

Air Quality Update

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Air Quality Update

1. Wider Government Update

- i. Spending Review 2010
- ii. Localism
- iii. Natural Environment White Paper

2. National and local air quality priorities

- i. Package to improve Air Quality
- ii. Telling the Air Quality Story
- iii. Focus on delivery – working with Local Authorities

Spending Review 2010

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Over the course of the Spending Review period, Defra will reduce resource spending by 29% and capital spending by 34%. Dept's Administration budget will be reduced by 33%.

Defra is reprioritising its spending, focusing on British farming and food production; enhancing the environment and biodiversity; and supporting a green economy resilient to climate change

Reducing waste and bureaucracy – including reducing the number of quangos Defra funds from 92 to 39.

Making efficiencies - Reducing administration costs through reductions in staff numbers, more efficient IT and procurement practices

Deficit reduction programme takes precedence

“Localism, localism, localism” – Localism Bill

Decentralising power as far as possible

Lifting the burden of bureaucracy: Removing unnecessary legislation, targets and central prescription

Empowering communities to do things their way

Increasing local control of public finances

Central government role

- provide an enabling framework, incentives and information
- Facilitate new and imaginative forms of delivery – innovation
- Reduce reporting burdens to allow focus on delivery

Local government role

- work with partners and local communities to decide priorities
- devise innovative ways of working and delivery
- Shared accountability and responsibility

Natural Environment White Paper



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We want everyone to contribute their views on the natural environment – whether they're concerned at the plight of the songbirds in their garden, the quality of air in their town, flooding the fate of our wider countryside

Caroline Spelman Defra SoS 26 July 2010



Natural Environment underpins economy health and wellbeing
Air Quality: a key priority impacts upon health & environment
Optimise benefits of air quality & climate change
Big Society: greater role for communities civic groups & citizens
White paper expected Spring 2011



Response to the EAC report



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Government response to the Environmental Audit Committee report published in November. The themes included:

Costs of poor air quality need to be properly accounted for

Improving public understanding of air quality is important, as is raising the profile across other Government Departments

Local Authorities are key

A range of strategies will be necessary to support local action – not one size fits all

National & Local air quality priorities



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Deliver PM₁₀ and NO₂ Limit values nationally and locally

PM₁₀ – European Commission still considering our application

NO₂ limit value - not yet in compliance across about 27% of roads especially in major urban areas and city centres

Significant contributions from HGVs outside London and Buses both within London and other city centres

Focus on action to encourage vehicle improvement and reductions in vehicle emissions.

Looking at local and national action to achieve NO₂ LV by 2015

Package to improve air quality



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Tell the air quality “story”

Re-connect national and local delivery

Local authorities as delivery partners

Work together to share information and develop right tools and skills

Tell the Air Quality Story

- Poor Air Quality still is damaging the health of everyone
 - Man-made fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) alone **reduces the average life expectancy of people in the UK by 6 months, costing £15 billion annually.**
- Poor air quality is damaging biodiversity and valuable habitats.
 - Things have improved since the 'acid rains' but **critical acidity levels** from deposition of sulphur or nitrogen are still **exceeded in many areas.**
- We all have a role to play in improving air quality
 - Ensure individuals, communities and businesses understand what they can do to improve air quality
 - Ensure decision makers have tools to make decisions

Tell the Air Quality Story

- Started work to increase awareness and understanding, and looking to share best practice and good ideas on what is working well.
- Working with a number of sectors including health, transport and local authorities
- Welcome ideas on either what more can be done, or examples of good practice which can be shared

Reconnect National and Local delivery



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- ▶ National duty to meet EU Limit Values
- ▶ Defra use national network and models
- ▶ Local authorities “work in pursuance of” AQ Objectives locally
- ▶ Often use own models and monitoring which may not meet EU requirements

- ▶ Local authorities are delivery partners in meeting EU requirements
- ▶ Share data and overcome national/local distinction

More streamlined system
with shared responsibility
for delivery of LVs

Focus on delivery – working with LAs



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Provide flexibility and a clear framework for action

Share information on what works, support tools for delivery

Share best practice and encourage new ways of delivery:
Low Emissions Strategies, Eco stars, LEZs

Minimise reporting burdens

Some steps have already been taken



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Commitment to

- Introduce Reduced Pollution Certificate Scheme for Euro VI when available
- Incentivise Ultra Low Carbon Vehicles and support for infrastructure

Considering focused measures to facilitate local action

- Targeted technology improvements especially for buses and HGVs
- Feasibility of Low Emission Zones outside London – what evidence is there for effectiveness of LEZs for NO₂?
- Link to climate change measures on modal shift and very low carbon vehicles

Will consult local authorities on position in their areas and take account of local measures in NO₂ air quality plans.

Concluding Remarks

- ▶ Delivering good air quality is fundamentally about health and the environment - not just a legal obligation
- ▶ Natural Environment White Paper, sustainable transport approach and localism can help to refocus on delivery of improvements
- ▶ We have a joint responsibility to deliver good air quality
- ▶ Local authorities need to be delivery partners – LAQM review

Thank you.

Any Questions?