

Subject: Air Quality Policy and Strategy

Status: For Publication

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 21st January 2009

Report of: Executive Director - Business

Portfolio

Holder: Environmental Services

Key Decision: Yes

Forward Plan

General Exception

Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This Strategy is intended to set out the approach for addressing air quality issues within Rossendale. It provides a framework for delivery of services to reduce air pollution where possible, compliance with statutory duties and to minimise the effects of pollution on the more vulnerable members of the community.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities and associated corporate objective.

- Delivering Quality Services to Customers (Customers, Improvement)
 - By ensuring consistent high quality services
- Keeping Our Borough Clean and Green (Environment)
 - By directly acting on issues related to air pollution
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit (Economy)
 - By enhancing the general environment
- Improving health and well being across the Borough (Health, Housing)
 - By contributing to a reduction in pollutants that affect people's health and wellbeing
- Well Managed Council (Improvement, Community Network)
 - By demonstrating a co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to air pollution control

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no specific risk issues for members to consider arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 In December 2007, the Cabinet approved an Air Quality Policy. This has been incorporated into the attached Strategy document and amended to clarify its intent.

4.2 This new Strategy identifies the effects of poor air quality on people and the environment, the key pollutants involved, the processes by which these pollutants are emitted and the means by which they will be controlled.

4.3 This Strategy aims to contribute to addressing the pollutants and objectives outlined in the Government's Air Quality Strategy published in 2007. Action taken at this local level will be an effective way of tackling localized air quality problems, thereby leading to an overall improvement of air quality across the UK.

4.4 This Strategy directly links to the Council's Environmental Strategy and demonstrates how the Air Pollution aspect of Aim Five would be achieved. Actions will be developed in order to achieve a steady decrease in pollutants and ensure achievement of national pollution objectives by the target dates.

4.5 The Council has an obligation to undertake periodic reviews of air quality under the system known as Local Air Quality Management. This imposes a duty to review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in this area against national air quality objectives for seven specific air pollutants. Where any objective is unlikely to be met by the relevant deadline, local authorities must designate those areas as Air Quality Management Areas and take action, along with others, to work towards meeting the objectives. Investigations are ongoing to determine whether this action is needed within Rossendale.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

5.1 There are no financial implications with this Strategy.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

6.1 There are no legal implications with this Strategy.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

7.1 There are no HR implications with this Strategy.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 By adopting this Air Quality Strategy, the Council will be demonstrating its commitment to putting air quality at the heart of the decision making process and thereby act in a co-ordinated way to reduce air pollution and protect the health of people and the environment within Rossendale.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 That the Air Quality Strategy be adopted and implemented.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 A Consultation Plan was developed and implemented in relation to this Strategy. The following individuals and organizations have been contacted:-
Chamber of Commerce
Lancashire County Council – Highways Department
Rossendale Climate Change Group
J&J Ormerod
Groundwork
LSP Environment Theme group
Rossendale Transport
East Lancs PCT
Health Protection Agency
Rossendale Borough Council's Green Team

11. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is an Equality Impact Assessment required Yes
Is an Equality Impact Assessment attached Yes

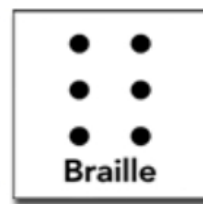
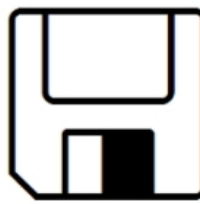
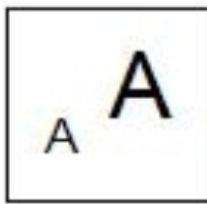
12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required Yes
Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required Yes

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
<p>The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Defra. 2007</p> <p>Air Quality Toolkit: Local action for cleaner air. LACORS. 2008.</p>	<p>Environmental Health Service Stubblelee Hall Stubblelee Lane Bacup Lancashire OL13 0DE</p>

AIR QUALITY POLICY AND STRATEGY 2009 - 2011



اردو



AIR QUALITY POLICY AND STRATEGY DRAFT

2009 – 2011

Abstract:

Clean air is an essential prerequisite for a good quality of life and people have the right to expect that the air they breathe will not harm them. Poor quality air can have numerous ill effects on long and short term health, cause 'statutory nuisance', harm the natural environment, contribute to climate change and affect social inequality issues. Air pollution in Rossendale arises from 3 main sources, these being transport, industry and buildings, with the largest contributor being transport. The Council has a duty to protect its residents from current sources of air pollution by preventing exceedances of national standards from occurring and numerous pieces of legislation are enforced in order to do this including the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Environment Act 1995, the Clean Air Act 1993 and the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000. The Council is also committed to improving air quality in the long term and will seek to do this through a package of measures primarily concerned with reducing road traffic and improving the efficiency of that which is unavoidable.

