant parties on methods to deal with anti-social behaviour on the town.

The Scrutiny Panel, in having regard to the general equality duty, will be mindful of the protected characteristics when undertaking this scrutiny activity; so that any recommendations that it made could identify disproportionate and unintended potential positive and negative impacts on any particular sector of the community, including any potential mitigation required. This will be borne in mind as the Scrutiny Panel progresses with the review and evidence is gathered.

In order that the Scrutiny Panel obtains a wide range of views, a number of key witnesses will provide evidence as detailed in section 3 of this report.

Any recommendations regarding the Action Plan for the Emissions Strategy will consider impact and potential mitigation as appropriate and relevant across all protected characteristics. Impact assessments will be integral to any reports including actions plans.

8 Evidence gathering Timetable

Meetings to commence at 6.00 pm

October 2016 – April 2017

10 October 2016	Scoping meeting
5 December	Evidence gathering
9 February 2017	Evidence gathering
9 March	Evidence gathering
27 April	Approve final report

Various site visits will be programmed during this period, if required.

9. Responsible Officers

Lead Officer	Ruth Austen, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager
Co-ordinator	Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

10. Resources and Budgets

Ruth Austen, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, to provide internal advice.

11. Final report presented by:

Completed by April 2017. Presented by the Chair of the Panel to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then to Cabinet.

12. Monitoring procedure:

Review the impact of the report after approximately six months (February 2018)