

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SCRUTINY STEERING BOARD

4TH MARCH 2008

RECOMMENDATION TRACKER

This report lists all scrutiny recommendations approved by Cabinet with information on: who will be progressing the approved recommendations; when the recommendations are expected to be implemented by; and any officer comments which might be useful to the Scrutiny Steering Board. The recommendations are grouped by Task Group.

All general recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board are also listed when applicable.

General Recommendations made by the Scrutiny Steering Board on: 5th February 2008

*Rec. No.	Detail of Recommendation	Officer Responsible	Implementation to take place by	Tick if completed	Officer Comments
N/A	The Public Transport (Buses) Scrutiny Report, as agreed by the Scrutiny Steering Board, be placed on the next available Agenda for Cabinet's consideration and all recommendations contained within the report be approved.	Committee Services Officer	March	✓	The Scrutiny Report is on the Agenda for the Cabinet's Meeting scheduled to be held on 5th March 2008.
N/A	Full Council include the concerns of the Scrutiny Steering Board in response to the CLG consultation exercise on Calls for Action.	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	February	✓	The Board's full response has been included in a report to the Full Council Meeting due to be held on 27th February 2008.

*Note: "Rec. No." is the Recommendation Number as given within a Scrutiny Report compiled by a Task Group

Approved Recommendations from Air Quality Scrutiny Investigation:

9th January 2008 (Date agreed by Cabinet)

*Rec. No.	Detail of Recommendation	Officer Responsible	Implementation to take place by	Tick if completed	Officer Comments
1	<p>This Council considers applying to Worcestershire County Council for certain roads to be made low emission zone roads therefore limiting access to certain types of vehicles which reduce air quality. Specifically, the following roads/areas should be low emission due to high NO2 levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approximately a 2 mile radius around Bromsgrove town centre ▪ A38 Bypass in Rubery ▪ All roads in Rubery with a weight restriction ▪ A456 in Hagley ▪ A491 in Hagley 	N/A	N/A	N/A	<p>At the Scrutiny Steering Board Meeting on 5th February 2008, it was agreed that Cabinet would be requested to reconsider its response to this recommendation. A report has been submitted to Cabinet and will be considered on 5th March 2008.</p>
2	<p>The Council remain committed to improving Bromsgrove Railway Station including the Park and Ride facility as this will encourage the public to use public transport and therefore reduce the numbers of cars on the roads which are having a negative impact on air quality.</p>	Assistant Chief Executive	By 21st March 2008		<p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects will send letter to Railway Station Working Group to ensure they are aware of the approved scrutiny recommendations highlighting the issue of adequate car parking and traffic management in the</p>

					Aston Fields area with regard to access and egress from the car park.
4	<p>(a) Request that Worcestershire County Council's Highways alter the traffic signals on the A38 North into Bromsgrove so to reduce exit blocking and improve traffic flow near the AQMA; and</p> <p>(b) Request that both Worcestershire County Council's Highways and this Council's Environmental Health Team monitor the area before and after the alterations in order to obtain evidence to prove whether or not the alteration have been successful.</p> <p>(The Cabinet also wished the appropriate authority to consider making the operation of the traffic signals part time (e.g. during the night, the traffic was much lighter and this would reduce the amount of stationary traffic and therefore improve air quality.)</p>	<p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p> <p>Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p> <p>Highways Agency</p>	By 21st March 2008		<p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects will write to Worcestershire County Council (WCC) requesting the traffic lights be altered as requested and to ask that WCC indicate when they will undertake this work so that Environmental Health (EH) can monitor before the alteration and after.</p>

	<p>Birmingham Road (by Davenal House) and investigate, in partnership with Worcestershire County Council Highway's, whether or not it might help decrease traffic congestion and therefore lower the air pollution at this location which has high NO2 levels.</p>				<p>been unable to attend so far. However, a reminder has been sent and the issue of road management will feature as a major item at future Town Centre Steering Group meetings. The issue of air quality will form part of the discussions with the Highways Unit.</p>
8	<p>(a) Request that Worcestershire County Council review the timing of the traffic signals located at the top end of the High Street by The Strand with a view to reducing the build up of standing traffic;</p> <p>(b) If County Council agree to amend the timing of the traffic signals in (a), request that they monitor the traffic congestion before and after making the alteration to measure whether the action has had a positive impact; and</p> <p>(c) Request Environmental Health monitor air quality around Davenal House, Birmingham Road before and after the (a) is implemented to measure whether it has helped improve air quality (which is known to be poor at this location).</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council's Highways</p>	<p>Commence exploring air quality issues with Highways Unit by 30th April 2008</p>		<p>This will be linked to recommendation 7.</p>

