
Crowthorne Air Quality Management Area Revocation Update

Committee considering report:	Joint Public Protection Committee
Date of Committee:	8 June 2026
Chair of Committee:	To be appointed at the meeting
Date JMB agreed report:	18 May 2026
Report Author:	Suzanne McLaughlin
Forward Plan Ref:	JPPC

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the JPPC that the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) revocation for Crowthorne has progressed to the draft Order for approval of intention stage following the completion of the consultation process.

2. Recommendations

The Committee:

NOTES that the AQMA for Crowthorne is being revoked.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>Work relating to Air Quality monitoring and reporting is funded from the general revenue budget allocated to the Public Protection Service. Several proposals in the action plans continue to require additional funding to implement whilst others are relatively low cost and are covered from within the PPP revenue budget.</p> <p>Grant funding from DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) has been available and the PPP have applied annually. In addition, West Berkshire Council (on behalf of the Partnership) was awarded £259,406 in March 2021 by DEFRA to fund a project focused on behavioural change for the residents who drive in the three boroughs by launching an anti-idling campaign as well as PM2.5 monitoring in / near the Air Quality Management Areas.</p>
Human Resource:	<p>Staff who undertake this work are a shared resource with Wokingham Borough Council under the new Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) with Wokingham.</p> <p>One benefit of the shared service is the ability to have staff that specialise in areas such as this and the service is fortunate to</p>

	<p>have several officers with significant expertise on environmental matters generally and air quality specifically.</p> <p>The 2021/22 Grant from DEFRA has meant that the authority was able to appoint an Air Quality Officer on a fixed term contract until September 2023 to support the anti-idling campaign. The post holder left WBC in April 2023 and since then the work has been undertaken in PPP and recharged to the grant.</p>
Legal:	<p>Under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) system local authorities are legally required to assess air quality in their area and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary.</p> <p>Where an AQMA is designated, of which there is one in Bracknell Forest (Crowthorne High Street) , local authorities are required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) describing the pollution reduction measures it will put in place.</p> <p>Where the pollutant levels no longer exceed the Objectives then the AQMAs should be revoked by Order. Where a Local Authority no longer has any AQMAs then an Air Quality Strategy is to be produced. Where a Local Authority still has an AQMA these are to be regularly reviewed and must be revised no later than every five years.</p> <p>PPP Officers have worked with the BFBC Legal Services Teams to progress the Order.</p>
Risk Management:	<p>This is a legal requirement under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Failure to comply with our statutory obligations could present the risk of challenge to the PPP partner authorities.</p>
Property:	<p>There are no direct property implications arising from this report.</p>
Policy:	<p>The Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) identified Environmental Protection as one of the six Overarching Themes for the Joint Public Protection Committee.</p> <p>Under this heading the Committee in turn identified Improving Air Quality as a priority from 2023/24. West Berkshire has declared a climate emergency. They have embedded Air Quality improvements into their Environment Strategy and Climate Emergency Action Plans.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest Council's Climate Change Strategy was completed and published in January 2021 and have a target of net carbon zero by 2050.</p>

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		Consideration of the impact on inequality is set out in the report and reflected on in the National Clean Air Strategy. Any inequalities raised as part of the consultation have been addressed in the AQAPs and AQMAs.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		Poor air quality can be particularly harmful to the young, elderly, pregnant and those suffering ill health. Consideration to all these matters is given in this report and / or the National Clean Air Strategy.
Environmental Impact:	x			<p>Under the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) system local authorities are legally required to assess air quality in their area and designate Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) if improvements are necessary.</p> <p>Where an AQMA is designated, local authorities are required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) describing the pollution reduction measures it will put in place.</p> <p>These reports are therefore designed to have a positive impact on the environment.</p>
Health Impact:	x			<p>The Air Quality Objectives have been put in place to protect people's health and the environment.</p> <p>Although there has been a reduction in air pollution since the 1970s, poor air quality is still the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. It shortens lives and reduces quality of life, particularly amongst the most vulnerable, the young and old, and those living with health conditions.</p>

			Ongoing monitoring and where appropriate the creation of action plans or strategies is designed to improve the quality of lives of our residents.
ICT or Digital Services Impact:		x	None All Reports and Plans are published on the PPP website .
PPP Priorities:			The report will impact on the following PPP Priorities 1. Environmental Protection 2. Improved Air Quality
Data Impact:		x	None
Consultation and Engagement:	Consultation with all statutory consultees and other interested parties has taken place for the Crowthorne AQMA revocation.		
Other Options Considered:	None – The update of the AQAP is a requirement by DEFRA and revocations are required when Air Quality Objective levels are no longer exceeded over the three-year period.		

