

South Dublin County Council – Council Meeting 13th December 2021

The Dublin Region Air Quality Plan 2021 Report

Introduction

Ireland is obliged to implement EU Directive [2008/50/EC](#) on ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe (also referred to as the CAFÉ Directive). Among other things, this Directive involves carrying out air quality monitoring for several specified air pollutants at a network of air quality monitoring stations throughout the country. These requirements were transposed into national legislation in Ireland by the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2011 (S.I.180/2011).

In 2019, there was an exceedance of the annual permissible limit value for one of these pollutants – nitrogen dioxide - at a single monitoring station in Dublin. There were no other exceedances recorded elsewhere for nitrogen dioxide or any other specified air pollutant during 2019.

Under the national legislation, if this occurs the relevant local authorities are obliged to prepare an air quality plan to identify the root causes and formulate measures to address the exceedance of that pollutant for submission to the EU within two years of the exceedance being reported. In this case, the Air Quality Plan must therefore specifically relate to nitrogen dioxide and must address the exceedance in question. The relevant local authorities in this case are those that make up *Agglomeration A - the Dublin Conurbation*. This consists of the functional areas of Dublin City Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Council, and most of Fingal County Council.

At a South Dublin County Council Environment SPC meeting on the 7th of September 2021 an update was provided on the development of the Air Quality Plan. Please see SPC report [here](#). Since the SPC meeting on the 7th of September 2021 a four-week period of public consultation has been completed and a report on the submissions received is included as a separate report.

The submissions have been reviewed with comments and views received broken into categories across a range of common themes. Responses relating to each theme have been provided in respect of how these are accommodated within the Air Quality Plan and/or other Plans and Strategies relating to Air Quality, Transportation, or land use with details of any action or amendment that have been in the Plan set out.

Update to the Plan

The draft Air Quality Plan included 14 measures as summarised below.

- Integrate “15 Minute Neighbourhoods” concept in City and County development Plans
- Public Parking Controls
- Residential Parking Standards
- Workplace Parking Standards
- Continue delivery of the Active Travel Programme
- Electrical Vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy
- Publication of National Clean Air Strategy

- Air Quality Enabling Legislation
- Introduction of Clean Air Zones / Low Emission Zones
- Remote / Flexible Working
- Enhanced Air Quality Monitoring and Modelling
- Air Quality – Citizen Engagement
- Air Quality and Health Research
- Behavioural Change Campaigns to Cleaner Fleets

These 14 measures remain within the final Plan. While there were varying comments and levels of support for each, the responses did not warrant the removal or a significant change to any one measure. Modifications have been made to two of the measures as set out below;

- **Measure 9** of the Plan to be amended to include an action as follows; The UTRAP Working Group, which includes the Dublin Local Authorities, should commit to further investigations into the feasibility of Low Emissions Zones in Dublin.
- **Measure 12** to be modified to reflect Smart Cities involvement in citizen engagement project

A 2nd draft of the Air Quality Plan is currently underway considering the feedback from the consultation. This version remains draft subject to amendments given the tight timeframe to completion. Although significant modifications and changes are not anticipated with most amendments resulting from proof reading of the final document and are likely to be minor in nature.

The revised Plan will also need to be rescreened for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) for the changes now proposed. The draft for public consultation had concluded that a SEA and an AA was not required. This rescreening has not been completed at the time of writing this report.

Next Steps

A copy of the updated Draft Air Quality Plan (subject to amendment) was issued with the Information Pack for the full Council meeting for the 13th of December 2021. The Air Quality Plan (subject to amendment) has been placed as an agenda item on the Council meeting for discussion and noting.

The Air Quality Plan (subject to amendment) will be noted at the full Council meetings of the other three Dublin Local Authorities on the 6th and 13th December 2021.

The Plan is subject to ongoing final proof reading and will be finalised with a view to issuing to the EPA on the 17th of December 2021. Any further amendments are not expected to be material and are expected to be format related and minor in nature.