



## WMCA Environment Board

<b>Date</b>	10 September 2018
<b>Report title</b>	Update on developing a West Midlands Low Emission Strategy
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<b>Report has been considered by</b>	Summary considered by WMCA Board - 20 July 2018

**Recommendation(s) for action or decision:**

**The Environment Board is recommended to:**

- (1) Approve the scope and direction of the development of a West Midlands Low Emission Strategy

## **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 To update the Board on work to date and seek approval to begin strategy development.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 At its July meeting, the WMCA Board agreed to strengthen the WMCA Environment Board and that it should oversee the development of a strategic approach to air quality covering the whole WMCA area and building on the emerging industrial strategy and existing transport delivery plan.

2.2 Informal consultation with internal and external stakeholders including local authorities shows that there is clear appetite for the West Midlands to develop a strategic approach on Air Quality and a low emissions strategy and delivery plan, – similar to the approach used by Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, and partly by London in their new Environment Strategy. This is emerging good practice for our major urban areas and necessary to ensure that overall the West Midlands takes a coordinated approach to reducing the negative economic and health effects of poor air quality. There are compelling reasons for the West Midlands developing a plan now:

- the opportunity that the West Midlands has to be a national leader in transport and mobility innovation, supported by very significant investment in public transport and zero emissions vehicles in the years ahead.
- the benefits of ensuring that action in one part of the region is seen as part of an overall approach – minimising the transfer of issues or poor outcomes around the region
- Birmingham City Council's recent consultation on a Clean Air Zone
- Government's continued pressure on individual local authorities to meet air quality targets

2.3 The WMCA Board agreed that the development of the strategy will be overseen by the new Environment Board and agreed by the WMCA board, and that potential principles for a West Midlands approach to Low Emissions could include:

- Build on existing powers and duties of individual local authorities, who remain responsible for delivery and direction in their areas.
- Keep a strategic approach to improving air quality by continuing to measure an overall basket of air quality indicators, and greenhouse gases, not just Nitrogen Dioxide.
- Develop a grand challenge to address clean growth and mobility as part of WMCA Local Industrial Strategy and bid for Government funding.
- Develop a Low Emissions Strategy to help coordinate monitoring, grand challenge actions, and scale up local good practice.
- WMCA to use investment programme to lead by example, through building standards, transport contracts etc.

2.4 Based on these principles we have developed more detailed scope for a Low Emission Strategy including through informal consultation with stakeholders and learning from other cities. This is in Appendix 1.

2.5 To support the Board, we are proposing that the day to day strategy development work be led by the CA, working with a steering group comprising of representatives from TfWM, WM local councils pollution officers network, and the WMCA Environment Board Advisory and Delivery Group (EADG). It will involve the use of external experts as required to work with councils and the CA to develop a strategy and action plan.

2.6 A draft strategy and action plan will go to the 1 February 2019 Environment Board to comment on and recommend for approval to a subsequent WMCA Board meeting.

### **3.0 Financial implications**

3.1 The cost of external advice to support the development of the strategy and action plan will come from the WMCA Budget. The final action plan could have a range of proposed activities that would have additional financial implications. These will be considered in any future budgeting process if approved by the Board and any potential financial implications will be considered by the Environment Board before the strategy is finalised.

### **4.0 Legal implications**

4.1 This strategy and action plan is a non-statutory document.

### **5.0 Equalities implications**

5.1 The implementation of this strategy and action plan in tackling air quality and greenhouse gases should help contribute to addressing health inequalities within the WMCA area.

## Appendix 1: Scope of WM Low Emission Strategy

### Objectives and outcomes of a West Midlands Low Emissions Strategy and Action Plan:

- **Support for local action** - Joint action between local authorities, the WMCA and other stakeholders where this will accelerate existing agreed local plans to tackle air quality and greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Social, economic, and environment outcomes** – accelerated activity will result in improved health, such as reduction in premature deaths and health inequalities, economic productivity, such as reduced congestion and attraction of new business, and an improved natural environment.
- **Attract investors** - help to scale up opportunities to attract investors to fund innovation, manufacturing and deployment of solutions both locally and for export. Underpin the WMCA ambition to produce the UK's first 'clean, inclusive, and resilient growth' local industrial strategy and inform relevant bids such as future Industrial Strategy 'grand challenges'.

