

REPORT OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN FOCUS GROUP

DATE – 6TH OF DECEMBER 2001

THE LOWRY CENTRE, SALFORD

GREATER MANCHESTER AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN FOCUS GROUP

1. Aim of the Focus Group

- 1.1 The Greater Manchester Air Quality/Action Plan Focus Group was held on 6th of December 2001 at The Lowry Centre, Salford. It was a consultation exercise with the aim of generating and determining acceptance of a range of possible options for inclusion in the Greater Manchester Air Quality Action Plan. This report is a summary of the main points discussed at the focus group.
- 1.2 Lord Peter Smith, chair, Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and Tim Williamson of the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection, introduced the aims of the day, followed by an open floor question and answer session. Options for inclusion in the Action Plan were generated and their level of acceptance determined by delegates through a number of workshops. Delegates worked in groups to discuss possible options, and then were able to comment on other groups' options during a carousel session. A scoring exercise was then carried out where delegates added a tick, cross or question mark to the different options to indicate their view on acceptability. Tim Williamson fed-back the main outcomes of the day to the group.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 Lord Peter Smith explained the role of AGMA and the need for air quality management to be a co-ordinated approach across all 10 districts. In the past air pollution had been very much visible but now is an invisible problem. Greater Manchester have predicted exceedances for two pollutants, nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and fine particulates (PM₁₀), and these are shown in the map of the air quality management area. The air quality objectives are established to protect human health and therefore exceedances could lead to significant health impacts.
- 2.2 Tim Williamson explained that the Air Quality Action Plan is a legal requirement and there are alternative ways in which it can be prepared. Officers can produce proposals themselves, or alternatively they can be produced in consultation with other key individuals and groups, which was the aim of today's focus group.
- 2.3 The results of the post-it exercise were discussed by Tim Williamson, (all delegates were asked 'what will happen to air quality in the next 10 – 15 years if we do nothing?' and wrote their answers on post-it notes). All answers were negative, except for one. The main responses related to impacts on health, investment, wildlife, and the corrosion of historic buildings.

3. Question and Answer Session

Delegates were asked what they needed to know to develop the Air Quality Action Plan.

3.1 What do we need to know?

- a) More about emissions from air transport. Conflict between the promotion of Manchester Airport and the reduction of pollution.

A: Impact of aircraft emissions is global problem rather than a local problem. Locally the most significant impact is traffic travelling to and from the airport. Manchester Airport is in the process of developing a travel plan to reduce these impacts.

- b) Where and how have we measured air quality?

A: We have used a sophisticated system of monitoring and modelling. Real time sites are used to monitor air quality, with some sites being near roads and others away from roads, so background readings can be obtained.

- c) Should we be monitoring air quality in schools and hospitals?

A: This could be predicted through modelling, local authorities need to determine who are the sensitive people, and if modelling should be done in these areas.

- d) What is the timescale for the action plan and who is going to pay for it and make it happen?

A: There is a legal timescale for action plans, they should be produced 12-18 months after the designation of an Air Quality Management Area. Within the action plan itself we need to include actions which we can realistically get funding for and the timescale for achieving those actions. Today should identify those options which are feasible.

- e) How well does modelled data compare with that which is measured? What is the extent of the exceedances?

A: The model is validated against measured sites and there was a good correlation. Greater Manchester has decided to take a conservative approach of 19ppb threshold, rather than the national 21ppb (for concentrations of NO₂), and this will ensure all potential areas are included within the Air Quality Management Area.

- f) What is the trend in air pollution?

A: Due to new technologies the vehicle fleet in the UK is getting cleaner, however the increase in the number of vehicles will ultimately cancel this out. NO_x in Greater Manchester is on a slight downward trend, but particulates (PM₁₀) are going up.

- g)** Politicians will be likely to not get elected if they are seen to support radical actions such as congestion charging. What is the action plan trying to do and how will we get firm support from politicians?

A: The point of today is to determine the acceptance of possible options. We have got to be realistic about what we can achieve. If we just come up with radical solutions for which there is no acceptance, we will not achieve anything. Although if radical options are automatically dismissed we also might not get anywhere.

- h)** What is the extent of the industrial problem?

A: There are mechanisms for dealing with this through the authorisation process and the work of Local Authorities the Environment Agency. The majority of NO_x emissions is from transport which is more difficult to control.

