

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Green City Charter		
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2019		
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	Cabinet Member for Green City		
<b><u>CONTACT DETAILS</u></b>			
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#### **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

N/A

#### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

Southampton is a large and diverse city, with a strong and growing economy (currently assessed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the PwC Good Growth for Cities index). Southampton is a regional hub for transport, business, commerce, leisure and retail as well as being home to a major international cargo and passenger port.

Southampton is predominantly urban in character and the built up area and the city's influence extends beyond its administrative boundary. However, Southampton is also a city with a large amount of green spaces, with 49 parks and 1,140 hectares of open space. It also neighbours the New Forest National Park, Southampton Water, the Solent and the range of protected environments within them.

It is important to ensure that the city continues to support economic growth, but that this growth continues to support Southampton to be a green and environmentally sustainable city that will be resilient to the challenges of climate change. A move towards a low carbon, cleaner economy and greener landscape will enable the city to grow and evolve as a modern, healthy and attractive place to live, work and do business.

Last summer the council undertook a consultation exercise to seek opinions on measures needed to improve local air quality. The council had been required by government to assess if a Clean Air Zone was needed to deliver compliance with the European Union's limit level for Nitrogen Dioxide. The [consultation exercise](#) received an unprecedented response and there was significant support for delivering improvement. The subsequent proposal indicates that nitrogen dioxide concentrations have improved in recent years as consequence of both local and national action. It recommends a package of measures to ensure the likelihood of compliance being achieved. However, the consultation illustrated that there is significant ambition and aspiration to achieve more than the CAZ project could deliver. A new set of objectives and actions is needed if this is to be satisfied.

The council is proposing to develop a new citywide Green City Charter which will seek to deliver actions that will reduce pollution and waste, minimise the impact of climate change, stop health inequalities and create a more sustainable approach to economic growth. The Green City charter will identify a clear set of objectives that are aligned with national priorities. As well as setting a set of commitments and actions for the council to deliver, it will seek support from partners across the city to do the same.

Governments published its environment strategy in early 2018, '[A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment](#)' which proposes to deliver a range of measures to improve the environment within a generation. A set of priorities are identified and it recommends that local efforts be guided by the same goals. The UK [Clean Air Strategy](#) was published in January 2019 and advocates a joined up approach in delivering cleaner air, wider environmental and public health improvements and sustainable development. Both form part of a wider vision promoting sustainable development.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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| (i)  | To note the intention to develop a new Green City Charter for Southampton as outlined in this paper and, which will subsequently be brought to Cabinet for adoption in spring 2019. |
| (ii) | To support the intention to engage with partners on the development of the Green City Charter.  |

**REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

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| 1. | The development of a Green City Charter will facilitate the delivery of the Councils existing priority outcomes, refresh existing activities, and deliver new ones. It will ensure that environmental impacts are given due consideration in the delivery of services and decision making and where possible ensure we maximise the opportunity to deliver benefits. It will provide an opportunity to satisfy the expectations and ambitions identified in the Clean Air Zone Consultation exercise and seek to encourage city stakeholder to work with us to make Southampton a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable and attractive environment for all. |
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**ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

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| 2. | No alternative options considered. |
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**DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

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| 3. | Southampton City Council have been issued a Ministerial Direction Requiring it to undertake a local assessment (feasibility study) of air quality in the city, and produce a business case for a Plan to demonstrate how compliance with the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD) of 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup> for Nitrogen dioxide (NO <sub>2</sub> ) can be achieved in the shortest possible time. This must be submitted to the Secretary of State for Environment for approval no later than the 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2019. |
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4.	<p>Between June 21<sup>st</sup> 2018 and the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2018 the council undertook a consultation exercise with neighbouring authorities, local communities and businesses to: explain the objectives of the Clean Air Zone study, consider the potential health and economic impacts; understand any concerns; and assess the need for any mitigating actions or identify alternative options for consideration.</p> <p>The response was unprecedented. 9309 replies were received and have been accounted for in developing the Clean Air Zone business case and identifying a preferred option for the <a href="#">Plan</a> that will deliver compliance. 75% of respondents indicated that they thought air quality was a fairly or very big problem in Southampton. 80% agreed with the overall aim of a proposed Clean Air Zone and 56% supported a vehicle charging scheme as a means of delivering improvement. 78% and 77% believed it would deliver positive impacts on the environment and public health respectively.</p> <p>Of the comments received some of the most significant topics raised concerned; the need for action to improve air quality, the proposed measures not being enough and, the need to focus on sources other than road transport.</p>
5.	<p>The subsequent <a href="#">Plan</a> being proposed indicates that nitrogen dioxide concentrations have improved in recent years as consequence of both local and national action. It also recommends a package of measures to ensure the likelihood of compliance being achieved. However, the consultation illustrated that expectations and ambitions for cleaner air in Southampton extended beyond achieving legal compliance and the objectives set by the governments <a href="#">Clean Air Zone Framework</a>.</p> <p>A new set of objectives and actions is needed if this is to be satisfied. To satisfy this expectation a proposal to introduce a Green City Charter is recommended which will provide an opportunity to establish more ambitious improvements through alternative long-term, far-reaching projects.</p>
6.	<p>The Clean Air Zone consultation and the wider stakeholder engagement work has identified that there is a significant appetite amongst stakeholders to contribute to delivering improvements. Although the council has far reaching responsibilities it recognises that it cannot deliver the scope of change needed to achieve the standard of air quality that many want. The council also believes that encouraging and supporting voluntary change can be more effective in the long term than enforcing it.</p> <p>The Green City Charter can provide a vehicle to harness the enthusiasm seen during the Clean Air Zone Consultation and seek to maintain and even accelerate to momentum apparent during this exercise.</p>
7.	<p>The principles driving improved air quality support wider environmental improvements and benefits to the city. Similarly, the approach to delivering improved air quality (like partnership working) can be applied more generally to create a set of objectives and commitments that are mutually beneficial and can collectively build a more sustainable city.</p>

