

Air Quality in Southampton Terms of Reference and Inquiry Plan

1. Scrutiny Panel membership:

Panel membership TBC

2. Purpose:

To develop understanding of the issue of air quality in Southampton and to identify what additional steps can be taken, if necessary, to improve it.

3. Background:

- In May 2014 the World Health Organisation (WHO) released a report, which named Southampton as one of the worst cities in the UK to be breaching air pollution safety guidelines (specifically for PM 10 – particulate matter).
- The main cause of air pollution in the UK is emissions from motor vehicles. In Southampton additional sources of air pollution include industrial emissions, shipping emissions as well as airflow from the continent.
- Local authorities have an important part to play in helping to improve air quality. This includes coordinating local assessment and action; taking air quality into account when undertaking transport functions, ensuring the planning system is deployed to limit deterioration of air quality (or exposure) and where possible to improve air quality and promote the public health benefits of good air quality.
- Provisions in the Localism Act allow the Government to pass down fines from the EU to a local level. Defra has indicated that it intends to do this if Air Pollution targets are not met. In addition Public Health England (PHE) is now urging local authorities to do more to protect people from harmful air pollution.

4. Objectives:

- a. To increase understanding of air quality issues within Southampton
- b. To examine the causes and impacts of air pollution
- c. To understand the actions being taken to reduce air pollution in Southampton
- d. Learning from best practice, to identify ways of improving air quality in the city now and for future generations.

5. Methodology:

- a. Undertake desktop research
- b. Seek stakeholder views, including through use of social media
- c. Identify best practice

6. Proposed Timetable:

Six meetings July/August 2014 – December 2014/January 2015

7. Inquiry Plan (subject to the availability of speakers)

Meeting 1: Date TBC

- Introduction, context and background – Overview of air quality in Southampton and national comparison.

To be invited:

- Lead Cabinet Member
- Independent expert
- Environmental Health

Meeting 2: Date TBC

- To examine the impact of poor air quality.
 - Public Health
 - Residents perspective

To be invited:

- Public Health
- Residents Groups, including Western Docks Consultative Forum

Meetings 3 & 4: Dates TBC

- To identify the causes of air pollution in Southampton, the areas worst affected, and the actions that are being taken, or are planned to address air quality in Southampton.

To be invited:

- Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH)
- ABP
- DP World
- Bus Companies
- Meechers Global Logistics (Sustainable Distribution Centre)
- Council Officers from Transport, Environmental Health, Sustainability, Planning, Licensing

Meeting 5: Date TBC

- To identify best practice

To be invited:

- Defra
- SusTrans
- Other local authorities

Meeting 6: Date TBC

- To approve the final report of the inquiry and recommendations