- i)** How much traffic reduction do we need to achieve a 1ppb reduction? Need to express the action required in simple terms.

A: There is no straight forward response to this, but further work is being undertaken at the moment.

- j)** Can you confirm that the air quality management area is not concerned with global warming and CO₂ emissions?

A: Agreed. The management area is concerned with the excess over the Government's targets for pollutants. However actions introduced to tackle air quality could also tackle global warming.

- k)** What is the pollution from a new car at 50mph, compared with buses, lorries and old cars? Also why does there appear to be more pollution in the north of Greater Manchester, despite lower car ownership?

A: There are proposals for authorities to conduct roadside emission testing next year, and also to offer free checks. Prevailing winds blow inner city pollution northwards and also Fiddlers Ferry power station emissions contribute.

4. Option Generation and Acceptance

A list of key points made by delegates during the workshops and the results of the scoring exercise are shown in tables 1-6.

4.1 Group 1 – Traffic Management & Restrictions

The following options were discussed:

- Pedestrianisation
- Promoting cycling and walking
- Traffic control systems

4.2 Group 2 – Public Transport

- Safe and secure public transport network
- Electric public transport
- Public transport priority
- Clean up bus and taxi emissions
- Subsidised services

4.3 Group 3 – New Options 1

The following options were discussed:

- Speed restrictions
- Low emission zone
- Emissions testing
- Restriction of all private vehicles
- More regulation of taxi emissions

4.4 Group 4 – Travel Plans & Domestic

The following options were discussed:

- Home insulation schemes
- Travel plans
- Car pool schemes
- Provision of public transport – co-ordination
- Walk to school
- Less car parks – park and ride

4.5 Group 5 – Planning and Industry

The following options were discussed:

- Section 106 agreements
- Development plans (UDP)
- Environmental management systems
- Development Control

- Public education/awareness
- Traffic calming
- Home zones
- Bypasses and road building

The following options were discussed:

- Park and ride
- Bus quality partnerships
- Public transport to reduce school run
- Cleaning emissions technology

- High occupancy vehicle lane
- Changing peoples' opinions
- Real time information for transport
- Car scrapping scheme
- Vehicles idling

- Consideration of air quality in planning process
- Free tuning of cars (tied in with roadside checks)
- Pedestrianisation
- Bonfire bans - recycling

- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Links between different groups of professionals

4.5 Group 6 – New Options 2

The following options were discussed:

- Roadside emission testing
- Car scrapping
- Education/ public awareness
- Congestion charging
- Parking levy
- Enforcement – vehicles idling
- Work from home schemes
- Banning cars (high pollution days/certain roads)
- New technologies – short journeys identified
- Car free days

Table 1:

GROUP 1. ACTION PLAN - TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND RESTRICTIONS					
Options	Other Impacts (all measures need enforcing by the police to be of any use)	Feasible (y,n,p)	Cost (1 - 5)	Time (1 - 5)	YES No ?
Pedestrianisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could affect competitiveness of area • Local impact only on air quality • More attractive environment for pedestrians • Impact / problems for deliveries • Needs good Public Transport / park and ride • Needs parking space outside area • Enforcement difficulties - although technology to control access is improving • Could be associated with bypasses and road building • Need dedicated off road deliveries 	Y	3/4	3/4	Y - 28 N - 3 ? - 2
Cycling and walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health benefits • Community safety problems, especially at night • Lack of parking facilities for bikes • Intimidation from fast / high volumes of traffic • Incomplete networks of cycle facilities • Facilities need to be well maintained, lit etc • Need to be carefully designed • Need other facilities e.g. cycle parking, showers etc • Pedestrian / cyclist conflict - need segregated facilities • Not enough cycle facilities • Need secure parking facilities • Need cycle allowances 	Y	2/3	2/3	Y - 28 N - 0 ? - 1
Traffic control systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could increase overall levels of pollution due to more vehicles • Not discouraging car use • Could help delivery vehicles / buses if roadspace reallocated • Positive effect on emissions 	Y	4	3/4	Y - 20 N - 0 ? - 8