9	<p>(a) The Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services be requested to consider the best ways to discourage development within an AQMA; and</p> <p>(b) An air quality guidance note for developers be drafted by the Planning and Environmental Health Officers to try and control and mitigate the impact property development has on air quality.</p>	Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services	On going	The Planning and Environment Department apply government guidance with developers, but EH in coordination with Development Control are examining ways of strengthening application of Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 23.
10	<p>(a) There is ongoing communication with local residents who own and/or reside in a property located in the AQMA to ensure they are fully aware of the situation. (The Task Group will be ensuring the households affected receive a copy of this report for their information); and</p> <p>(b) A sign be erected (by the County Council) in the AQMA to inform the public that it is an AQMA and that the District Council is working with other agencies to reduce air pollution in the vicinity. The sign should also pose the question "Is your journey</p>	Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services	By 31st December 2008	<p>EH will enhance the information on the website by the end of 2008 and use this as the basis for providing further information to households in the AQMA.</p> <p>Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects will write to WCC requesting sign.</p>

	necessary?" to encourage the public to think about their travel habits and the impact it has on air pollution.				
11	Environmental Health be requested to update information on the Council's website as soon as possible and ensure it is regularly updated.	Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services	By 31st December 2008		See response to recommendation 10 above.
12	(a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to work in partnership with Worcestershire PCT (and local GP surgeries) and ensure they are kept up to date in regards to which areas are known poor air quality areas to help investigate further the correlations between poor air quality areas and respiratory illnesses such as asthma; and (b) Request that Worcestershire PCT work closely with GPs to ensure the criteria used for diagnosing and recording data relating to asthma is standardised wherever possible to enable the analysis of data to be more meaningful.	Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services Worcestershire PCT	Considered by LSP Theme Groups by 30th June 2008 Letter written by 30th April 2008		There is an Air Quality Steering Group that includes the PCT. However, this only meets once a year so the issue will be raised at both the LSP Better Environment Group and the Health and Well Being Group. Executive Director – Partnerships and Projects will write to public health officer at PCT regarding outcomes of Air Quality Scrutiny Group.

13	<p>(a) The Environmental Health Team be requested to actively discourage bonfires (with the exception of social events on and around 5th November) through promotion, similar to Birmingham City Council; and</p> <p>(b) Ensure that members of the public are aware how to report bonfires if they are a nuisance.</p>	Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services	By 30th September 2008		An article will be published in Together Bromsgrove regarding bonfires and reference will be made to the BDC website and WCC website regarding discouragement to bonfires.
14	The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management be requested to further investigate and assess options available (such as using bio fuel in refuse and recycling vehicles) which could assist the Council in contributing to improving air quality.	Head of Street Scene and Waste Management	Ongoing	Updates to be provided	The current cost of bio fuel is more expensive than the traditional fuel that we purchase. There are also environmental concerns about the current availability of such fuels and whether they have a beneficial affect on the environment. The department is therefore continuing to research the options and monitor the ongoing debate with the use of such fuels. At present it is not considered appropriate to enter into a long tem commitment to use bio fuels within Council vehicles, however a regular update will be provided.

15	It is requested that the newly established Energy Efficiency Project Group progress the Council's Staff Travel Plan as a matter of urgency and work together with the LSP Better Environment Theme Group.	Executive Director – Partnership and Projects	A draft Travel Plan will go to CMT by 14th March 2008. The Energy Efficiency Group will work on the draft so a plan can be presented to Cabinet by 31st October 2008.		The demand for a meaningful Travel Plan has also been supported by CMT and a report is to be presented in March. This report will go to the Energy Efficiency Group in April and a Travel Plan will be submitted to Cabinet by 31st October 2008.
16	<p>(a) To help the Council lead by example to other agencies, training be offered to all Members and staff (including those based at the Depot) on air quality (and other green issues) to improve their awareness of the impact their behaviour at home and at work can have on air quality;</p> <p>(b) As part of that training, it is suggested that the film “An Inconvenient Truth” relating to the work of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore be shown at the Council House; and</p> <p>(c) The Head of Street Scene and Waste Management ensure specific training is provided to refuse and recycling crews relating to where refuse vehicles should be parked (to avoid causing traffic</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services</p> <p>Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p> <p>Head of Street Scene and Waste Management</p>	<p>Member Training to be discussed at the next Modern Councillor Programme Steering Group Meeting.</p> <p>Report to CMT mid March on Staff Training Priorities for 2008/9</p>		<p>The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services will ensure that this item is on the Agenda for the next Modern Councillor Programme Steering Group Meeting. The Steering Group will then decide when this particular training should be added on to the Member Training Work Programme.</p> <p>The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development will ensure that this item is considered by CMT along with all other proposed corporate training priorities, and prioritised accordingly.</p> <p>Refuse and recycling</p>