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Environmental Health Pollution, Housing and Health Section Air Quality Strategy and Policy

1.0 Introduction

Clean air is an essential prerequisite for a good quality of life and people have the right to expect that the air they breathe will not harm them. Air Quality and the production of Air Pollution can directly and adversely affect the health and wellbeing of people in Rossendale and also contributes to the overall level of air pollution in the North of England outside the Borough boundaries.

This document defines the policies employed by Rossendale Council to protect its residents from existing sources of air pollution and details the strategic approach the Council will take to improve air quality, prevent exceedances of permitted levels of pollution from occurring, allow the Council to meet its own targets and Government standards regarding air quality as defined by the National Air Quality Strategy 2006 and fulfil its statutory duties to enforce pollution related legislation.

1.1 Air Quality and Air Pollution

Air Quality and Air Pollution have distinctly different meanings and it is important to tell them apart.

Air Quality can be defined as:

“The standard of air with respect to the quantities of pollutants contained therein”

Whereas Air Pollution can be defined as:

“The release of certain substances into the air in concentrations that are determined unacceptable”

Or,

“An unreasonable and significant emission that causes unreasonable and significant interference with the use and enjoyment of premises”

In more simple terms it can be said air quality describes the general standard of the air, whilst air pollution relates to the release of substances into the air above the limits which have been deemed acceptable, and which may be harmful to health or cause a nuisance affecting quality of life. It can also be said that the relationship between air quality and air pollution is inversely proportional, i.e. the higher the level of air pollution, the lower the quality of the air.

1.2 Effects of Air Pollution and Poor Air Quality

1.2.1 Effects on Health

The large scale production of air pollution over a period of time leads to a reduction in the quality of air in Rossendale which adversely affects the health and wellbeing of the local population in both the long term and the short terms.

Long term exposure to poor quality air can lead to a range of health defects, all of which cause a reduction in life expectancy in Rossendale and increase the burden on the National Health Service. In fact it has been estimated that the life expectancy of every person in the UK is reduced by an average of 7 – 8 months as a result of current levels of air pollution. Long term defects linked to poor air quality include increased incidence of diseases related to the respiratory system, a worsening of heart conditions and increased prevalence of certain cancers.

In the shorter term exposure to poor quality air can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and respiratory tracts and aggravate pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma and bronchitis which lowers quality of life and may even cause premature mortality amongst the most vulnerable. Poor air quality is also thought to cause a reduction in participation in physical exercise which in itself has many related health effects such as those related to obesity etc.

1.2.2 Causation of Nuisance

Pollution events which occur on a smaller scale, such as those caused by open burning or bonfires, can cause a loss of amenity and affect residents enjoyment of their own properties. This type of complaint can amount to the causation of 'statutory nuisance' as defined by the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and whilst not usually detrimental to physical health, can cause stress and frequently leads to disputes between neighbours and even cases of violence.

1.2.3 Effect on the Natural Environment

Poor air quality damages the natural environment through adverse effects on vegetation such as reduced growth, inhibition of photosynthesis and degradation of chlorophyll. Certain pollutants also contribute to secondary effects such as the acidification of soils and/or the eutrophication of sensitive habitats which leads to a range of environmental ill effects and an overall loss of biodiversity.

1.2.4 Air Quality and Climate Change

Some emissions (namely Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) and Methane (CH₄)), whilst not air pollutants in this context per se, are classed as 'Greenhouse Gases' which are heavily implicated in environmental concerns regarding global warming and climate change. These emissions more often than not originate from the same sources as those air pollutants which directly affect air quality. The issues of air quality and climate change are therefore intrinsically linked and efforts taken to tackle either will, in most cases, be of benefit to both.