Bypasses and road building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could increase traffic overall • Would need associated measures to discourage traffic • More research needed on impacts • Last resort - encourage people to drive • Could address pollution hotspots • Can be done without increasing overall capacity e.g. at junctions • Doesn't deal with discouraging car use • Would need complementary measures on relieved routes - needs to be part of an overall solution • Need to consider those who are affected by heavy traffic flows • Need careful use of relieved roadspace • Land take 	P	5	5	Y - 13 N - 12 ? - 7
Public education / awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Necessary, but takes a long time to work • Needs to start in schools • Could be done quickly and cheaply to sell schemes 	Y	1/2	1/2	Y - 32 N - 0 ? - 0
Traffic calming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No impact on air quality - need a system that generates constant speed, not speed up / slow down 	Y	2/3	2/3	Y - 7 N - 4 ? - 15
Home zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of displaced traffic 	Y	2/3	2/3	Y - 9 N - 3 ? - 15
School zones		Y	2	2	Y - 13 N - 1 ? - 14

Table 2:

GROUP 2. ACTION PLAN - PUBLIC TRANSPORT					
Option	Other Impacts	Feasible (y,n,p)	Cost (1 - 5)	Time (1 - 5)	YES No ?
Efficient, regulated – Quality Bus Corridor, comprehensive, reliable, time and area direct Public Transport Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need agreement on regulation • Network should include community transport • Integrated ticketing • Cycle provision including trams 	P	5	3	Y - 27 N - 0 ? - 0
Safe and secure Public Transport Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essential to consider whole journey 	Y	3	1.5	Y - 28 N - 0 ? - 0
Public Transport priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to clarify impact on air quality 	Y	4	3	Y - 19 N - 0 ? - 8
Electric Public Transport tram, trolleybus / train	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public perception benefits • Inward investment 	P	5	3	Y - 21 N - 0 ? - 6
Subsidised services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would need lobbying and national policy change 	N	4	1	Y - 23 N - 0 ? - 3
Park and ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need assessment • Land use 	Y	1	1	Y - 9 N - 6 ? - 9
Public transport to reduce school run (e.g. including education, other public transport)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some scepticism • Look at age of child concessions / passes 	Y	2	2	Y - 21 N - 0 ? - 4
Cleaning emissions technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May reduce individual responsibility if used on private vehicles 	Y	1	1	Y - 25 N - 0 ? - 0
Cleaning up bus emissions, enforcement and taxis and enforcement at bus stations		P	1.5	1.5	Y - 25 N - 0 ? - 0
HGV priority					Y - 3 N - 0 ? - 2

Table 3:

GROUP 3. ACTION PLAN – NEW OPTIONS					
Options	Other Impacts	Feasible (y,n,p)	Cost (1 - 5)	Time (1 - 5)	YES No ?
Speed restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial impacts through fines Better fuel consumption with education and money needs to go to enforcement (as depends on area) Linked to air quality - information system Need regulation through whole network High cost (HGV'S) which might be passed onto customers 	Y	2	2	Y - 20 N - 2 ? - 4
Low emission zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need provisions for Public Transport Ring and ride (social exclusion) Hard to enforce Enforcement boundaries Tourism Can target buses easily and delivery vehicles 	P	3/4	3/4	Y - 17 N - 3 ? - 7
Emissions testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue needs to go to LA Social exclusion Need to look at mileage as well as age of vehicles 	Y	2	1/2	Y - 23 N - 0 ? - 2
Taxi emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulate - fewer taxi's Fares go up Age limits Encouraging alternative fuels 	Y	1	1/2	Y - 27 N - 0 ? - 2
Restricting all private vehicles - not just some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health impacts Disabled people Limited mobility for disabled people if less traffic 	Y/P	5	4	Y - 6 N - 7 ? - 11
Need to change peoples opinions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs to be connected to next item 	Y	2	5	Y - 26 N - 0 ? - 0
High occupancy vehicle lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cause more congestion Feasibility - not always possible to car share Need to allow HGV's - they don't in Leeds 	P	3/4	3/4	Y - 11 N - 8 ? - 9
Real time information on transport		Y	3	3	Y - 22 N - 1 ? - 3
Car scrapping scheme - linked to emission testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to abuse Need to look at whole life cycle of cars 	Y	3	2	Y - 10 N - 3 ? - 10
Vehicles kept running - powers to fine		Y			Y - 6 N - 0 ? - 8