### The format of the Strategy and Action Plan

This is flexible to meet the objectives, however it is likely to include:

- The strategy setting out:
  - the nature of the problem,
  - links with other local and regional strategies,
  - rationale for the focus on particular actions,
  - and delivery mechanisms either through existing plans and activities or new activity.
- The action plan with:
  - a clear set of actions and owners
  - success measures, milestones, and monitoring.
- The evidence base and methodology used to allow future updates of the strategy and action plan. This is to include:
  - some form of scoring matrix on how the actions were prioritised against criteria such as rationale/value for regional action, ease/cost of implementation, and scale of impact.
  - Maps and graphs covering the sources and concentrations of different emissions.
- To review and recommend appropriate delivery structures e.g. Joint Low Emissions Unit

### The Geographic area

The strategy is to cover the same area covered by the WMCA Strategic Economic Plan and draft Local Industrial Strategy. This is the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) of the Black Country, Greater Birmingham and Solihull, and Coventry and Warwickshire.

There will need to be a recognition of the diverse economic geography and good practice of urban and rural areas. However the prioritisation of actions will need to be focused on where there is a concentration of emissions and health impacts, which is likely to be in the WMCA constituent members urban areas.

## **Emissions and targets covered**

Greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change covered by the UK Climate Change Act and the 2050 target of an 80% reduction on 1990 levels. At the SEP level this is a 2030 target of 40% reduction on 1990 levels. This is currently monitored by the WMCA Performance Management Framework indicator PMF E.1. of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e).

Emissions that contribute to air quality and have the highest impact on health covered by the draft UK air quality strategy with 2020 and 2030 targets for reduction. These are:

- fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) reduction against the 2005 baseline by 30% by 2020, and 46% by 2030.
- particular matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) reduction against the 2005 baseline to 50% or less of UK population living in areas with concentrations of (10 µg/m<sup>3</sup>) by 2025
- ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) reduce emissions against the 2005 baseline by 8% by 2020 and 16% by 2030.
- nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) reduce emissions against the 2005 baseline by 55% by 2020, and by increasing 73% by 2030.
- sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) reduce emissions against the 2005 baseline by 59% by 2020, increasing to 88% by 2030.
- non-methane volatile organic compounds (NMVOCs) reduce emissions against the 2005 baseline by 32% by 2020, increasing to 39% by 2030.
- ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) as secondary pollutant to ensure it does not increase as NO<sub>x</sub> reduces and keeps within EU limits.

At the SEP level the target is to reduce the number of poor air days (a 4 or higher in the Defra Daily Air Quality Index to reflect likely legal breaches of the pollutants and the beginning of health warnings) from 40 in 2016 to 1 by 2030. This currently monitored by the WMCA Performance Management Framework indicator PMF E.2. of number of days scoring '4' or higher on the Daily Air Quality Index. The index covers a basket of most of the current pollutants in the draft air quality strategy e.g. PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, Ozone. However it omits NH<sub>3</sub> and NMVOCs which need to be reviewed as part of the new strategy.

## **Timescales for Strategy and Action Plan (2019-2030)**

The strategy should align with the SEP and Local Industrial Strategy and therefore cover the period when the Low emissions strategy is launched in early 2019 and the alignment with many of the national air quality targets.

## **Consultation and stakeholder involvement**

The strategy is not statutory and will be drawing on existing local plans and knowledge which have already been subject to detailed consultation. Therefore the focus will be to consult with the local authorities and regional stakeholders on a strategy and plan for joint working to accelerate existing agreed local action, rather than engage directly with the public locally.

This strategy will support the decision made by Birmingham City Council, after public consultation, on a local Clean Air Zone.

Where possible the strategy is required to build on existing good practice and development experience from other Combined Authorities who have developed similar strategies, especially Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire, and the London Integrated Environment strategy.

## **Governance of the development of the strategy**

The WMCA Environment Board and supporting officers and partners will be the group overseeing the development of the strategy to ensure it 'adds value' and through joint working at scale will help accelerate existing local good practice driven by individual local councils. This Board will ultimately recommend the final strategy for approval by the Mayor and WMCA Board. There will be a strategy steering group dealing with the day to day development of the strategy. This will be formed from representatives from Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), the WM air quality/pollution officers group, the WMCA Environment Board air quality workstream advisor. This group will be chaired by the WMCA Interim Head of Environment, who will also act as the primary client contact for the consultants supporting the development of the strategy.

## **Timescales for development of Strategy and Action Plan**

The indicative timescales are:

- September – update/input from WMCA Environment Board, and first meeting of steering group.
- End of January 2019 – draft for approval by Steering Group
- 1 February presentation to WMCA Environment Board
- 1 March final report delivered, and then formally adopted by WMCA Board later in year.