Local Authority:	**Nottingham City Council**
Reference:	**AS23-1753**
Date of issue	**July 2023**

Annual Status Report Appraisal Report

The Annual Status Report sets out new information on air quality obtained by Nottingham City Council as part of the Review & Assessment process required under the Environment Act 1995 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021) and subsequent Regulations.

Nottingham City Council has been improving their air quality in recent years however there are still some exceedances. There is an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in place covering the entire of the administrative area for Nottingham City Council NO_2. There are five automatic monitors located within the Council monitoring a range of pollutants – NO_2, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$ and SO_2. There are 38 monitoring sites located within the Council, including 6 triplicate locations for a total of 50 diffusion tubes.

Ten non-automatic monitoring sites report concentrations above the Air Quality Objective (AQO) of 40 µg/m^3, however after distance correction was applied this has been reduced down to eight. The highest concentration was recorded at 57.1 µg/m^3 at DT46 (Hicking Building, Queens Road). The other exceedances of the AQO were at DT14 (41.5 µg/m^3), DT30 (41.0 µg/m^3), DT49 (45.4 µg/m^3), DT50 (45.9 µg/m^3), DT52 (40.5 µg/m^3), DT20,60,61 (42.4 µg/m^3) and DT29,64,65 (43.4 µg/m^3). The monitored concentrations indicate that it is unlikely there would be exceedances of the 1-hour mean objective as no concentrations exceed 60 µg/m3, in accordance with Defra LAQM.TG (22). Exceedances of the AQO for PM_{10} (40 µg/m^3) and $PM_{2.5}$ (25 µg/m^3) were not reported within the Nottingham City Council. Instead the highest concentrations reported for each pollutant were 18 µg/m^3 for PM_{10} at WB AURN and 6 µg/m^3 for $PM_{2.5}$ at CC AURN. Nottingham City Council have stated that the PCM model indicates that as much as 80% of the $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations in Nottingham come from distant primary sources and upwind vapours, such as industrial, commercial and agricultural sources outside of the City's boundary. Therefore, any action that the Nottingham City Council is taking to reduce $PM_{2.5}$ emissions and concentrations will only have a small impact on $PM_{2.5}$ levels.

The Council plans to maintain the current diffusion tube network for 2023, however they do plan to deploy 20 electro-chemical cell NO2 units to be co-located with a number of current diffusion tube locations. The use of diffusion tubes will then be reviewed in 2024. The diffusion tubes were analysed by Gradko which is a UKAS accredited lab that recorded a 'good' precision rating for their supplied/analysed tubes in 2022. Annualisation was not required at any of the monitoring sites for 2022. A local bias adjustment factor of 1.12 was applied to the diffusion tubes, this was calculated using triplicate site DT24,25,26 co-located with the automatic monitor along St

Andrew's Road. Two of the diffusion tubes required distance correction during 2022, these were DT47 and DT56.

The Executive Summary provided significant detail on Local Engagement and How to get Involved for residents of Nottingham City Council with a large number of website links that residents can access. Additionally, the Council has lots of schemes and projects in place to improve air quality and reduce emissions. These include Go Ultra Low Nottingham which supports uptake of electric cars and other low emission vehicles, completion of a feasibility study to implement a Clear Zone in the City Centre and extension of Nottingham's tram network.

Defra recommends that Directors of Public Health approve draft ASRs. Sign off is not a requirement, however collaboration and consultation with those who have responsibility for Public Health is expected to increase support for measures to improve air quality, with co-benefits for all. Please bear this in mind for the next annual reporting process.

On the basis of the evidence provided by the local authority the conclusions reached are **accepted** for all sources and pollutants. Following the completion of this report, Nottingham City Council should submit an Annual Status Report in 2024.

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Commentary

The report is well structured, detailed, and provides the information specified in the Guidance. The following comments are designed to help inform future reports:

1. The council should add an amendment to the exceedances stating that when distance correcting for relevant exposure, two sites becomes compliant with the objective.
2. The AQAP is due to expire as of 2023 as such the council should revise the current AQAP and amend it as needed to ensure it is still relevant to future ASRs.
3. Please could the Council where possible provide estimates of costs for air quality measures in Table 2.2, and remove missing/incomplete entries from the table unless they can be filled in entirely, in order to ensure full transparency to the public regarding the actions taken to tackle air quality.
4. The ASR has not been signed off by the relevant Public Health Body. This is an example of good practice and is expected to increase support for measures to improve air quality, as such it should be included in future ASRs.
5. Comments from last year's ASR have been mentioned and addressed for the most part. Including use of online maps with the addition of automatic monitoring stations.
6. Clear justification was added for use of the local bias adjustment factor for the non-automatic monitoring QA/QC process.
7. An additional section was added to the appendix about Nottingham's Ministerial Direction which helps to contextualise the council's priorities.
8. The council have included reference to the Public Health Outcomes Framework D01 – Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution, this is considered an example of good practice and should be included in future ASRs.
9. Nottingham City Council provides a lot of detail in the Executive Summary, in particular the Actions to Improve Air Quality, Conclusions and Priorities, and Local Engagement and How to get Involved sections.