Table 4:

GROUP 4. ACTION PLAN – TRAVEL PLANS AND DOMESTIC					
Options	Other Impacts	Feasible (y,n,p)	Cost (1 - 5)	Time (1 - 5)	YES No ?
Home insulation schemes (creating internal problems)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Secure funding • Reduced heating bills • CO₂ reduced • Job creation 	Y/P	2	2	Y - 22 N - 2 ? - 4
Travel plans (if alternative is available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion reduced • Too long to produce political incentives • Less area for parking 	P	2	3	Y - 26 N - 0 ? - 2
Car pool schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less cars • Less stress • Less flexibility 	Y	3	2	Y - 22 N - 1 ? - 3
Provision of Public Transport - co-ordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More use of Public Transport 	P	3	3	Y - 25 N - 0 ? - 1
Walk to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy kids • Education • Safety - walk / bus • Drying rooms • Weather / clothing 	P	2/3	2	Y - 29 N - 0 ? - 0
Less car parks - park and ride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get modal shift / shift trade • Detract flexi car park charge 	P	3	3	Y - 11 N - 3 ? - 9
Consideration of air quality in planning process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could restrict development 	Y	1	Various	Y - 22 N - 1 ? - 1
Free tuning of cars (tied in with roadside checks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motorists save money 	P/N	2	1/2	Y - 17 N - 5 ? - 4
Pedestrianisation		P/N	2/3	2	Y - 19 N - 1 ? - 2
Bonfire bans - recycling		Y	1	1	Y - 6 N - 6 ? - 8
Vehicles idling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already controls over buses and taxis • Heating system dependant on engine • Reliability- engine difficult to re-start 				

Table 5:

GROUP 5. ACTION PLAN – PLANNING AND INDUSTRY					
Option	Other Impacts	Feasible (y,n,p)	Cost (1 - 5)	Time (1 - 5)	YES No ?
Greater Manchester protocol for assessing developments - development team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolong process - deadlines 	Y	1	1	Y - 25 N - 1 ? - 1
Unitary Development Plans <u>must</u> include policies on air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political pressures • Too many restraints due to built up area 	Y	1	Variable	Y - 22 N - 1 ? - 2
Balance developments with health impacts as well as air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity within health profession 	P	2	3	Y - 24 N - 1 ? - 1
Air quality must be given a higher priority in development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political and industrial pressures 	Y	2	1	Y - 25 N - 0 ? - 2
Environmental Management Audit System <u>must</u> be part of a planning consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delays - political pressures • Size of development 	P	3	3	Y - 17 N - 1 ? - 4
Develop GM planning guidance to tighten requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment		Y	1	1/2	Y - 17 N - 2 ? - 0
Include air monitoring within a planning consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding 	Y	2	1	Y - 11 N - 1 ? - 10
Make better links with health professionals and all linked professions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifting resources • Funding 	Y	2	2/3	Y - 19 N - 1 ? - 3
Lobby for better means of enforcing section 106's and travel plans		Y	1	1	Y - 21 N - 1 ? - 4
Develop independent Greater Manchester agency to assess developments for Air Quality, health etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifting resources • Funding 	P	3	3	Y - 13 N - 2 ? - 1

Table 6:

GROUP 6. ACTION PLAN - NEW OPTIONS 2					
Options	Other Impacts	Feasible (y,n,p)	Cost (1 - 5)	Time (1 - 5)	YES No ?
Roadside emission testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social equity • Public awareness 	Y	2	1	Y - 27 N - 0 ? - 0
Car scrapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social equity • Abandoned cars off road • Shift workers may need the car 	Y	4	3	Y - 12 N - 8 ? - 7
Education / public awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could address other issues 	Y	2	1	Y - 28 N - 0 ? - 1
Congestion charging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional competitiveness • Need to introduce alternatives • May move problem to other areas • Polluter pays 	P	5	5	Y - 12 N - 7 ? - 11
Parking levy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional competitiveness • Social equity – more affluent have better ability to pay • No alternatives • Increase in on street parking • People may still use the car 	P	5	5	Y - 17 N - 4 ? - 8
Enforcement - vehicles idling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise benefit 	Y	2	1	Y - 20 N - 2 ? - 6
Work from home schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happier workforce • More productive • Need to consider health and safety • Workers may feel isolated • Need checks to ensure work is done 	Y	3	2	Y - 22 N - 2 ? - 2
Banning cars (high pollution days / certain roads)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Transport network under strain • Creating rat-runs • Would cause chaos 	P	2	5	Y - 16 N - 3 ? - 9
New technology - short journeys identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on particular users 	N	5	5	Y - 19 N - 2 ? - 2
Car free days					Y - 9 N - 9 ? - 8

