

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 15th July 2019
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WARD(S): All
PORTFOLIO: Cllr Robert Anderson – Lead Member for Transport and
Environmental Services

PART I **NON-KEY DECISION**

CHARTER FOR CLEANER AIR

1 Purpose of Report

To advise the cabinet to sign up to Oxford City Council Charter for Cleaner Air to support the call for the UK Government to do more to improve poor air quality and put the health of our communities first.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve to sign up to the Oxford City Council Charter for Cleaner Air and agree a press release announcing the sign up to the Charter.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

A new charter for cleaner air has been launched by Oxford City Council, Greenpeace UK, and Friends of the Earth, calling on the Government to place the health of communities first. We all have a right to breathe clean air. However, across the UK and here in Slough harmful levels of air pollution are damaging people's health and their quality of life and cutting lives short.

The charter for cleaner air supports three key priorities within the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy:

- protecting vulnerable children
- increasing life expectancy by focussing on inequalities
- improving mental health and wellbeing

Work carried out by Public Health England as part of the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) shows that the fraction of mortality associated with particulate air pollution in 2017 within Slough Borough Council is 6.4% which is above the regional average of 5.6%. Slough also has five Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) that covers more than 2000 residential properties, relating to the exposure of high levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) where the annual mean concentrations are above

(40µg/m³) and can increase the likelihood of respiratory problems, inflaming the lining of the lungs, and reducing immunity to lung infections.

3b **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The Charter reinforces our commitments to providing better public transport, improving active travel and the promotion of a shift towards sustainable transport modes and an acceleration of zero emission vehicles by calling on the Government to revise the tax regime and provide fiscal incentives to help people adopt cleaner vehicles, as well as end the sale of all new petrol and diesel cars and vans earlier than 2040 and provide greater investment in public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure.

The charter supports our Five-Year Plan Outcomes in particular:

Outcome 2 – Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs

The Charter calls on the UK Government to put the health of our communities first, by tightening the legal limits on air pollution to match safer WHO guideline levels and launching a national public health campaign and alert system to highlight the dangers of air pollution. This supports our approach to working with public and voluntary sectors targeting health inequalities by focusing on the wider determinants of health, including air quality.

Outcome 3 – Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.

The Charter calls on the UK Government to accelerate the zero emission revolution by investing in charging infrastructure and the supporting power network, ending the sale of all new petrol and diesel cars and vans earlier than 2040, and ensuring fossil fuels do not generate power used to fuel electrified vehicles. This supports our Low Emission Strategy and using innovative solutions to improve air quality in the borough.

Outcome 5 – Slough will attract, retain, and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

The Charter calls on the UK Government to provide greater investment in public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure to give people real alternatives from using the car. This supports our longer term ambitions to encourage modal shift to sustainable forms of transport – including walking, cycling and public transport which in turn reduces traffic congestion and emissions.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

This is a charter that calls on the UK Government to put the health of our communities first and provide local authorities with more money and powers to achieve cleaner air. There are no financial implications with supporting this Charter.

(b) Risk Management

During the construction phase of the expanded Heathrow airport there maybe the potential for further action and mitigation required to keep construction traffic emissions within EU Air Quality limits.

The Table below must be completed fully for each recommendation from Section 2

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats / Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
The Cabinet is requested to resolve to sign up to the Oxford City Council Charter for Cleaner Air and agreeing a press release announcing the sign up to the Charter.	<p>During the construction of expanded airport, construction vehicles emissions are likely to be higher and more work maybe required to ensure the emissions are kept within EU limits.</p> <p>There is a risk that the expansion may lead to an increase in emissions during the (construction phase) in the local area.</p>	The airport expansion must comply with the Airports National Policy Statement which requires that the construction and operation of the Northwest runway will not affect the UK's compliance with air quality limit values, that air quality considerations are likely to be particularly relevant where the proposed scheme is within or adjacent to an AQMA, that any likely significant air quality effects of the scheme, must be mitigated. This could include construction traffic management plan and the use of low emission construction plant and fleet, use of consolidation sites, active workforce transport scheme, construction site connection to grid as well as other measures.	8	Work with Heathrow to adopt CAZ compliant emission standards for HGVs, Buses and Coaches, support the implementation of a CAZ in Brands Hill, consider alternative access arrangements to avoid HGV movements through the Brands Hill AQMA.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

- i) There are no Human Rights Act implications as a result of this report.

