

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** Monday 17th September 2018

CONTACT OFFICER: Jason Newman, Environmental Quality Team Manager

(For all enquiries) (01753) 875219

WARD(S): ALL

PORTFOLIO: Cllr Rob Anderson – Environment and Leisure

PART I **KEY DECISION**

LOW EMISSION STRATEGY

1 Purpose of Report

The Slough Low Emission Strategy (LES) forms part of the Slough Air Quality Action Plan. The LES lays out an integrated, year on year plan to improve air quality over the period until 2025 through a reduction in vehicle emissions by accelerating the uptake of cleaner fuels and technologies.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to recommend that the Low Emission Strategy be approved and taken before Full Council for adoption.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan

3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

By tackling air pollution through a co-ordinated programme of vehicle emission improvement measures, the LES seeks to reduce the impact of air quality on the health of local residents in line with the Wellbeing Strategy. The LES supports three key priorities within the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy:

- protecting vulnerable children
- increasing life expectancy by focussing on inequalities
- improving mental health and wellbeing

3b Five Year Plan Outcomes

Transport has a major role to play in helping to address the challenges we face. Better transport, and the improved connectivity and accessibility which results, combined with the promotion of a shift to sustainable transport modes and vehicle emission reductions, outlined in the LES, can support many of the important Five-Year Plan Outcomes identified, in particular:

Outcome 2 – Our people will be healthier and manage their own care

In terms of longer terms priorities outlined within Outcome 2

- Work with our partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents

Outcome 3 – Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay.

In terms of longer terms priorities outlined within Outcome 3

- Improve air quality in the borough with innovative solutions
- Actively manage the impact of new developments and infrastructure so the town centre is a place where people can live, work, shop and enjoy.

As part of the Transport Strategy and Local Transport Plan, the LES can help to capitalise on opportunities brought about through increased inward investment.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

There are no direct financial implications of the proposed action to approve the Low Emission Strategy (LES). The LES does not include any commitments for increased SBC expenditure. Many of the LES measures are already being delivered as part of agreed, existing budgets and changes to policies.

However, as a Strategy to 2025, the LES has been designed as a platform for inward investment and aligns with Government funding programmes and other opportunities for funding. The LES includes an ambitious Low Emission Programme (draft), Appendix 3 that outlines potential, costed projects that can be taken forward, subject to available funding opportunities. Such opportunities may include OLEV (Office for Low Emission Vehicles) grants, DEFRA (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) grants, DfT (Department for Transport) grants, LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) funding, Section 106 contributions from major development schemes, HAL (Heathrow Airport Ltd) community funding, Capital borrowing and private sector investment. Further details of the Low Emission Programme (draft) can be found in section 5.10 of this report.

There are significant, indirect financial benefits from improving health outcomes for our residents as a result of improving air quality, particularly in relation to health and social care costs. It is possible to quantify some of these benefits.

(b) Risk Management

Recommendation from section 2 above	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
<p>The Cabinet is requested to recommend that the Low Emission Strategy is adopted and taken before Full Council for approval</p>	<p>a) Economical /Financial:</p> <p>The LES includes a draft Low Emission Programme that will seek opportunities for funding</p>	<p>Many SBC LES commitments are already being delivered within existing budgets and policy changes</p> <p>The LES includes a costed Low Emission Programme (draft) that can be delivered, subject to successful, future funding. This may include grants, capital growth bids, LEP funding, HAL Community Funding, private sector investment or developer off-set mitigation on major schemes</p> <p>All new bids for capital funding are subject to Council procedure</p> <p>SBC will horizon scan for all relevant funding opportunities, building on successes to date</p>	4	<p>The LES seeks to provide a platform for inward investment. The LES has been designed to maximise opportunities from funding schemes and private investment.</p> <p>Current controls for capital growth bids will be adhered to.</p> <p>SBC will pursue all relevant funding opportunities</p> <p>A detailed delivery plan will be submitted to Cabinet for approval in due course</p>
	<p>b) Political</p>	<p>The LES is a manifesto pledge that is being delivered</p>		3