1.2.5 Air Quality and Social Equality Issues

Research has recently been reported by DEFRA in their consultation on Better Regulation Review of Part B activities which indicate that:

- People in deprived communities are disproportionately affected by air pollution and may have higher susceptibility to poor air quality and less access to mitigation, whether that be through the purchase of medicines or access to good health care.
- There is a higher susceptibility to air pollution effects amongst people with poorer nutrition.
- There are increased risks in people with lower educational status.

DEFRA has also reported that, in a number of urban areas, the least affluent members of society tend to be exposed to the highest levels of air pollution. Measures to improve air quality can therefore have a more pronounced effect in deprived areas and contribute positively to reducing social inequalities.

1.3 Key Pollutants

The Council will respond to and investigate any complaint of air pollution but for the purpose of this document the main pollutants considered are detailed below due to the fact that they appear as priority pollutants in the Government's National Air Quality Strategy.

1.3.1 Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)

Nitrogen Dioxide is produced by the reaction between Nitrogen and Oxygen when fuel is combusted in vehicle engines or in other such processes. At high concentrations it is known to irritate and inflame airways causing problems for those suffering from existing respiratory ailments such as asthma or bronchitis. There is evidence indicating that long term exposure to NO₂ may affect lung function and increase sensitivity to allergens amongst vulnerable individuals. Additionally NO₂ is also involved in the production of secondary pollutants such as low lying ozone (O₃) which is formed as a result of photochemical reactions in the ambient environment and is itself implicated in a number of health defects. The Council monitors NO₂ at 14 locations and it is the air pollutant of most current concern in Rossendale. Results of recent monitoring have shown that NO₂ levels have been in gradual ascendance for the past 3 years and may marginally exceed current National Air Quality Standards at 2 locations in Rossendale where public exposure may occur. This is the subject of ongoing investigation.

1.3.2 PM₁₀ Particles

PM₁₀ particles are particulate matter suspended in the air with a diameter of less than 10 microns (1 micron = 1 thousandth of a millimetre). They are produced by human activities, primarily combustion, but also by natural activities such as the weathering of soils. PM₁₀ particle levels have been associated with a number of health defects including decreases in lung function and the increase in

symptoms and exacerbation of respiratory ailments. PM₁₀ levels are not currently thought to exceed National Air Quality Standards at any location in Rossendale.

1.3.3 Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon Monoxide is a colourless gas formed by the incomplete combustion of carbon containing fuels such as petrol and gas. As much as 90% of CO found in outdoor areas is believed to come from road transport. In high enough levels CO causes mortality as it constricts the transport of oxygen around the body, although exposure of this level is highly unlikely except in isolated incidents involving faulty heating systems etc. Exposure to lower levels can precipitate angina in those who are susceptible and reduce mental performance causing confusion and loss of coordination. CO levels are not currently thought to exceed National Air Quality Standards at any location in Rossendale.

1.3.4 Sulphur Dioxide (SO₂)

SO₂ is produced by the burning of sulphur compounds, which are a natural constituent of coal and oil. Heat generation in homes and businesses is therefore the main source of this pollutant in Rossendale. At high levels SO₂ is known to cause irritation and constriction of the airways causing discomfort and breathing difficulties. SO₂ levels are not currently thought to exceed National Air Quality Standards at any location in Rossendale.

1.3.5 Benzene

Benzene is a chemical compound of Carbon and Hydrogen which is released into the air from the tail pipes of motor vehicles (approx. 70%) and as a result of evaporation whilst refuelling (approx. 30%). At high concentrations Benzene is carcinogenic and occupational studies have shown that long term exposure to significant concentrations may be associated with leukaemia. Benzene levels are not currently thought to exceed National Air Quality Standards at any location in Rossendale.

1.3.6 1,3-Butadiene

1,3-Butadiene is a hydrocarbon gas formed by the combustion of petrol and diesel fuel. Short term exposure to high concentrations can result in irritation of the eyes, nose, throat and skin. Longer term exposure has been shown to be linked to a range of cancers. 1,3-Butadiene levels are not currently thought to exceed National Air Quality Standards at any location in Rossendale.