- ii) There is a legal requirement to pursue, achieve and maintain air quality standards. The European Union Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EC sets out the obligations for Member States in terms of assessing ambient air quality and ensuring Limit Values (LV) for certain pollutants are not exceeded. The requirements of the Directive have been transposed into domestic law through the Environment Act 1995 and subordinate regulations. While the Government has a duty to meet EU Limit Values, local authorities have a duty to pursue the achievement of National Air Quality Objectives.
- iii) The European Union has commenced infraction proceedings against the Government for failing to meet the EU Limit Value for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). The reserve powers of the Localism Act 2011 allow the Government to pass on any EU fines imposed to any public organisation “whose act or omission” has contributed to the breach of any EU Limit Values.
- (d) Equalities Impact Assessment
There is no need to prepare an equalities impact assessment for this report
- (f) Carbon Emissions and Energy Costs (Please delete if no Carbon and Energy cost implications)
The charter calls on the UK Government to support measures that would also result in a reduction in transport carbon emissions.

5 **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 Air pollution is now recognised as the UK’s largest environmental risk to public health, contributing to heart and respiratory diseases, and lung cancer. Everyone has a right to breathe clean air, especially the poorest and most vulnerable whose health disproportionately bears the harms of air pollution.
- 5.2 Oxford City Council Councillor and Executive Board member for Safer and Greener Environment has approached the Leader for Slough Borough Council to see if Slough wants to sign up to Oxford City Council Charter for Cleaner Air.
- 5.2 The Oxford City Charter for cleaner air calls on the UK Government to:
 1. Show national leadership in removing the most polluting vehicles from the most polluted parts of our towns and cities to protect people’s health.
 2. Provide greater investment in public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure to give people real alternatives.
 3. End the sale of all new petrol and diesel cars and vans earlier than 2040.
 4. Revise the tax regime and provide fiscal incentives to help people and businesses adopt cleaner vehicles.
 5. Accelerate the zero emission revolution by investing in charging infrastructure and the supporting power network.
 6. Ensure fossil fuels do not generate the power used to fuel electrified vehicles.

7.Tighten legal limits on air pollution to match safer WHO guideline levels.

8.Improve the national monitoring and modelling of air pollution to show the true extent of the problem.

9.Adopt a new Clean Air Act or equivalent fit for the 21st Century backed by an independent watchdog with teeth.

10.Launch a national public health campaign and alert system to highlight the dangers of air pollution.

5.3. This Charter supports Slough’s ambitions to improve local air quality, and reinforces our commitments within the Low Emission Strategy to accelerate the uptake of ultra low and zero emission vehicles and supports our commitments within the Transport Plan and Transport Vision to improve active travel and investment in public transport and enable modal shift away from the car.

5.4 The Charter also supports our ambitions to removing the most polluting vehicles from the most polluted parts of our towns by calling on the UK Government to support the development of Clean Air and Zero Emission Zones across the UK and provide help and support for people and businesses to move to cleaner forms of transport.

5.5 The Charter also calls on the UK Government to recognise local air quality data and pollution hotspots, as these occur in Slough, and ensure national policy takes these into account and receive targeted national support as opposed to focusing on EU limits and their compliance which uses different data sets.

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

This report has not been considered by any other committees.

7 **Conclusion**

The Charter for Cleaner Air reinforces our commitment to improve local air quality in Slough and supports our ambitions to accelerate the uptake of zero emission vehicles, and improve modal shift to low emission public transport and active travel.

8 **Appendices Attached (if any)**

‘A’ The Oxford City Charter for Cleaner Air with Slough Logo

9 **Background Papers**

‘1’ Slough Low Emission Strategy