8.	<p>Making Southampton a greener city can only be achieved through partnership working with local residents, businesses and other stakeholders. Everything we do, whether as an individual in work, at home or visiting the city, or as an organisation, has an environmental impact. The council's intention is to work with partners to develop a shared set of principles that will ensure the environment is at the forefront of all decision making whether at work or at home.</p>
9.	<p>Government published its <a href="#">Clean Air Strategy</a> on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019. This forms part of a wider government vision on the environment including the vision for a Green Brexit (the new Environment Bill) and A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Section 3 identifies the link between clean air, the wider environmental and public health agenda and sustainable development. It states that <i>"in the past, pollution was sometimes seen as a price we had to pay for progress, but that is outdated thinking. We now know that clean, green and healthy environments in urban and rural areas are an essential component of progress, not a barrier to economic development"</i>.</p>
10.	<p>Government published '<a href="#">A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</a>' in January 2018. This identifies key environmental benefits and pressures and sets out goals and targets for improving the environment within a generation. It details how government will work with communities and businesses to do this. It recognises many organisations and partnerships pursue their own plans, and opportunities for joining up and integrating environmental work are missed. At a local level it suggests that environmental effort be guided by the goals it has outlined but also to reflect local needs and priorities as well as being more integrated and efficient.</p> <p>A Green City Charter can achieve this and can ensure Southampton is best placed to benefit from the support, initiatives and funding that central government will provide through the delivery of its own strategy.</p>
11.	<p>Southampton City Council is already active delivering schemes that support sustainable living. These include its Clean Air Strategy, the <a href="#">MyJourney sustainable travel programme</a>, <a href="#">Fuel Poverty Action Plan</a> and <a href="#">Citizen Energy</a>. But there is scope to build on these and an opportunity to use the experiences gained in delivering them to invest in a wider range of opportunities that will benefit the council and the city.</p>
12.	<p>Other cities have been recognised as <a href="#">Green Cities</a> for the efforts they have made to promote sustainable living. They have and been able to demonstrate the significant benefits a more sustainable economy can deliver. Southampton can learn from these cities, identify good practice and how to deliver it.</p>
13.	<p>Appendix 1 illustrates a set of themes and commitments as an example of what a Green City Charter might offer. This is based on the priorities published in the government's 25 year Plan and suggestions proposed during initial officer workshops. It is proposed that those who adopt the charter will propose their own set of specific commitments, actions and targets alongside each of the priorities to demonstrate how they will contribute.</p>

14.	Appendix 2 proposes a work plan involving both internal and external engagement to develop the proposal further, ensure priorities reflect the city's needs and establish a set of ambitious targets and a delivery plan for the council. The Green City Charter and the council's action plan will be presented to cabinet in spring 2019.
15.	In addition it is intended that we will work with and support stakeholders to adopt the Charter and develop their own plans alongside us. This will be achieved through round table events with business leaders, other public sector organisations, academics, community interest groups and local residents. Social media, the Clean Air Network, feedback from the Clean Air Zone consultation and analysis of national and international best practice will also be utilised.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

There is currently no budget set aside for delivery of the Green City Charter in the 2019/20 budget proposals. An assessment of potential delivery costs, and associated funding streams, will be undertaken as the Charter is developed.

### **Property/Other**

To be confirmed on delivery of the Green City Charter.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

s.1 Localism Act 2011 allows the Council to do anything deemed necessary or desirable to deliver or support its functions and duties providing that action is not otherwise prohibited by statute (the general power of competence). The preparation and delivery of a Green City Charter is authorised by virtue of s.1.

### **Other Legal Implications:**

The contents of a Green City Charter may be authorised by a variety of statutory powers and duties, depending on what is included in the final version to be adopted. Legal powers to undertake the proposals in the Charter will be further investigated as those proposals are developed with stakeholders and will be included in the final report to Cabinet. In undertaking the preparation of the Charter the Council needs to have regard to the impact of any proposals on protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 and s.17 Crime & Disorder Act (the duty to reduce or remove opportunities for crime and disorder in the area) as well as the duty to secure the rights and freedoms protected under the Human Rights Act 1998. These duties will be addressed by the preparation of an Equalities and Safety Impact Assessment ('EISA'). The Council also has various duties under the Environment Act 1995 and Environmental Protection Act 1990 to address air quality and other environmental pollutants and the proposals under the Charter will assist in delivering this duty.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

A Green City Charter will support the delivery of the Council Strategy 2016-2020 outcome "People in Southampton live safe, healthy, independent lives".

A Green City Charter will support the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2025 outcomes “People in Southampton live active, safe and independent lives” and “Inequalities in health outcomes are reduced”.

A Green City Charter will support the Clean Air Strategy by providing a mechanism to deliver further improvements in local air quality.

A Green City Charter is consistent with the principles outlined in the Government’s Environment Strategy, [‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’](#) and their [Clean Air Strategy](#).

<b>KEY DECISION?</b>	No	
<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	All	
<b><u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u></b>		
<b>Appendices</b>		
1.	A Blueprint for a Green City Charter	
2.	Work plan to deliver a Green City Charter	
<b>Documents In Members’ Rooms</b>		
1.	None	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>		
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out?		No
<b>Privacy Impact Assessment</b>		
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) to be carried out.		No
<b>Other Background Documents</b>		
<b>Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:</b>		
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)	
None		