	congestion) with engines turned off during breaks.		Weekly briefing for crews to include instruction outlined in recommendation 16 (c) will be developed and will commence from July 2008		crews are instructed as part of their induction training to avoid causing unnecessary obstruction when operating service vehicles. This instruction will be reiterated on a regular basis as a reminder and Street Scene and Waste Management will develop a weekly briefing for crews which will include this instruction along with other service specific issues.
17	The Licensing Section be requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank. As an incentive to change their behaviour, it should be pointed out that (a) it will save fuel; and (b) it is an offence to leave a vehicle running when not in the vehicle and any person doing so is at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice. This information could be included in a newsletter for example.	Head of Planning and Environmental Health Services	End of February 2008	✓	A Newsletter incorporating this information has been sent to all taxi drivers and taxi operators in February 2008.

18	<p>(a) To ensure car parking spaces are reserved for those who join the car sharing scheme (which could act as an incentive);</p> <p>(b) Through various forms of publicity, the Communication Team ensure that staff are frequently reminded and encouraged to join the Car Sharing Scheme and encouraged to use other alternatives to travel to work such as walking, cycling or public transport; and</p> <p>(c) The numbers of staff from Bromsgrove District Council joining the car sharing scheme be monitored.</p>	<p>Executive Director – Partnership and Projects</p> <p>Assistant Chief Executive</p>	<p>A draft Travel Plan to be considered at CMT by 14th March and by Energy Efficiency Project Group at April meeting.</p>		<p>Car sharing will form part of the travel plan to be considered by CMT by 14th March and by the Energy Efficiency Project Group in April 2008. (See recommendation no. 15 above)</p>
19	<p>Further investigations be carried out by the Human Resources Section into the possibility of having: (a) a pool of Council owned environmentally friendly cars for essential and casual car users; or (b) a loan/lease scheme to assist and encourage staff to convert their own car to alternative fuel.</p>	<p>Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	<p>2010</p>		<p>The review of car allowances is being addressed through Single Status, and it is proposed that a new set of criteria is developed for determining which posts attract the allowance going forward. It has been agreed in principle that this review will take place over the next 12 months, and that any individual members of staff who are found to no longer undertake sufficient</p>

					<p>business miles to receive the allowance should be protected for 2 years, in accordance with the same principle for JE protection. This is to minimise the potential effect upon individual members of staff who may be financial losers through both JE and the review of car allowances. The possibility of having environmentally friendly pool cars and loan/leasing scheme will be included in this process.</p>
20	<p>The Council consider revising the current car allowance pay scales and not pay more to those who are potentially the worst polluters.</p> <p>(The Cabinet resolved that investigations be undertaken into the revision of the current car allowance pay scales to include the possibility of paying a flat rate for all users regardless of engine size.)</p>	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	2010		<p>See officer comments under recommendation number 19 above.</p>

21	Support be given to a Home Working Policy as reducing the number of times staff need to travel to and from the office will help reduce the number of cars on the road and this will help towards improving air quality. Therefore, a report from the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development should be submitted to the Corporate Management Team without delay.	Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	15th January 2008	✓	Corporate Management Team (CMT) is generally supportive of the principle and it was discussed once again on 15th January 2008. However CMT is mindful of the wider context, such as office accommodation / asset management and technological capabilities / resources. Consequently, CMT do not feel able to implement the policy at the present time. At present, there is a pilot within Revenues and Benefits to ensure that the technology to allow for home working is correct. Although a corporate Home Working Policy has not yet been adopted, Heads of Services can allow home working when appropriate.
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Abbreviations:

AQMA = Air Quality Management Area
 BDC = Bromsgrove District Council
 CMT = Corporate Management Team
 EH = Environmental Health
 JE = Job Evaluation

LSP = Local Strategic Partnership
 PCT = Primary Care Trust
 PPS = Planning Policy Statement
 WCC = Worcestershire County Council