

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment and Highways Cabinet Board

1st September 2016

Report of the Head of Planning

N. Pearce

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All

2016 Air Quality Progress Report

Purpose of Report

1. To inform members of the results of pollution monitoring carried out during the calendar year of 2015, and obtain approval to place a copy of the report on the Council's website and send copies to the Welsh Assembly Government.

Executive Summary

2. Two air quality reports are covered by this Board Report.
 - a) The 2016 Air Quality Progress Report for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.
 - b) The 2016 Detailed Assessment of Air Quality for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

Summary of the 2016 Air Quality Progress Report

3. The Progress Report covering the period up to the end of 2015 has identified the need to proceed to a Detailed Assessment for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) at Victoria Gardens, Neath.
4. The long-term Air Quality Objective (AQO) for PM₁₀ was not breached in Port Talbot. However, the short-term average was breached at Port Talbot Fire Station, for the first time since 2007. However, compliance may be achieved once the effect of natural sources such as sea salt is taken into account. These calculations

had not been completed by Welsh Government at the time of writing. The Taibach/Margam Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) will continue to remain in force.

5. There were no exceedances of Air Quality Objectives for sulphur dioxide (SO₂), lead (Pb) or carbon monoxide (CO).
6. Fine particulates of less than 2.5 microns in size (PM_{2.5}) easily complied with the EU Target.
7. Ozone is not covered by Local Air Quality Management because trans-boundary pollution can have a significant effect upon local results. Neath Port Talbot, like other parts of the country, experiences significant numbers of exceedances of the UK air quality standard. The trend is one of gradual improvement over time.
8. Concentrations of polyaromatic hydrocarbons exceed the UK Air Quality Objective of 0.25 ng/m³, but are less than the EU Target value of 1 ng/m³. The trend line shows that concentrations are increasing over time. Natural Resources Wales, as regulator of the steelworks has produced a position statement on PAH, which is attached as a background paper.
9. Arsenic and cadmium easily comply with the EU Target, both in Port Talbot and Pontardawe.
10. Nickel concentrations comply with the EU Target at all locations in Neath, Port Talbot and Pontardawe, except Tawe Terrace. However due to work being carried out in relation to this exceedance, nickel levels decreased substantially at Tawe Terrace during 2015.
11. The highest rates of fallout of large particles (nuisance dust) were measured in Port Talbot at Port Talbot Fire Station and Prince Street. The highest ever fallout rates were recorded at Prince Street.

Summary of the 2016 Detailed Assessment of Air Quality

12. Measurements have shown that the only location having relevant exposure where the annual averaged AQO was breached was No. 1 Victoria Gardens (40.7 ug/m³). However, this exceedance is marginal and is considered to be subject to a significant degree of uncertainty.

13. The aim of the Detailed Assessment is to establish with reasonable certainty whether there is a likelihood that AQOs are not being achieved. It is considered that this result is not sufficient in this regard and that an AQMA will not be declared at this time.
14. The Council therefore intends to deploy diffusion tubes in triplicate at No. 1 Victoria Gardens, thereby reducing this uncertainty. A further Detailed Assessment of NO₂ shall then be carried out on 2016 data.

Background

15. These reports fulfil the requirements of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) process as set out in Part IV of the Environment Act (1995), the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland 2007 and relevant Policy and Technical Guidance documents. The LAQM process places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved.
16. Progress reports are produced by the Council in two out of every three years. The most recent was produced in 2014. Updating and Screening Assessments (USAs) are required in the remaining year. Progress reports should cover: new monitoring data; new local developments; the local air quality strategy; new planning applications; Planning policies; local transport plans and policies; implementation of LAQM action plans; other changes that might affect air quality.
17. The Council opts to include information on non-LAQM pollutants in addition to the more narrow LAQM range of pollutants required for inclusion in LAQM reports. LAQM USA reports are required to be provided to WAG as the devolved administration has responsibility for compliance with national air quality objectives.
18. The reports illustrate the results of pollution monitoring data collected during the calendar year 2015. The data includes results from continuous and non-continuous equipment, some of which is supplied to national pollution monitoring networks. Conclusions are drawn about air quality based upon this information.

Financial Impact

19. There are no implications for financial impact on this item.

Equality Impact Assessment

20. A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment it has been determined that this proposal does not require an Equalities Impact Assessment

Workforce Impact

21. There are no workforce impact implications on this item.

Legal Impact

22. There are no legal impact implications on this item.

Risk Management

23. There are no implications for risk management on this item.

Any Other Impacts? –

24. There are no impacts for crime & disorder/counter terrorism/sustainable development.

Consultation

25. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation(s)

26. 1) The contents of the 2016 Air Quality Progress Report and Detailed Assessment of Air Quality should be noted.

- 2) The reports should be made available to the public and other stakeholders via the Council website and a copy sent to the Welsh Assembly Government for information.

Reason for Proposed Decision(s)

27. To provide information about air quality in accordance with legislative requirements.

Implementation of Decision

28. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices

- 29 Appendix 1 - Air Quality progress report 2016
Appendix 2 – Detailed assessment of Nitrogen Dioxide

List of Background Papers

30. Natural Resources Wales position statement on PAH and Best Available Techniques (BAT).

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