

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL

Thursday, 1st March, 2012

Present: Cllr M S Worrall (Chairman), Cllr O C Baldock (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mrs J A Anderson, Cllr Mrs J M Bellamy, Cllr Mrs E M Holland, Cllr D Keeley, Cllr Mrs S L Luck, Cllr Miss A Moloney, Cllr M Parry-Waller, Cllr A G Sayer and Cllr Mrs C J Woodger.

Councillors Coffin, Dalton, Rhodes, Rogers, Miss Sergison and Mrs Simpson were also in attendance.

Together with Kent County Councillors Mrs Dagger and Mrs Hohler and representatives from Kent Police and Kent Association of Local Councils, Borough Green, Burham, East Malling and Larkfield, East Peckham, Hadlow, Hildenborough, Kings Hill, Leybourne, Mereworth, Platt, Plaxtol, Watringbury, Wouldham and Wrotham Parish Councils and Snodland Town Council.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Atkins and Balfour.

PPP
12/010

AIR QUALITY MONITORING

The Chief Environmental Health Officer reported that the Borough Council had a statutory duty to review and assess air quality within the local authority area and to develop and implement action plans to tackle local air pollution, when Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) were declared.

The demanding nature of the air quality regime prescribed by DEFRA and the constraints on councils in relation to air quality was given full consideration at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 January 2012. The recommendations from this meeting would be circulated with the Minutes and available to view on the website in due course.

Air quality in Tonbridge and Malling was typical of a borough with a mixed urban and rural environment. There were six AQMAs declared due to the exceedances of nitrogen dioxide related to road traffic. These were as follows:

- M20 - between New Hythe Lane and Hall Road
- A20 - Ditton at the Station Road/New Road junction
- Tonbridge High Street - south end
- Watringbury crossroads - A26/B2015 junction
- A20 Aylesford - South Aylesford Retail Park junction
- A20 - New Hythe Lane junction

Particular reference was made to the recent detailed assessment for Borough Green which recommended the declaration of an AQMA. This would be submitted to DEFRA for verification.

The local Borough Council Member for Borough Green (Councillor T Sayer) felt that residents deserved protection from pollution, especially as it had the potential to be a health hazard, and strongly urged Kent County Council to reconsider their position regarding a relief road/bypass.

In response to a question previously raised by Borough Green Parish Council, the Chief Environmental Health Officer advised that there was no direct mechanism that would require or automatically lead to a review of the adopted Local Development Framework as the result of a change in the air quality control regime. However, it was a factor that would be taken into account as and when a new local plan for the borough was prepared.

Members expressed frustration at the Borough Council's inability to enforce the appropriate agencies to take action on air quality issues and believed it unfair to fine a local authority which had no ability to take action.