



Reducing Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide – Air Quality

SUMMARY

- 1.1 In November 2015 the government selected Derby as one of five cities to lead on air quality improvements, focusing on the reduction of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) from vehicle emissions.
- 1.2 The original nation plan was to legally mandate the five Local Authorities to implement access restrictions with charges for non-compliant vehicles.
- 1.3 In July 2017 the national plan was revised and the legal mandate removed, though government is still promoting chargeable restrictions as being the most effective intervention and any alternative measure must be demonstrated to have at least the same impact.
- 1.4 The Council is legally obliged to assess chargeable access restrictions and has resolved that such schemes are likely to not be effective, not deliver the legal NO₂ levels and the public health benefits in the quickest possible time, and result in severe local economic disadvantages for businesses and households.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To support the Council's developing proposals for a package of measures to stimulate travel behaviour change and assist in developing campaigns for public awareness of the public health issues.
- 2.2 To support the Council's developing proposals to address NO₂ emissions directly by delivering a scheme to remove polluting vehicles.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 A range of measures to raise awareness and stimulate active, sustainable travel, and increased use of public transport will be required to assist with the reduction in NO₂ emissions and achieve the legal targets. No single organisation can provide all of the solutions. Support, expert assistance is required from partners, communities and businesses across the city.
- 3.2 A significant intervention is required to achieve NO₂ reduction in the quickest possible time. Vehicle replacement is directly effective, can be targeted, can be delivered much faster than a chargeable access scheme. The scheme will also offer other

benefits through mobility credits and access to alternatives to traditional car ownership.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 The Council administration established a clear position in late 2015 in response to the government policy.
- The Council will comply with the specific legal obligations set out by governments.
 - The Council takes the issue very seriously and is committed to achieving air quality improvements for all residents and visitors.
 - The levels of NO₂ are a national public health crisis, and the Council wants Derby to play a leading role in achieving change.
 - However, the Council has always believed that road charging is unlikely to be effective, and will not achieve the target levels as quickly as possible, and carries huge economic risks for businesses, and will have a disproportionate negative impact on household budgets.
 - The Council intends to implement a range of effective measures.
 - The Council will not voluntarily implement any scheme that includes road charging.
- 4.2 The current National Plan (published July 2017) for reducing NO₂ from vehicle emissions removed the legal mandate to implement charging schemes. As a response the Council has been developing a plan to have a quick and direct impact on NO₂ levels, and deliver a range of complementary measures that will engage all of the community and encourage partners to develop additional measures.
- 4.3 In February the Council presented the proposal for a Local Targeted Vehicle Scrappage scheme to the government Minister as the preferred option for Derby, along with a full range of complimentary measures. The Minister accepted the Council's position and since then we have been working on the details of a scheme, and engaging with business organisations and potential scheme partners.
- 4.4 The vehicle replacement (scrappage) scheme will be unique. It will not focus on swapping old cars for brand new cars, which has been the key limiting factor in other scrappage or vehicle replacement schemes. The Derby scheme will offer grants to obtain compliant (Euro 6 diesel and Euro 4 petrol) or ultra-low emission vehicles. The scheme will also allow owners to choose to trade in a vehicle in exchange for 'mobility credits', which can be used to access public transport, join car clubs, and hire vehicles for short periods. The scheme is being designed to offer widespread incentives and benefits.

- 4.5 The scheme will avoid the social and economic disadvantages inherent in a charging scheme, which is likely to penalise those who cannot afford to change their vehicles, and lead to traffic re-routing to inappropriate areas. The Council has been clear when presenting to government, that it is not acceptable to simply displace the problem and consequential health issues.
- 4.6 The proposal has received widespread support for businesses and the vehicle trade is enthusiastic about becoming partners in delivering the scheme.
- 4.7 The Council has been developing a Low Emission Strategy. The plan for reducing NO2 is being developed alongside this strategy and is intended to provide sustainable change in emissions levels.
- 4.8 Consultation on the full plan details, along with the emerging Low Emission Strategy, is expected to take place in the summer, ahead of the final submission to government in September.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The Council is legally obliged to continue testing chargeable access schemes. However, the analysis suggests that even a scheme for a restriction for the whole of the Derby City area would be unlikely to achieve the legal targets, in the quickest possible time.
- 5.2 A package of measures based on travel behaviour change was presented to government in November 2017. The clear feedback from government was that this package would not be effective. The plan needed to have an immediately effective proposal to have an impact as quickly as possible.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Estates/Property officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	
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List of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 The High Court has ruled that the intervention that can be demonstrated to achieve the legal target levels in the quickest possible time. The cost of the scheme is not a determining factor.

Legal

- 2.1 The Council has a clear legal duty to achieve the legal target levels of NO₂ in the quickest possible time. It is also obliged to deliver a Full Business Plan by 15th September 2018. The implications of failing to meet the obligations are unclear at the moment.

Personnel

- 3.1 The project to develop a scheme requires specific skills, most of which need to be sourced from consultants.

IT

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report.

Health and Safety

- 6.1 The proposal is to improve air quality and promote public health benefits.

Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 The proposal is to improve air quality and promote sustainable travel choices and cleaner vehicle technologies.

Property and Asset Management

- 8.1 None arising directly from this report

Risk Management and Safeguarding

- 9.1 None arising directly from this report

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 10.1 Supports the Council's objectives for health and wellbeing, environment

sustainability, and supports jobs and regeneration.