Agenda Item

Report

Report to:	**Community and Enterprise Resources Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**14 March 2023**
Report by:	**Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)**

Subject:	**Revocation of Lanark Air Quality Management Area – South Lanarkshire**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- update the Committee on improvements to air quality within the Lanark area and the subsequent proposal to revoke the Lanark Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

(1) that it be approved that Environmental Services proceed to revoke the Lanark AQMA.

3. Background

3.1. South Lanarkshire Council has a statutory duty to monitor the quality of air within its area. This is defined in the Environment Act 1995 and details provided within the Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000 and 2002 as amended. The results of the monitoring must be considered against the air quality objectives/targets. Should an air quality objectives/target be exceeded the local authority must take action to improve air quality. Exceedances were previously found in East Kilbride, Rutherglen and Lanark which resulted in the declaration of 3 AQMAs for these areas.

3.2. An AQMA encompassing the whole town of Lanark was declared in June 2016 due to likely breaches of the Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) hourly mean and annual mean air quality objectives/targets.

3.3. The formal declaration process for the AQMAs and the resultant Air Quality Action Plan development have been detailed in previous Committee reports dated 3 June 2008, 11 November 2008, 8 December 2015 and 19 March 2019.

3.4. Environmental Services has supported traffic management and air quality improvement actions since 2016. Lanark specific initiatives included:-

- Beat the Street' and 'Lanark on the Move' which support the uptake of active and sustainable travel choices for short local journeys.
- Improvements to traffic flow to ease congestion in sensitive locations has been facilitated by improvements to traffic signalling, in conjunction with colleagues in Roads and Transportation.

- Electric vehicle charging was introduced in Lanark to support the transition to lower emission vehicles.
- A number of engine idling campaigns and vehicle emission testing events have taken place locally to increase awareness of the impact vehicle emissions can have on health.
- The local projects are supported by South Lanarkshire wide initiatives including fleet and emission tailored support to fleet and taxi operators through the Eco Stars project.
- Support to encourage the uptake of cycling via the 'Love to Ride South Lanarkshire' project as well as South Lanarkshire's walking and cycling campaign.

3.5. Collectively, the above interventions have resulted in improved traffic flow and pollutant reduction.

4. Current Position

4.1. Measured NO_2 concentrations have declined over recent years, supporting a Detailed Assessment of Air Quality at Lanark for NO_2 and Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$). The Detailed Assessment demonstrated air quality has improved and air quality objectives/targets currently, and in future, will not be exceeded. A copy of the executive summary from the Detailed Assessment report is included at Appendix 1.

4.2. The Detailed Assessment reviewed pollutant measurements over the previous 10 years concluding:-

- The annual mean for NO_2 of 40μgm^{-3} was exceeded in 2013 and since then measured concentrations have declined in general at all measurement sites. In 2019 all measured concentrations were significantly less than the Scottish objective for NO_2.
- To avoid the possibility of re-declaring for $PM_{2.5}$ at a future date, a review of measured $PM_{2.5}$ data was undertaken. This indicated annual mean concentrations have been consistently below the Scottish objective of 10μgm^{-3} for $PM_{2.5}$ since monitoring for this pollutant began in 2015.

4.3. Dispersion modelling study of current and future road traffic NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions indicated:-

- In 2019, the NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ annual mean objectives were not exceeded at any locations where relevant human exposure is present within the study area.
- The sensitivity analysis conducted using meteorological dataset from 2009 through to 2019 indicates that is unlikely that exceedances of the NO_2 or $PM_{2.5}$ annual mean objective will occur at these receptor locations due to inter-annual variability in weather conditions.
- In 2025, when likely traffic growth and inter-annual variability in weather conditions are considered, the NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ annual mean are not predicted to exceed the Scottish objectives at any locations where relevant human exposure is present within the study area.
- In 2025 with future developments, the NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ annual means are not predicted to exceed the Scottish objectives at any locations where relevant human exposure is present within the study area.

4.4. The Council's Annual Progress Report on air quality together with the Detailed Assessment have been submitted to the Scottish Government and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) for appraisal as part of statutory reporting

requirements. Both reports conclude the Lanark AQMA should now be revoked under Section 83(2) of the Environment Act 1995. The findings of both reports have been accepted by the Scottish Government and SEPA.

4.5. In view of the conclusions of the Detailed Assessment of Air Quality in Lanark and acceptance of the findings by Scottish Government and SEPA, Environmental Services recommends South Lanarkshire Council revokes the Lanark AQMA.

4.6. Following acceptance of the recommendation, the Revocation Order will be drawn up in conjunction with Legal Services and the Order advertised among statutory consultees before coming into effect spring/summer 2023.

5. General/Other Implications for the Council

5.1. Where a local authority considers it necessary to revoke an AQMA the Scottish Government expects the authority to consult SEPA. For the Lanark proposed revocation this consultation has already taken place. In addition, it is also expected that the local authority consults statutory consultees, businesses, members of the public and other interested parties.