1.3.7 Radon

Radon is a radioactive element which is formed by the natural decomposition of Radium within the crust of the earth. At ambient temperatures it is a gas and can become problematic if allowed to build up within confined spaces in buildings. In this way Radon is different from the above pollutants in that it is only largely problematic in indoor environments and is not produced as a result of human activity. It is however inert, colourless and odourless, so can build up undetected

for a number of years if unchecked and has been implicated in higher than average rates of lung cancer in some areas of the country. Due to this link with lung cancer it is of greater importance if the exposed person is a smoker and therefore already predisposed to cancers of this type. Radon production is reliant on a number of factors including, primarily, the underlying geology of an area and a recent report by the Health Protection Agency has indicated that some areas of Rossendale may be at a medium level of risk from Radon build up. This is the subject of ongoing investigation.

2.0 Background to Rossendale

2.1 Brief Outline of the Area

Rossendale is one of the smallest Lancashire districts, with a slowly rising population of approximately 66,700. It covers 138 square km and is located 15 miles to the north of the Manchester City boundary between the conurbations of West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester; a band of urban development runs East-West along the deeply incised upper valley of the River Irwell, flanked by harsh Pennine moorland scattered with isolated settlements. The Borough of Rossendale itself comprises of, for the large part, picturesque fells and moorland where the close knit communities of Rawtenstall, Bacup, Haslingden, Whitworth, Edenfield and Stubbins can be found.

Traditionally the principal industries of the area have been footwear, textiles and light engineering but now former factories and other converted buildings are more likely occupied by companies operating in the retail, leisure and distribution industries.

With regards air quality and pollution, although once an industrialised area close to the centre of the Industrial Revolution, over the last two decades much of the 19th Century character of the area has disappeared which has resulted in cleaner air with the predominant source of air pollution now clearly transport and road traffic, as opposed to the sulphur emitting mills of years gone by.

2.2 Description of Air Quality Problems in Rossendale

Contemporary air pollution primarily arises from one of 3 sources which are ubiquitous throughout Rossendale:

2.2.1 Transport and Road Traffic

The combustion of petrol and diesel fuel in motor vehicles produces a plethora of air pollutants (see 1.3) which lead to a reduction in local air quality and have numerous related health effects. Although levels of pollution produced in this way vary from day to day and depend on factors such as levels of traffic and local weather conditions, transport and road traffic have been identified as being by far the largest source of air pollution in Rossendale with 'hotspots' of pollution occurring where traffic is regularly heavy or prone to congestion. Despite this, pollution from this source is largely accepted by the public and thought of as

'unavoidable' and as such the Council receives very few complaints regarding this.

2.2.2 Industrial Installations

Industrial activities which result in the release of air pollution from exhaust flues etc. take place at several installations within Rossendale. The Council allows these activities to take place as long as they operate within the limits of permits issued by the Environmental Health Service which govern and restrict the amount of emissions produced and precautions which must be taken etc. These are known as 'Permitted Processes' and are strictly regulated and monitored but produce some level of air pollution nonetheless (the negative impact of this pollution is considered to be offset by the positive impact enterprise such as this has upon the local micro-economy). The Council receives approximately 30 complaints from the public regarding this each year, usually when emissions are unusually visible.

2.2.3 Houses and Other Buildings

As well as producing a steady level of pollutants as a result of the combustion of fuel for power or heat generation, individual dwellings and other buildings are occasionally a source of 'one off' pollution episodes, such as bonfires and other open burning events, or the improper burning of non smokeless fuels which can cause friction between neighbours and result in nuisance complaints. This type of incident is unlikely to impact on physical health but causes stress and loss of amenity. The Council receives approximately 80-100 complaints of this type each year.

3.0 Aim of the Air Quality Strategy

The overarching aim of the Air Quality Strategy is to "minimise the effects of air pollution on the quality of life in Rossendale".

4.0 Policy Statement

The intention of this policy is to ensure the protection of people from existing air pollution sources, ensure Council compliance with the relevant legislation and to take action to reduce the production of pollution with a view to improving overall air quality in the long term.

Rossendale Borough Council believes that people living in the Borough have a right to the following:

- A right to breath clean air which will not adversely affect their health.
- A right to the enjoyment of their properties without interference from air pollution caused by neighbours and others, whether residential, commercial or industrial on a regular basis such that it causes loss of amenity.
- The availability of qualified, competent staff during normal working hours to consider the existence of a statutory nuisance.

