

AIR QUALITY MONITORING UPDATES AND AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS - RECOMMENDATIONS

Item CE 25/42 referred from Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee of 5 November 2025

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health advised that, in line with statutory duties, monitoring of Air Quality had continued in the Borough and the Annual Status Report 2025 submitted to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) earlier this year had been appraised and approved.

Based on the evidence, the revocation of four of the five remaining Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) at Tonbridge High Street, Larkfield, Aylesford and Borough Green were recommended. Members were advised that these AQMA could be revoked as there had been significant improvement in air quality and improved pollution levels. This position was supported by DEFRA as referenced in Paragraph 6 of their Annual Status Report appraisal, attached at Annex 1. Members were pleased to note that monitoring in some form within the areas of the AQMA to be revoked would continue, to keep air quality under review in known hotspots.

The potential of relocating continuous monitoring equipment to Watlingbury, the only remaining AQMA, was discussed and it was explained that previous attempts had not shown exceedance of nitrogen dioxide level. The use of lamp post-mounted sensors was also noted and ongoing monitoring at known hotspots was confirmed.

In addition, air quality monitoring across the Borough would continue in line with statutory requirements and there would be flexibility to move monitoring sites currently outside of AQMA as appropriate.

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the improvement in air quality over the last four years, be noted;
- (2) the revocation of the Tonbridge High Street, Larkfield, Aylesford and Borough Green Air Quality Management Areas, be agreed; and
- (3) the continuation of air quality monitoring across the Borough, including to respond to any specific areas of concern, be agreed.

***Recommended to Cabinet**