5.2. Once the consultation process has been completed, Environmental Services would submit the Revocation Order to the Scottish Government for information.

5.3. Where a Revocation Order is accepted, local authorities are expected to consider drawing up a Local Air Quality Strategy to ensure air quality maintains a high profile locally and to respond to public expectations. Such a strategy should incorporate measures designed to tackle climate change. It should also cover the linkages between air quality and wider environmental sustainability issues. Environmental Services will seek to develop such a Strategy during 2023/2024.

5.4. Environmental Services plans to continue air monitoring at the existing automatic air station for a year following revocation of the AQMA to demonstrate the decision to revoke was justified. Environmental Services will report this monitoring through the Annual Progress Report to the Scottish Government and SEPA on compliance with the national air quality statutory objectives.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. There are no employee implications.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. Advertising costs for the consultation and publicising of the Revocation Order, will be met from the existing Environmental Services' budget.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

8.1. In accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required as the revocation of the Air Quality Management Area is not a policy, plan, programme or strategy as defined by the Act. However, a Strategic Environmental Assessment will be carried out alongside the development of an Air Quality Strategy.

9. Other Implications

9.1. There are no other significant implications as result of the contents of this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no equality impact assessment or consultation is required

David Booth
Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

22 February 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

- Focused on people and their needs
- We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- We will work to recover, progress and improve
- Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- People live the healthiest lives possible
- Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live

Previous References

- Community Resources Committee 3 June 2008 - Air Quality Management Area
- Community Resources Committee 11 November 2008 - Air Quality Management Area – Whirlies Roundabout East Kilbride
- Community Resources Committee 8 December 2015 - Air Quality Management Area – Rutherglen
- Community Resources Committee 8 December 2015 - Air Quality Management Area – Lanark
- Community and Enterprise Resources Committee 4 February 2020 - Air Quality Action Plan – Beat the Street – Lanark and Rutherglen

List of Background Papers

- Environment Act 1995
- Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000
- Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2002 and subsequent amendments

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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Appendix 1

Detailed Assessment to the revocation of Lanark AQMA, South Lanarkshire Executive Summary.

Ricardo Energy and Environment have been commissioned by South Lanarkshire Council to undertake a Detailed Assessment of Air Quality at Lanark, South Lanarkshire.

An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) encompassing the whole town of Lanark was declared in June 2016 due to likely breaches of the Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) hourly mean and annual mean air quality objectives.

Measured NO_2 concentrations have declined over recent years; on this basis, South Lanarkshire Council are currently considering revocation of the Lanark AQMA. This Detailed Assessment aims to provide evidence that will aid the Council in deciding if revocation is appropriate, or if an AQMA is still required in Lanark or may be required in the future.

The assessment includes the following main elements:-

- A review of measured NO_2 concentrations within the AQMA over recent years.
- Detailed dispersion modelling of NO_2 concentrations for the most recent year of 2019
- A sensitivity analysis of potential fluctuations in annual mean pollutant concentrations attributable to meteorological conditions.
- Detailed dispersion modelling of NO_2 concentrations in a future year (with estimates of road traffic emissions attributable to future housing allocations in/around the AQMA included).
- A review and detailed dispersion model of $PM_{2.5}$ in 2019 and future years. Although Lanark does not have an AQMA declaration for exceedance of $PM_{2.5}$, the pollutant was included in this assessment to avoid the possibility of re-declaring an AQMA for $PM_{2.5}$ at a future date.

The review of pollutant measurements over the last ten years has concluded:-

- An annual mean in excess of the NO_2 40 µg.m-3 objective was measured once at the Bloomgate diffusion tube in 2013. Since then, measured concentrations have in general declined at all measurement sites. In 2019, all measured concentrations were significantly less than the 40µg.m^{-3} objective.
- For $PM_{2.5}$, annual mean concentrations have been consistently below the Scottish objective of 10 µg.m^{-3} since monitoring began in 2015.

The dispersion modelling study of current and future road traffic NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions indicated that:-

- In 2019, the NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ annual mean objectives were not exceeded at any locations where relevant human exposure is present within the study area.
- The sensitivity analysis conducted using meteorological dataset from 2009 through to 2019 indicates that is unlikely that exceedances of the NO_2 or $PM_{2.5}$ annual mean objective will occur at these receptor locations due to inter-annual variability in weather conditions.
- In 2025, when likely traffic growth and inter-annual variability in weather conditions are considered, the NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ annual mean are not predicted to exceed the Scottish objectives at any locations where relevant human exposure is present within the study area.

- In 2025 with future developments, the NO_2 and $PM_{2.5}$ annual means are not predicted to exceed the Scottish objectives at any locations where relevant human exposure is present within the study area

In light of the conclusions of this Detailed Assessment of Air Quality, South Lanarkshire Council may wish to consider revocation of the Lanark Air Quality Management Area at this time.