	c) Environment	<p>Changes in future climate systems may counter-act our efforts to improve air quality.</p> <p>The LES is based on what we can control and seeks the reduction in road transport emissions that form best practice nationally, both in terms of NO2 and PM and also CO2</p>	4	<p>implementation</p> <p>LES implemented with continued reductions in the wider emissions of greenhouse gases</p>
	d) Legal /Regulatory	<p>The LES forms part of the Slough Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) which is a requirement following the designation of AQMA</p> <p>SBC are reducing the liability that any EU fines could be passed on under the reserve powers of the Localism Act 2011</p>	2	<p>LES implemented and reviewed in association with AQAP 2019.</p>

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

- i) There are no Human Rights Act implications as a result of this report.
- ii) There is a legal requirement to pursue, achieve and maintain air quality standards. The European Union Air Quality Directive 2008/50/EC13 sets out the obligations for Members States in terms of assessing ambient air quality and ensuring Limit Values (LV) for certain pollutants are not exceeded. The requirements of the Directive have been transposed into domestic law through the Environment Act 1995 and subordinate regulations. While the Government has a duty to meet EU

Limit Values, local authorities have a duty to pursue the achievement of National Air Quality Objectives.

- iii) The European Union has commenced infraction proceedings against the Government for failing to meet the EU Limit Value for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂). The reserve powers of the Localism Act 2011 allow the Government to pass on any EU fines imposed to any public organisation “whose act or omission” has contributed to the breach of any EU Limit Values.
- (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

Government studies show that air pollution has an adverse effect on the health of the majority of the population. These studies also identify specific groups that are particularly susceptible to the impact of poor air quality, including pregnant mothers, children and the elderly, with deprived communities known to be disproportionately affected. The Low Emission Strategy focuses mainly on positive and proactive interventions designed to reduce air pollution. SBC and its partners are taking an “exemplar” role in changing travel patterns and incentivising initiatives that improve air quality and public health outcomes.

However, some elements of the strategy may have policy change or sanctions that could potentially adversely affect some groups. Specifically these are the Clean Air Zones (Charging) and changes to Taxi Licensing provisions. There are currently no charging Clean Air Zones at present and the council will conduct a thorough impact and feasibility studies before any are implemented. There are no plans to include passenger vehicles.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached to this report as Appendix 4.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The Slough Summary Low Emission Strategy (final draft) and the Low Emission strategy Technical Report (final draft) are attached as Appendix 1 and 2, respectively. All final LES documents will be uploaded to the SBC LES webpage once approved.
- 5.2 Slough, like many urban areas in the UK, experiences elevated levels of air pollution, which have a measurable impact on the health of the local population. While there are several factors contributing to our local air quality, including heating and energy production and the cross-boundary transportation of pollution, the emissions from road transport vehicles are the most significant source at present.
- 5.3 Slough Borough Council (SBC) has designated 5 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) due to elevated levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) which breach

the National Air Quality Objective (annual mean NO₂) and where there is relevant exposure to residents. The AQMAs are located around the M4, Tuns Lane, Bath Road, Town Centre/A4 and Brands Hill/A4 and cover nearly 2,000 residential properties. Slough has an extensive air quality monitoring network that has shown small improvements in air quality over a 5-year rolling period in most locations, while some areas have either remained stubbornly elevated or deteriorated slightly. Levels in Langley may require the designation of a new AQMA in the future.

- 5.4 While levels of particulate matter (PM) do not exceed EU Limit Values, the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) shows that levels of fine particulates (PM_{2.5}) in 2015 accounted for 19.1 premature deaths per 100,000 people in Slough compared with a rate of 11.7 for the South East. The health impacts of air pollution are becoming more apparent with evidence showing effects such as heart attacks, strokes, low birth weight babies and impaired lung and brain development. The World Health Organisation (WHO) categorises diesel exhaust fumes as carcinogenic.
- 5.5 The *SBC Five Year Plan* and *Wellbeing Strategy* commit us to improving health outcomes in the Borough and we have developed a *Low Emission Strategy (LES)* which will support the new *Transport Strategy* and *Local Transport Plan update* in targeting reductions in vehicle emissions by accelerating the uptake of cleaner vehicles and technologies, that are capable of improving air quality and health and also contribute to sustainable growth, as part of the transition to a low emission economy.
- 5.6 The LES provides an overarching, integrated programme, covering initiatives to be delivered by several key Council Departments, including Public Health, Transport Management, Environmental Quality, Environmental Services Fleet Management, Procurement, Taxi Licensing, Planning Policy & Development Control and the Press Office and also in partnership with key stakeholders. The Environmental Quality Team has managed the development of the LES, which forms part of the Slough Air Quality Action Plan, required under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995.
- 5.7 The LES development has been supported by Government funding and includes practical policies and measures that are in line with best practice and Government policies. The Government has published the 'UK plans for tackling roadside NO₂ concentrations' in 2017. The plans include a national *Clean Air Zone (CAZ) Framework*. The Government has recently published a draft *Clean Air Strategy*, looking at the wider implications of air pollution, including the reduction of particulate matter emissions from non-transport sources. The Clean Air Strategy will be taken into account in the production of the Slough Air Quality Action Plan in 2019.
- 5.8 The LES comprises sections outlining the reasons why we are taking action (*Evidence for Change*), the measures that we can take as a Council to reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality and health (*Creating a Low Emission Future: Leading by Example*) and a *Clean Air Zone (CAZ) Framework for Slough* that we can deliver in partnership with key stakeholders to improve the

emissions of cars, vans, buses and freight vehicles, while encouraging the take-up of ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEV) through a *Slough Electric Vehicle Plan*.

5.9 The LES builds on significant activity in the Borough in demonstrating leadership in *Creating a Low Emission Future*;

- SBC has developed extensive cycling infrastructure in the Borough, including cycle hire facilities
- SBC has successfully introduced electric vehicle charge points across the Borough that continue to show a significant upward trend in use
- We have successfully installed EV charge points at Council Offices to allow our EV fleet, staff EVs and visitor EVs to use
- We have introduced electric pool cars and electric bikes as part of the Slough Fleet Challenge to reduce 'grey' vehicle emissions and costs
- Slough has the fourth largest number of plug-in vehicles registered per local authority in the UK with over 4,500 registrations
- SBC Environmental Services Fleet meets the latest European (Euro VI) Emission Standards with plans to look at alternative fuels to diesel as part of the next fleet replacement cycle (2024). The SBC appraisal of alternative fuels and technologies using whole life costs (WLC) has been published as best practice by the Local Government Association (LGA)
- SBC is reviewing van and light commercial vehicle operations and is procuring the cleanest (Euro 6/VI) vehicles while transitioning to ULEVs where feasible
- SBC has committed to the Clean Van Challenge, ensuring our light commercial vans will be zero emission capable by 2028
- SBC has introduced vehicle emission standards for taxi and private hire vehicles that will lead to the use of zero emission capable vehicles by 2025
- SBC was awarded £157,000 of OLEV funding to develop rapid charging facilities for taxi drivers
- SBC is implementing vehicle emission standards for relevant contracts in line with Social Value procurement
- SBC is seeking appropriate mitigation from new development schemes, in line with the LES

As part of the *Slough Clean Air Zone (CAZ) Framework* we will:

- raise awareness of vehicle emissions and their impact on air quality and health
- look at the feasibility of introducing CAZ in Slough which could potentially set emission standards for taxis, buses, coaches, lorries and vans in key areas
- develop an ultra-low emissions pathway for buses to 2025, in partnership with local bus operators
- promote the development of alternative refueling infrastructure for buses and freight vehicles
- provide co-ordination in supporting the uptake of ULEVs and developing charging infrastructure to support growth through the *Slough Electric Vehicle Plan*

5.10 The LES has been designed to provide a platform for inward investment over the period to 2025 and will seek to build on the successful grant funding and capital borrowing secured so far. The LES aligns with key Government Strategies, including the *Industrial Strategy: Road to Zero (2018)*, which outlines significant funding opportunities to increase the take up of ultra-low emission vehicles. A draft *Low Emission Programme* has been developed as part of the LES and can be found in Appendix 3. This programme will be updated on an annual basis. The draft *Low Emission Programme* has been designed to be flexible to maximise opportunities for funding going forward.