This commentary is not designed to deal with every aspect of the report. It highlights a number of issues that should help the local authority either in completing the Annual Status Report adequately (if required) or in carrying out future Review & Assessment work.

Issues specifically related to this appraisal can be followed up by returning the attached comment form to Defra, Welsh Government, Scottish Government or DOE.

For any other queries please contact the Local Air Quality Management Helpdesk:

Local Authority:	**Nottingham City Council**
Reference:	**AS23-1753**
Date of issue	**July 2023**

Telephone: 0800 0327 953
Email: LAQMHelpdesk@bureauveritas.com

Local Authority:	**Nottingham City Council**
Reference:	**AS23-1753**
Date of issue	**July 2023**

LAQM Guidance Notes – 2023

Changes to the Local Air Quality Management Framework

Through the Environment Act 2021 and updated Local Air Quality Management Statutory Policy Guidance 2022, the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) framework has been considerably strengthened. This page highlights some of the changes for delivery to help you prioritise action for improved air quality:

1. Strengthened Criteria for Air Quality Action Plans (AQAPs)

Where a Local Authority is not meeting air quality objectives, they must create an AQAP setting out their intentions to improve air quality in the area. Without current action plans in place, Local Authorities risk negatively impacting their communities by not proactively working to reduce air pollution in the area.

The requirements and guidance around AQAPs were recently strengthened under the Environment Act 2021 and revised LAQM Statutory policy guidance, which Local Authorities must have regard to. The key criteria for action plans are that they:

- set out the measures they will take to secure the achievement, and maintenance, of air quality standards and objectives
- specify a date by which each measure will be carried out
- are revised no later than every five years

2. New Escalation Process for Reporting

Government is committed to increasing transparency by requiring timely and accurate publication of Annual Status Reports (ASRs) and AQAPs by local authorities, as set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. These documents are public-facing and serve to keep local communities informed of the steps being taken by their local authority to improve air quality.

To ensure ASRs and AQAPs are delivered on time, Defra has introduced a new reminder and warning letter system for Local Authorities. This system was set out in the LAQM Statutory Policy Guidance 2022 and started to apply from 30 June 2023.

Local Authority:	**Nottingham City Council**
Reference:	**AS23-1753**
Date of issue	**July 2023**

If reporting requirements continue to be missed, the matter can be escalated to a Section 85 Secretary of State direction to the relevant Local Authority Chief Executive specifying action. You are therefore advised to ensure all statutory reporting duties for LAQM are met on time.

3. Public Bodies Required to Contribute to Action Plans

The Environment Act 2021 amended the Environment Act 1995 to increase the number of public bodies that have a duty to co-operate with Local Authorities for LAQM. Air quality partners are certain other public bodies that a Local Authority identifies as having responsibility for a source of emissions contributing to an exceedance of local air quality objectives. This could be a neighbouring authority, National Highways, or the Environment Agency. Once identified, there is a statutory requirement for such public bodies to engage and to contribute actions they will take to secure achievement of the local air quality objective and to maintain achievement thereafter.

All tiers of local Government are also now required by law to collaborate to address exceedances of Air Quality Objectives. County councils, the Mayor of London and combined authorities have similar duties to air quality partners. The difference is that, when requested, they must contribute to an action plan being prepared by a Local Authority, regardless of whether the local authority has identified them as being responsible for a source of emissions.

Under the new legislation, you may choose to request the support of another public body in the development of an AQAP and the same may be requested of your organisation.

Please refer to the LAQM Statutory Policy Guidance 2022 for more information. Should you require further assistance, please contact the LAQM Helpdesk: https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/air-quality/featured/england-exc-london-policy-guidance/

Web: http://laqm.defra.gov.uk/helpdesks.html

FAQs: http://laqm.defra.gov.uk/laqm-faqs/

Tel: 0800 032 7953

Email: laqmhelpdesk@uk.bureauveritas.com

The Air Quality Hub also provides free online information and is a knowledge sharing resource for local authority air quality professionals: https://www.airqualityhub.co.uk/

Local Authority:	**Nottingham City Council**
Reference:	**AS23-1753**
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Appraisal Response Comment Form

Contact Name:	
Contact Telephone number:	
Contact email address:	UKLAQMAppraisals@aecom.com

Comments on appraisal/Further information: