

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS**  
**Monday, 15th February, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors Goult and Kaye (Policy Advisors).

**J132. NATIONAL AIR QUALITY AND M1 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 108 of 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2008, the Director of Housing and Neighbourhood Services presented the above update.

Section 83 of the Environment Act required a local authority, for any area where air quality standards were not being met, to issue an Order designating it an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). It was proposed that the area covered by the existing M1 AQMA be extended to include areas of Blackburn that were in proximity to the M1.

Although air quality is cleaner than at any time since the industrial revolution, air pollution was not declining as quickly as previously expected. The proposed extension of the M1 will inevitably have a negative effect upon air quality in Rotherham.

The Council's Community Protection Unit had been consulted by the Highways Agency regarding the proposal to widen the M1 motorway between junction 35 and 32 through Rotherham. The proposal was to increase highway capacity as a managed motorway to 4 lanes at peak times with no extra land taken. This would result in vehicles being closer to the residential properties of Blackburn, Meadowbank and Brinsworth. Mitigation measures could include variable speed limits. The impact on air quality was being assessed by consultants on behalf of the Highways Agency as part of their Environmental Assessment.

A Detailed Assessment of the air quality in Blackburn close to the M1, adjacent to the M1 AQMA was submitted to DEFRA in July, 2009. It was unlikely that areas of Blackburn where residents were exposed to levels of Nitrogen Dioxide above the Air Quality Objective Levels would meet the Air Quality Objectives. Consequently, the Council was statutorily obliged to declare an AQMA.

It was proposed that the AQMA should be extended to include:-

"From the boundary of the existing Air Quality Management Area which follows the line of Droppingwell Road follow Baring Road to the junction with Barber Wood Road, due north from Barber Wood Road to the line of the dismantled railway line, follow the route of the dismantled railway line to the north west to the edge of the M1 motorway. From there, follow the edge of the M1 motorway due south east to New Droppingwell Road"

It was also noted that a Detailed Assessment of Air Quality for the Parkgate area near to the A633 had been completed in April, 2009, and accepted in full by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. A Detailed Assessment for the pollutant fine particulates (24- hour PM<sub>10</sub>) in the area of St. Ann's alongside the A630 was due for submission to DEFRA in April, 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That the extension of the Rotherham M1 Air Quality Management Area (2001) be extended to include additional areas of Blackburn close to the M1 motorway.

(2) That Legal and Democratic Services amend the existing Air Quality Management Area Rotherham Borough Council Order 2001 (M1) in accordance with National Air Quality Strategy Guidance.