The Council will achieve its aim by:

- Fulfilling its duty to investigate, and where necessary, abate statutory nuisance in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- Regulating permitted processes in accordance with required procedures.
- Reacting to applications for development in order to prevent air pollution affecting susceptible populations in the future.
- Promoting awareness amongst all sectors of the community in order to secure their consideration of others in respect of air quality and pollution.
- Liaising and working with other Authorities, agencies and organisations.
- Undertaking enforcement action in compliance with the Enforcement Policy.
- Communicating performance in relation to air quality to residents and outside bodies and obtaining feedback on the service and its delivery.
- Committing appropriate resources, including staff and equipment, for the design and delivery of the services.
- Monitoring and reviewing the service in order to ensure consistency of service delivery and maintenance of an effective, efficient and economic service that reflects best practice.

5.0 Relevant Legislation

Legislation in relation to air quality comprises of four main streams:

- a) The Environment Act 1995 introduced a system of local air quality management (LAQM). This requires local authorities to periodically review and assess the current, and likely future, air quality in their areas against national air quality objectives for seven air pollutants included in regulations for that purpose. Where any objective is unlikely to be met by the relevant deadline, local authorities must designate those areas as air quality management areas (AQMA) and take action, along with others, to work towards meeting the objectives.
- b) The Environmental Protection Act 1990 sets out a duty on every local authority to inspect its area from time to time to detect any statutory nuisance. This includes the following situations which may be prejudicial to health or a nuisance:
 - i) Smoke emitted from premises,
 - ii) Fumes and gases emitted from a premises,
 - iii) Any dust, steam, smell or other effluvia arising on industrial, trade or business premises.
- c) The Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000 regulate pollution from industrial installations and require operators of certain industrial and other installations to obtain a permit to operate. The permit when issued will include conditions aimed at reducing and preventing pollution to acceptable levels, which are set by the Government.

- d) The Clean Air Act 1993 prohibits emissions of dark smoke from chimneys and dark smoke from industrial and trade premises, prohibition of domestic emissions of smoke in smoke control areas and deals with unauthorised fuels and exempt appliances.

In addition, the Council has the following duty and has made the following commitments:

- e) The Council has a duty under Section 3(2) of the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006, to have regard to the current Energy Measures Report in relation to any of its functions. By controlling emissions to air, Local Authorities can contribute to climate change mitigation through encouraging businesses to comply with the emissions conditions of permits, plans to reduce carbon emissions and working to reduce other pollution from road traffic.
- f) The Council has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change. This commits the Authority to publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.
- g) The Council's Environmental Strategy includes an objective to maintain and improve air quality in the valley.

6.0 Controlling Existing Pollution and Services Provided

The principle means for monitoring and controlling existing sources of air pollution in order to prevent the exceedance of standards and abate nuisance are outlined below.

6.1 Bonfires and Open Burning

Nature of Pollution - Precipitates the release of smoke, noxious gases and particulate matter into the atmosphere which is likely to cause annoyance and the loss of amenity amongst surrounding properties.

Possible Remedial Action - Complaints of this nature are dealt with using both informal and formal action including the sending of letters and diary sheets, and visits made by Council Officers to the properties concerned. Legal notices requiring abatement of nuisance can also be served if necessary.

Relevant Legislation - The Environmental Protection Act 1990 and the Clean Air Act 1993.

6.2 Smoke from Chimneys

Nature of Pollution - The whole of Rossendale is a smoke control area which means that residents with solid fuel fires must burn only smokeless fuel or use an

approved appliance to prevent the release of smoke, noxious gases and particulate matter into the atmosphere.

Possible Remedial Action - Informal and formal action can be taken usually involving the sending of letters and/or visits from a Council Officer. Legal notices requiring abatement of nuisance can also be served if necessary.

Relevant Legislation - The Clean Air Act 1993.

6.3 Sandblasting and Other Dust Complaints or Odour and Light Nuisance Complaints etc.

Nature of Pollution - Sandblasting and other processes involved with the construction and renovation trades can produce large amounts of airborne dust which may be a nuisance and prejudicial to health.

Possible Remedial Action - Informal and formal action may be taken which involves contacting the person responsible to make them aware of the complaint and discussing ways in which the pollution can be minimised. This is again done by way of sending letters and visits from the appropriate Council Officers. Legal notices requiring abatement of nuisance can also be served if necessary. Work is also to be undertaken to educate local firms involved with the building and renovation trades and ensure they adopt best practice techniques in order to minimise the amount of dust pollution caused by their activities.

Relevant Legislation – The Environmental Protection Act 1990

6.4 Permitted Processes

Nature of Pollution – Industrial activity can result in the production of a number of air pollutants which can enter the atmosphere via exhaust flues etc. and can be harmful to health if not carefully monitored.

Possible Remedial Action - As is required by the Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations the Council issues permits setting emission limits etc. to all installations wishing to carry out industrial processes in Rossendale. It also carries out a minimum of one risk based inspection per year and responds to complaints from the public regarding emissions, and where a contravention of a permit is suspected formal or informal action is taken. This usually involves talking to and meeting with the managers of the business in question by the relevant Council Officers or their contractors.

Relevant Legislation - The Pollution Prevention and Control Regulations 2000 and the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

6.5 Road Traffic

Nature of Pollution – Road traffic and transport results in the production of a range of air pollutants as a result of the combustion of petrol and diesel fuel within vehicles which may be harmful to health.

Possible Remedial Action - The Council monitors Nitrogen Dioxide at 14 locations across Rossendale on a monthly basis to ensure that the levels are within the Government set limits. Where results from this monitoring indicate that pollutant levels are likely to exceed national targets, increased monitoring is undertaken and the declaration of an Air Quality Management Area is considered.

Relevant Legislation - The Environment Act 1995.

7.0 Reducing Pollution and Improving Air Quality

In addition to controlling existing pollution levels as described above, Rossendale Borough Council is committed to reducing pollution levels and improving air quality as part of its Environment Strategy, and to helping fight Climate Change as is required by the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006 and through signature of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

The Council has identified that the majority of air pollution in Rossendale now originates from transport and as such any action taken to improve air quality will largely revolve around reducing levels of road traffic or improving the efficiency of that which exists. The strategic action the Council intends to take in order to achieve this is outlined below.

7.1 Social Marketing

Traditional marketing techniques can be applied to the public sector in order to encourage a behavioural change amongst Rossendale residents which will in time facilitate an improvement in local air quality.

Social marketing can be used to show the public how their behaviour affects local issues such as air quality and can help them understand the ways in which they can help the Council to improve the local environment, for example by cycling and walking instead of driving, and by adopting greener driving techniques etc.

The Council can achieve this through many means including:

- Traditional advertising campaigns involving the production and distribution of leaflets and posters etc.
- Promoting and participating in national schemes or events such as 'Energy Saving Week' and 'Walk to Work Day'.
- Promote the services of outside bodies holding similar agendas such as the Energy Saving Trust and The Carbon Trust etc.
- Attending relevant fairs and events etc.
- Issuing Press Releases to local media.
- Use of the Council Website.

7.2 Planning Obligations

Development work, such as the building of new housing or other buildings can impact air quality in Rossendale significantly. Planning Obligations (also known as Section 106 Agreements) are legally binding agreements which are negotiated by the Council at the planning stage of a development, usually in the context of the planning application. These can be used to ensure any impact on air quality is kept to a minimum or even to secure funding to be spent improving local air quality.

Planning Obligations can perform the following functions with an eventual goal of improved local air quality:

- Secure funding for the setup and maintenance of air quality monitoring schemes.
- Secure funding for the provision of other measures designed to improve air quality such as cycle paths, dedicated bus routes, new recreational facilities and tree planting programmes etc.
- Place restrictions on developments such as limiting vehicle access or parking provision to minimise traffic related emissions.
- Require green features such as sustainable design and alternative energy etc. are incorporated into building designs to reduce future energy related emissions.
- Ensure best practice with regards air quality is used at all points during construction, operational, and demolition phases of a development.

Planning obligations when used appropriately provide a means of ensuring developers contribute to any infrastructure or facilities which the Council believes are necessary to maintain the level of air quality in Rossendale. It is however vital that any obligations agreed are monitored and enforced effectively. This involves ensuring any agreed actions are carried out and that all money owed is collected and used to improve air quality.