Alternate registration plates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternatives?• May result in increased car ownership• People may purchase 2 older, more polluting cars to replace a new one.				
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5. Conclusions

The following points were the key items discussed during the feedback session.

- 5.1** Many options had ticks.
- 5.2** We all want comprehensive, reliable and direct public transport.
- 5.3** Support for technological solutions.
- 5.4** Though roadside emission testing is frequently opposed by the public everyone gave it a tick.
- 5.5** Low Emission Zones are controversial as there are equity and social exclusion issues for those people who cannot afford to replace their old car. Could therefore apply restrictions to only HGVs, taxis and buses.
- 5.6** Road building and bypasses were debated, and although the conventional response was against these, their value in reducing peoples' exposure to emissions in the areas by-passed was recognised. It is important to limit extra capacity provided and invest in public transport within the by-passed areas.

6. Delegate List

Name	Organisation
Tim Williamson	National Society for Clean Air
Caryn Mellor	GMPTE
Ann Davies	GMPTE
Sandra Dutson	GMTCC
Cllr Stephen Hellier	Wigan MBC
Katherine Hudson	Oldham MBC
Councillor Kevin Robotham	Rochdale MBC
Dave Fletcher	AGMA Secretariat
John Wharf	GMTU
Steve Glazebrook	Salford CC
Mr Mark Owen	Logistics Manager
Steve Brown	Stockport MBC
Joanne Betts	Oldham MBC
Peter Baxter	Railtrack
Richard Venes	GM Cycle Campaign
Councillor Guy Harkin	Bolton MBC
Ian Wray	North West Development Agency
Howard Gott	Rochdale MBC
Councillor Sue Derbyshire	Stockport MBC
Jonathan James	Freight Transport Association
Peter Black	GMPTE
Sophie Curtis	Manchester City Council
Dave Davison	Rochdale MBC
Councillor Allen J Brett	Rochdale MBC
David Lloyd	Borough Engineer
Richard H Lewis	Environmental Health
Liz Lambert	Tameside MBC
John Young	Stagecoach Manchester
Caroline Bedale	N Manchester Health Promotions Officer
Kathryn Boggiano	Bolton MBC
Beth Owen	Atmospheric Research Information Centre
Michael Bane	Manchester Friends of the Earth
Dr Richard Lewis	Manchester City Council
Michael Mitchell	GMPTE
Barry Holt	Tameside MBC
Paul Barrett	Trafford MBC
Ian Betts	Trafford Centre
Cllr Jim McArdle	Oldham MBC
Mr David Owen	Fleet Manager Post Office
Kath King	Bolton MBC
Emma Antrobus	Manchester Chamber of Commerce
Councillor R. Jones	Chair, GMPTE
Colin Sharples	Government Office North West
Gary Pickering	Deputy Chief Executive
Stephen Taylor	Environment Agency
Ade Collins	GM Joint Transportation Policy Team

Mr J Kilgallon
Joanne Miller
Martin Arthur
Jonathan Reade
Mr Bill Tyson OBE
Councillor P. R. C. Smith
Dave Morris
Adrian Wilmot
David Latham
Nigel Powell
Paul Feehily
Mr Malcolm Gleeson
Valerie Ivison
Stephen Currey
Bob Saunders
Sheila Will
Caroline Greenen

PHH Vehicle Management
City of Salford
GMLTP Team
Highways Agency
Transport Management Group
Wigan MBC
GM Fire Service
Bolton MBC
Manchester City Council
City of Salford
GMLTP Team
Operations Manager
Salford Community Health Council
British Gas
Wigan MBC
Bury and Rochdale Health Authority
Oldham MBC

GM AIR QUALITY/ACTION PLAN WORKING GROUP
JOANNE MILLER, SALFORD

DECEMBER 2001