

HEALTH, SCHOOLS AND CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING Wednesday, 13th March 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Dutton (in the chair); Councillors Biant, Dale, Gartside, Hartley, Hornby, Susan Smith and Sullivan.

OFFICERS: M. Widdup (Director of Neighbourhoods), W. Meston (Public Health Directorate), N. Rogers (Head of Public Protection – Neighbourhoods Directorate) and P. Thompson (Resources Directorate)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: one member of the public

APOLOGIES

112 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brosnan, Davidson and McCarthy.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

113 There were no declarations of interests.

GREATER MANCHESTER'S CLEAN AIR PLAN - TACKLING NITROGEN DIOXIDE EXCEEDANCES AT THE ROADSIDE - OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE

114 The Committee scrutinised a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which summarised the key features of Greater Manchester's feasibility study and its Outline Business Case to reduce nitrogen dioxide exceedances in both the Rochdale Borough and across Greater Manchester in the shortest possible time. The Outline Business Case had been developed by Rochdale Borough Council collectively with all of the Greater Manchester local authorities and also with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and co-ordinated by Transport for Greater Manchester in line with Government direction and guidance.

The Committee was advised that taking action on air quality was not optional. The severe and long lasting health implications of poor air quality as well as the legal obligations placed on Greater Manchester local authorities meant that authorities needed to act decisively and quickly to reduce harmful air pollutants, and nitrogen oxides in particular. Greater Manchester authorities in deciding to work together to respond to this vital issue were demonstrating collective leadership, which would be essential in helping to clean the air for the combined population of nearly three million residents. Analysis revealed that locations of damaging roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations could be found in every district.

It was noted that poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to the public's health. Therefore taking action to improve air quality is crucial to improve population health. It was further noted that air quality, generally, is improving, particular pollutants remain a serious concern in many urban

areas. These are oxides of nitrogen and its harmful form nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter.

Across Greater Manchester road transport is responsible for approximately 80% of nitrogen dioxide concentrations at roadside, of which diesel vehicles are the largest source. Long-term exposure to elevated levels of particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide may contribute to the development of cardiovascular or respiratory disease, and may reduce life expectancy. The youngest, the oldest, those living in areas of deprivation, and those with existing respiratory or cardiovascular disease are most likely to develop symptoms due to exposure to air pollution.

In considering the report Members sought clarification on the following:

- a. Consultations with those most likely to be affected by the proposals such as the Borough's licensed private hire and hackney carriage trades. The Director of Neighbourhoods reported that consultative meetings with the taxi/private hire trades regarding the proposals and the main issue raised related to concerns that vehicle owners would be unable to meet the required deadlines for vehicle emissions. The 'trade' had also requested that the deadlines be put back, by 12 months. However this was not possible as these deadlines had been established by the government.
- b. The status of private hire and hackney carriage vehicles that are operate in the Rochdale Borough but which re licensed by other local authorities.
- c. The effectiveness of the computer software that would be used, in terms of its ability to differentiate between different types of vehicles
- d. Measures being taken by authorities to encourage the use of electric vehicle and the possibility of planning regulations be used to encourage developers to install charging portals at new build developments to further encourage the use of such vehicles
- e. Whether the Council's Communications Team will be utilised to put across the positive benefits that the measures detailed in the report will yield.
- f. The impact, if any, of Brexit.
- g. Whether Highways England are supportive of the proposals.

The Committee was advised that the report would be submitted to the cabinet, at its meeting on 18th March 201, prior to consideration by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

The Director of Neighbourhoods undertook to present a report at a future meeting of the Committee updating members of developments in this regard.

Resolved:

1. That the Committee supports the proposals detailed in the report and recommends that the Cabinet, at its meeting on 18th March 2019 concurs.
2. The Director of Neighbourhoods be requested to present a report at a future meeting of the Committee updating Members of developments.

