

Appendix A

Recommendations

- 1. That the Council directly works with the neighbouring boroughs on specific projects to formulate a regional approach to improving air quality and promoting air quality as a health issue to inform residents.**

Islington continues to work with neighbouring boroughs through the Central London Air Quality Cluster Group to find new initiatives to improve air quality as well as sharing experiences to develop best practice. Successful bids for joint funding from the Mayor's Air Quality Fund and DEFRA have been made to support this area of work. Islington has been instrumental in setting up the Breathe Better Together project in partnership with Camden, Croydon, AirText and the GLA. This is based on the San Francisco 'Spare the Air campaign' and it aims to alert Londoners of when air quality is expected to be poor, and helping them mobilise into reacting by changing behaviour. We also lead and project manage the AirText service on behalf of all other London boroughs. The service sends alerts to its users who are often the most vulnerable in advance of moderate and high pollution days. This allows users to better prepare themselves for episodes that could adversely impact on their health. Islington has also been responsible for the expansion of this service to include alerts on pollen, UV, temperature information and cold weather.

- 2. That the Council undertakes business engagement to inform businesses of the ways in which they could reduce emissions.**

We have commenced a programme for business engagement around the Finsbury Park area and will also be working with business in the Old Street area in partnership with Hackney and Tower Hamlets Councils. A further project stream has been developed where major organisations with large transport fleets will be contacted and engaged in working with us to reduce their impacts.

- 3. That the Council lobbies the Mayor to prioritise Islington bus routes when rolling out the retrofitted buses and includes data to show points where emissions were highest.**

The evidence presented to the Scrutiny shows that there is a substantial increase in the levels of nitrogen dioxide that is attributable to exhaust from buses in Islington. We will lobby the Mayor of London to commit to having all buses that operate from Holloway Garage to be hybrid or NB4L vehicles to address this. The bus garage itself is the largest in London and is based in a residential area and yet the replacement of buses using it is not being prioritised.

- 4. That the Council carries out a feasibility study on implementing a borough wide low emission zone, including costings and presents a report to the Committee by September 2013.**

Since the Scrutiny concluded, TfL have disclosed that they will be declaring a new Ultra Low Emission Zone to follow an area of central London. There is benefit in deferring taking this action forward until we are clear where the boundaries of the area will be. We will lobby for this low emission zone to be applied to all buses and coaches and not just those operated by TfL.

5. That the Council's policies give greater priority to air quality in instances where air quality and carbon reduction conflict.

This is being addressed through the Air Quality Strategy for 2013-16.

6. That the Council increase planting of trees and plant species which improve air quality.

The Council's tree policy prioritises larger shade-providing trees which have a greater leaf surface area to mitigate against poor air pollution. Further discussions are taking place with Greenspace to establish where planting can be carried out to be most beneficial in protecting pedestrians from traffic emissions.

7. That the Council, when replacing its vehicle fleet, sources vehicles with the highest Euro rating available including electric vehicles where possible.

The Council already sources vehicles with the highest Euro rating, including hybrid vehicles where financially viable. Electric vehicles are purchased where it can be shown there is a similar cost to both purchase and operate a standard vehicle.

8. That the Council takes the necessary action to get its bronze membership of the Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) upgraded to silver and then gold.

Now that the transfer of the Enterprise fleet is complete, application for the accreditation will be commenced, with the intention of achieving the silver award.

9. That the Council includes air quality in procurement criteria. This should include FORS membership.

Having discussed this with our procurement team, the recommendation is to update the environmental impact assessment used within the procurement process to include air quality and FORS membership.

10. That the Council proactively bids for funding for projects that will deliver improved air quality in Islington.

We have been successful in bidding to the Mayors Air Quality Fund and DEFRA, securing funding for business engagement work, Breathe Better Together, School engagement and improvements at construction sites. We will urge the Mayor of London to continue his funding stream through the Local Implementation Plans,

requiring that a proportion of it is spent on works or programmes which will improve air quality across London.

11. That the Council works with TfL to improve air quality further within the NO2 Focus Areas (Angel to Islington Green and Nag's Head to Archway).

The Council is continuing discussions with TfL regarding the NO2 focus areas. Funding has been awarded for projects that will help to reduce pollutant concentrations in these areas including school and business engagement however there is a limit to what the council can do given that the road network in these areas belongs to TfL. We will lobby the Mayor of London to modernise these junctions, as well as those at Old Street and Highbury Corner, to create an environment which promotes active travel and improves air quality.

12. That the Council takes the necessary steps to avoid penalties and fines for breaching air quality regulations.

The Scrutiny has confirmed the Council's commitment to reducing pollutant concentrations across the borough using a range of actions. We recognise the importance of working across boundaries and in partnership other authorities and agencies to find new ways of improving local air quality. We currently meet the objective limits for PM₁₀ at both roadside and background locations and the NO₂ objective at background locations. In 2012 we observed the lowest annual mean result for NO₂ (55µg/m³) at the roadside since we started monitoring which confirms the success of our actions. The agreed work programme for air quality continues this commitment.

13. That the Council prepares a costed report on providing low cost cycle tracks in the borough to link up with the existing cycle network.

The Council already considers segregated cycle lanes in locations where it may be appropriate, taking into account overall safety and feasibility. Some improvements to cycle infrastructure has already been costed; the provision of these improvements is dependent on funding which could come from ward improvement plans or section 106 funds.

14. That the Council sets up an air quality working group to provide a lead on air quality issues.

An air quality working group has been established and led by the pollution team. The first meeting was held on January 31st 2013, attended by 25 people including residents and local councillors. The group has opted to continue to operate through an email group.

15. That the Council's public health team works with the Air Quality Working Group and reports annually to the Health Scrutiny Committee on public health actions to address air quality issues.

Public Protection is working closely with colleagues in Public Health to reduce the ill health and deaths attributable to exposure to air pollution. To support this, funding has been secured via the Defra grant scheme for a joint project with Public Health colleagues for an air quality roadshow. This will be taken to GP surgeries, community centres, children's and day care centres to advise on the impact of poor air quality to health and what they can do to reduce exposure and emissions.

16. That the Council applies for a Cleaner Air Borough award.

We have committed to being a Cleaner Air Borough through the Mayors Air Quality fund and are awaiting details of the application process.

17. That Members receive a report on air quality midway between Air Quality Action Plans to ensure they are updated on the air quality issues in the borough and that this report be published on the Council's website.

The Air Quality Strategy runs from 2013 – 2016. It will be adopted in early 2014 and a progress report will be provided in 2015.

18. That the Council considers establishing a citizen's action network on air quality, to help identify and address specific local air quality problems of concern to Islington's residents.

The air quality working group can fulfil this function and it will be promoted through the various engagement projects we are undertaking.

19. That, noting the successful joint Camden and Islington's air quality summit on 21 November 2011 in Camden, there should be a follow-up event in Islington in autumn 2013.

The second Camden and Islington Air Quality summit was held on October 17th at Islington Town Hall, focusing on outdoor air quality.

20. That the Council encourages and provides support to schools in developing walk-to-school travel plans.

We have a school travel plan officer who is responsible for this task. The pollution team work closely with this officer through the school engagement programme. All schools in the borough have a travel plan that encourages active travel, these are regularly updated.

21. That the Council encourages residents to make local journeys by walking and cycling through the provision of a safe, convenient and quieter street environment.

We will develop clean air walking/cycling routes to support residents with active travel. Appropriate routes will be reviewed to establish what improvements could be made.