4. Executive Summary

4.1 Following the report to the Committee in December 2025 the statutory consultation has taken place for the Crowthorne AQMA revocation.

5. Bracknell Forest

5.1 Following submission of the Annual Status Report 2025 (for monitoring data 2024) to DEFRA their corresponding appraisal recommended that the Crowthorne AQMA be revoked.

5.2 The Crowthorne AQMA draft revocation report for consultation was agreed by the Joint Public Protection Committee at the meeting on the 8 December 2025. The revocation consultation process was carried out between the 11 December 2025 and the 22 January 2026. DEFRA, the Environment Agency, National Highways, all local authorities neighbouring BFC, other public authorities as appropriate, and bodies representing local business interests and other organisations as appropriate, such as internal public health, planning policy and transport colleagues, and town / Parish councils were consulted.

5.3 5 consultation responses were received:

5.4 DEFRA – agreed revocation is appropriate.

5.5 BFC Parking/Transport – no objection but included additional reference made to anti idling and to ensure all borough wide initiatives are also tailored to Crowthorne (this has been noted and will be included in the Air Quality Strategy).

- 5.6 Crowthorne Parish Council – no objection but comments on the traffic impact on new developments raised (CPC have been advised on the monitoring data to demonstrate that the area has remained below the relevance of compliance for 5 years and that the impact on air quality has been considered as part of the Local Plan).
- 5.7 CROW (Crowthorne Reduce Our Waste community group) – raised concerns on the traffic impact on new developments, requested monitoring near the schools (which have been carried out and results showed no exceedances), concern regarding lack of bus service from the station and requested monitoring there.
- 5.8 CVAG (Crowthorne Village Action Group) - raised concerns on the traffic impact on new developments (CVAG have been advised on the monitoring data to demonstrate that the area has remained below the relevance of compliance for 5 years and that the impact on air quality has been considered as part of the Local Plan).

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The final Revocation Order for approval of intention must be sealed and sent to DEFRA and as is required will be published on the Bracknell Forest Council and the PPP websites.
- 6.2 The Bracknell Forest Council Air Quality Strategy must now be developed and a publication will be produced in consultation with the Director of Public Health. The Strategy must set out and progress the steps the local authority will take to improve air quality in their area.

7. Concluding Observations

- 7.1 The improvements to Air Quality, and hence the requirement to revoke the AQMAs, across the three local authority areas is to be welcomed. There are many factors that have contributed to this and it is clear that the range of interventions made by each Council has contributed to this improvement.
- 7.2 Air Quality continues to be a high-profile area of work and the links with the sources of pollutants and health impacts have become more apparent during and after the Covid pandemic. The authorities must continue to monitor the levels of pollutants and ensure that we continue to progress actions. We also need to develop an Air Quality Strategy for Bracknell Forest and continue to raise the profile of improvements in air quality to support our resident's health.
- 7.3 The duty on local authorities to both assess and improve air quality is not just a legal requirement but a public demand. The effects on health of poor air quality are indisputable and councils have been given a range of tools to tackle the causes.
- 7.4 In simple terms the causes are known but the solutions are wide ranging. The proposals set out in the plans seek to address several approaches ranging from raising awareness, changing human behaviour and improving infrastructure.

Appendices

Appendix A – Crowthorne AQMA Revocation Report

Background Papers:

8 December 2025 JPPC report West Berkshire Council - Agenda for Joint Public Protection Committee on Monday 8 December 2025, 7.00 pm

Bracknell Forest Council's LTP3 and supporting documents which can be accessed via the Council's website, at: <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planningpolicy/transport-policy>

Defra: National Clean Air Strategy 2019 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019>

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Item is Urgent Key Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Report is to note only | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Officer details:

Name: Suzanne McLaughlin
Job Title: Principal Officer
Tel No: 01635 519851
E-mail: Suzanne.mclaughlin@westberks.gov.uk
