

## Epping Forest Branch Meeting – 8 February 2017

### Agenda item 8, Other Matters

#### AIR QUALITY

**Loughton Town Council would like to raise concerns about poor air quality in the district by drawing attention to following report by Cllr Chris Pond and to ask for the Branch's support.**

The latest systematic reports by Epping Forest District Council on air quality are published at [www.essexair.org.uk](http://www.essexair.org.uk) In 2013, the intention was to declare some Air Quality Areas in Loughton. There is no evidence this has been done.

The main cause of poor air quality in our parish (both urban and rural parts) is road traffic, with two motorways on our borders, and endemic stop-start traffic on the High Road and the A1168.

During the public enquiry on the Enfield NGAR in 2015, the Conservators expressed great concern that the A104 and A121, especially through Loughton, would become much more polluted from NOx emissions from extra vehicles. Local GPs have reported an increase in asthma cases in the young, mainly from the emission of particulates from diesel vehicles.

In 2016, the City of London, recognising threats to the environment in the green spaces as well as in the City itself, banned further purchases of diesel vehicles, and persuaded hire-car owners to switch hybrids to electric-only mode.

Diesel vehicles were being promoted by the Government only 5 years ago and given tax benefits. Official research (eg <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/key-issues-parliament-2015/health/air-quality-in-urban-areas/>) indicates that dealing with NOx and particulate pollution is now a government priority

What the Town Council has already agreed to do:

- Replace the Council's diesel vehicle with petrol, electric, or hybrid alternatives, already under consideration by the Recreation Committee;
- Exert pressure on
  - Epping Forest District Council to monitor and publicise vehicle pollution levels in the District; and
  - Essex County Council to include a requirement in their bus contracts for companies to incorporate anti-pollution measures on their vehicles;
- Cease (after a reasonable period) to pay mileage to councillors and if possible council staff for any diesel vehicle journeys;
- Require as a contractual condition its contractors to install particulate filters on any equipment they use (e.g. in grass cutting, site maintenance, etc), and the Planning and Licensing Committee, where relevant, to request similar conditions in planning consents;
- Join with relevant bodies such as the Conservators and local GPs to reduce the levels of pollution;
- Lobby relevant committees; and
- Encourage residents, when changing vehicles, to choose the smallest and least polluting non-diesel cars for their replacements.
- Encourage the provision of charging points for electric vehicles in Loughton.
- Promote these concerns at the forthcoming meeting of the Epping Forest Branch of the Association of Local Councils and with the Essex Association of Local Councils and the National Association of Local Councils.