7.3 Green Driving

Many motorists waste money and cause unnecessary transport related emissions because of the way they drive and maintain their vehicle. Simply offering advice to motorists in many cases is enough to help them change the way they behave and reduce their motoring costs.

Also known as Eco or Smarter Driving, Green Driving involves the adoption of driving techniques which reduce the environmental impact of a car and ensure environmentally optimal vehicle operation. This includes such things as altering general driving style and behaviour, checking tyre pressures and type, removing excess weight and drag producing factors from vehicles and general motor maintenance tips.

Green driving benefits both the public and the Council as it reduces motoring costs for the driver and encourages lower emissions of air pollutants and

greenhouse gases, resulting in improved air quality and a reduced local contribution to climate change.

The Council will use and promote green driving to improve air quality by:

- Educating own staff in green driving ethos. As one of the largest employers in Rossendale, and with many staff residing within the borough, the Council can make a considerable start on spreading the concept of green driving simply by circulating the relevant information via in house email systems and newsletters etc. As well as enabling employees to save money this should allow the ideas and advice involved to spread beyond the council as staff take it home to families and friends.
- Produce own communications such as leaflets and posters etc. which can be circulated amongst general public and in particular be targeted at relevant groups such as businesses employing large numbers of drivers, learner drivers via driving schools and commercial drivers such as taxi and bus drivers.
- Use Council website to promote green driving and link to national campaigns such as those run by the Department for Transport etc.
- Include green driving as part of 'social marketing' campaign (see 7.1).

7.4 Workplace Travel Plans

A workplace travel plan is a package of measures and initiatives that can be produced by major employers which aim to reduce the number of car journeys made by staff and cut their associated emissions. This can include measures encouraging multi occupancy car use, car sharing schemes, improving cycle facilities (for instance by providing a lock up shed or changing facilities etc.) and promoting flexible working practices such as remote access to computer systems, home working and video conferencing.

In addition to improving air quality and reducing greenhouse gas production, workplace travel plans can benefit not only the organisation and its employees but also the community which surrounds it, for instance by helping to relieve local parking and congestion problems.

In order to take advantage of the benefits available through a workplace travel plan the Council will lead by example and produce its own corporate travel plan. Advice will also be circulated to other local businesses on how to prepare their own travel plans which will hopefully encourage others to follow suit.

7.5 Green Fleet Management

The Council operates its own fleet of vehicles to deliver essential services to Rossendale residents, including refuse collection vehicles, street sweeping vehicles and numerous 4x4 vehicles and vans. The operation of this fleet causes considerable emissions to be released which with may be avoidable with better environmental and fleet management.

The Council intends to initiate improvement in the environmental performance of its own fleet by:

- Compiling a 'fleet inventory' which will include information on all Council owned vehicles and their mileages, approximate running costs, emissions data and maintenance / replacement schedules. This will help to quantify the environmental impact of the current fleet and identify where improvements can be made.
- Taking environmental considerations into account when procurement decisions on new vehicles are made, alongside more traditional considerations such as financial cost. This may include such things as a requirement that all new vehicles comply with the most recent 'Euro-standard' for exhaust emissions.

Greener fleet management will improve the Council's corporate environmental reputation showing it to be a leader in emissions reduction in the community and help it to meet two new National Indicators (NI 194 & NI 185) which require Councils to reduce Carbon Dioxide, Nitrogen Dioxide and particulate emissions from their own estate and vehicles. Clear financial incentives to implement greener fleet policies also exist in relation to fuel efficiency and tax savings.

7.6 Penalty Notices for Stationary Idling

Drivers who keep their engines running when stationary (stationary idling), except under circumstances where it is necessary to do so i.e. when waiting in traffic or when required to run refrigeration equipment etc., create unnecessary pollution and noise, and waste fuel. Under Regulation 98 of the Road Vehicles Regulations 1986 a requirement for drivers to switch off their engines when parked was created (except in exceptional circumstances) and under the Road Traffic Regulations 2002 Councils were given the power to request drivers to turn off their engines when stationary and issue a fixed penalty notice to those failing to cooperate resulting in a fine of £20.