The *Low Emission Programme* is designed to achieve the following desired outcomes:

- attract private sector funding
- be cost-effective, and potentially raise revenues or introduce savings for the Council
- increase opportunities for residents, businesses and visitors to reduce their total cost of ownership of vehicles via the potential reductions in the whole life costs of ultra-low emission vehicles
- facilitate sustainable shift to ultra-low emission vehicles
- facilitate a shift away from the owned car usage model
- reduce harmful pollutants and improve air quality and health impacts

Delivery of the *Low Emission Programme* will depend on successfully securing funding. Funding opportunities may change over the coming years and the Programme will retain flexibility to adapt to the funding horizon. It is envisaged that funding for the Programme may include:

- OLEV (Office for Low Emission Vehicles) grants
- DEFRA (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) grants
- DfT (Department for Transport) grants
- LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) funding
- Section 106 contributions from major development schemes
- HAL (Heathrow Airport Ltd) community funding
- Capital borrowing
- private sector investment

Any future bids for capital growth funding will be subject to SBC controls, including a robust business case.

The draft *Low Emission Programme Infrastructure Maps*, which geographically show the provisional locations for key infrastructure for the seven sectors of the borough, can be found on the Council's LES webpage – http://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/LES_Plan.pdf

The draft *Low Emission Programme* will be subject to further internal consultation prior to publication. Delivery of the Programme will be included in the final LES *Delivery Plan*

5.11 The Slough Low Emission Strategy has incorporated best practice techniques in evaluating and developing measures to reduce road transport vehicle emissions. Government damage cost data, which puts a price on the social

cost per tonne of emissions of key pollutants, has been used in evaluating the alternatives to diesel vehicles for the SBC refuse collection fleet and the whole life costs of alternatives to diesel taxis. While an increasing number of local authorities also use damage costs to assess the scale of off-set mitigation that is required on major development schemes, this approach is not included in the Slough Low Emission Strategy: Planning & Development Control Guidance.

SBC are to undertake a review of the Council approach to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Any consideration of the use of damage costs in the planning process will be subject to the CIL review.

- 5.12 *A Delivery & Communications Plan* will be developed detailing how we can communicate key messages through our Public Health team, set roles, responsibilities and timescales for delivery while monitoring implementation and updating the strategy when necessary. The final *Delivery & Communications Plan* will be submitted to the Cabinet for approval. The LES will be reviewed within 2 years of implementation.
- 5.13 The LES has been developed in consultation with all relevant Council Departments. SBC undertook extensive, public stakeholder consultation from 25th November 2017 to the 5th February 2018. The consultation exercise showed strong support for implementing the LES measures. A summary of the LES public consultation responses can be found on the SBC LES web page below:
http://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/Summary_of_LES_Consultation_Responses.pdf
The consultation exercise has informed the development of the final LES.

6 **Comments of Other Committees**

There are no comments from other Committees about this specific consultation.

7 **Conclusion**

The Slough Low Emission Strategy demonstrates our commitment to implementing an integrated, best practice programme, in partnership with our key stakeholders, to reduce road transport vehicle emissions, improve air quality and health impacts and provide a platform for inward investment. It is recommended for adoption and full Council approval.

8 **Background Papers**

Appendix 1 - Summary Low Emission Strategy 2018 – 2025 (final draft)

Appendix 2 – Low Emission Strategy 2018 – 2025 Technical Report (final draft)

Appendix 3 – Low Emission Programme (draft)

(The draft Low Emission Programme Infrastructure Maps can be found on the SBC LES webpage - <http://www.slough.gov.uk/pests-pollution-and-food-hygiene/low-emission-strategy-2018-2025.aspx>)

Appendix 4 – Equalities Impact Assessment