In order to reduce unnecessary emissions and air pollution from this source the Council intends to train its Parking Enforcement Officers to enforce the above regulations. In the vast majority of cases it is anticipated that drivers will cooperate with a verbal request to switch off their engines and issuing a fixed penalty notice will not be necessary.

The Council will also seek to raise the public awareness of pollution caused in this way by publicising the issue by way of the Council website, production of posters and stickers etc., through the local press and by erecting signs in the relevant locations such as outside local schools where, for example, parents waiting to collect their children may be particularly problematic.

7.7 Radon Sampling

In response to a Health Protection Agency report suggesting that some areas of Rossendale may be at a medium level risk from Radon build up, the Council will undertake further work of its own to determine the actual level of risk and

respond appropriately. Initially this will involve sending out Radon testing discs to a sample of properties believed to be in the most at risk areas and upon receiving the results of this survey a further action plan will be formulated depending on the determined level of risk.

8.0 Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Monthly output reports are produced detailing the number of air quality complaints dealt with on a monthly basis. Customer satisfaction forms are sent out following the closure of a complaint and comments received back on the forms are acted upon to continue to improve the service. We also survey businesses involved with the operation of permitted processes to determine their level of satisfaction with our services.

The total number of the complaints dealt with is detailed in the Council's Annual Environmental Health Report and figures are sent on an annual basis to DEFRA who collate statistics on air quality and pollution nationally.

The Principal Environmental Health Officer audits requests for service to ensure that each case is dealt with promptly, professionally and fairly in line with the Council's procedure. The Principal Environmental Health Officer also attends quarterly meetings of the Lancashire Environmental Protection Officers' Group to benchmark, compare and share working practices to ensure consistency Lancashire wide.

9.0 Contact details

If a member of the public is aggrieved by an air quality nuisance then contact with the Council can be made by any of the following means:

- By telephoning 01706 252565 or 01706 217777
- By email to envhealth@rossendalebc.gov.uk
- In person by visiting the One Stop Shop, located in Town Centre Offices, Rawtenstall
- In writing to the Environmental Health Service, Stubblelee Hall, Stubblelee Lane, Bacup, Lancashire, OL13 0DE
- By fax to 01706 870447
- By the internet by completing a request for service form on the Council's web site at www.rossendale.gov.uk
- Via the local ward Councillor

The complainant must provide their own name, address and a telephone number as well as details of the complaint and the address of the premises at which the air pollution nuisance is alleged to exist. A description of the air pollution, when and for how long it occurs, the way in which it affects them and anything they have done to try to resolve the problem must also be given.

Details of all complainants are kept in strict confidence unless otherwise agreed. Only during legal proceedings would these details be released, and the

complainant's agreement to this position is normally secured at a relatively early stage during the investigation. Anonymous air pollution complaints may not be able to be progressed beyond informal action where the complainant's evidence is required, although in some cases illegal pollution events may be enforceable using the Officers own pollution observations.

Document Management

Version	Date	By Who
Version 1.0	11 th November 2008	Harry Boys Technical Officer Environmental Health
Version 1.1	20 th November 2008	Philip Mepham Environmental Health Manager

If you would like a summary of this information in large print, on audio cassette or language other than English, please let us know and we will be happy to arrange it.

Please telephone 01706 217777 or Contact Communications Section, PO BOX 74, Bacup, OL13 0WU

اگر آپ کو ان معلومات کا خلاصہ بڑے حروف میں، آڈیو کیسٹ پر، یا انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہے تو برائے مہربانی ہمیں بتائیں، ہم بخوشی آپ کے لیے اس کا انتظام کریں گے۔
برائے مہربانی 01706 217777 پر ٹیلیفون کریں یا پھر کمیونٹی کیشن سیکشن سے اس پتہ پر رابطہ قائم کریں:

Communications Section, PO Box 74, Bacup, OL13 0WU

آپانی যদি এসب তথ্যের সার সংক্ষেপ বড় হরফের ছাপায়, অডিও ক্যাসেটে অথবা ইংরেজী ছাড়া অন্য কোন ভাষায় পেতে চান তাহলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদেরকে জানালে আমরা অত্যন্ত খুশী মনে তার ব্যবস্থা করব।

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