

Title of Report:	Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032 Consultation
Committee Report Submitted To:	Environmental Services Committee
Date of Meeting:	13th October 2026
For Decision or For Information	For Decision
To be discussed In Committee	NO

Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)	
Strategic Theme	Healthy, Active and Engaged Communities
Outcome	Provide a consultation response
Lead Officer	Head of Health & Built Environment

Estimated Timescale for Completion	
Date to be Completed	N/A

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

Legal Considerations	
Input of Legal Services Required	No
Legal Opinion Obtained	No

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council response to the consultation.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Air pollution is one of the most serious environmental health challenges in Northern Ireland. It affects everyone, from unborn babies to older adults. It can lead to breathing problems, heart disease, stroke, and even premature death. There is no safe level of air pollution.
- 2.2 Poor air quality also affects our economy by increasing healthcare costs and reducing productivity. The main sources of harmful air pollution in Northern Ireland are:
- Traffic emissions in towns and cities
 - Burning solid fuels like coal and wet wood in homes
 - Ammonia from agriculture, which contributes to harmful particles in the air
- 2.3 The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) has recently launched a consultation on a draft Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032
- 2.4 The draft Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland aims to set out a clear ambition to improve air quality by 2032 through the following five strategic objectives and commitment to:
- **Develop our evidence base** by building on our existing high quality air quality network. This will provide more scientific air quality data, which will help to show if policy changes are working or not. This will inform future decisions and allow us to measure success.
 - Improve legislation by updating existing legislation to protect Northern Ireland's air quality and human health. New ambitious PM2.5 and PM10 limits/targets are intended to be introduced, following consultation.
 - **Raise Awareness and change behaviour** by providing people with clear, concise and accurate information to allow people to make better informed decisions and change behaviour. Behaviour change campaigns will be central to changing habits and improving air quality.
 - **Work towards zero pollution** by preventing air pollution at source. If prevention is not fully possible, air pollution should be minimised; and, if air pollution has occurred, it should be remediated.

- **Deliver change through partners** by working together to manage and improve Northern Ireland's air quality. DAERA will work with the District Councils to improve the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime and grant. The wide range of partners will also include, for example, Department for the Economy, Department for Infrastructure, Department of Health.

2.5 The full Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032 consultation can be found at the following link:

[Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032 | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

2.6 A draft response has been prepared and is attached as Appendix 1.

2.7 The consultation closes on 27th October 2026.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 It is recommended that Committee approves the response for submission by the consultation closing date, subject to subsequent endorsement or amendment by full Council.

Consultation on the Draft Clean Air Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2032

Draft Response

Qs 1 - 5 Background information on responding organisation

6. Do you agree with the aim of the draft Clean Air Strategy?

Yes.

7. If no, please provide your comments about an alternative or additional aim:

N/A.

8. Do you agree with the three goals in the draft Clean Air Strategy?

Yes.

9. If no, please provide your comments about alternative or additional goals:

N/A.

10. Do you agree with the five strategic objectives in the draft Clean Air Strategy?

Yes.

11. If no, please provide your comments about alternative or additional Strategic Objectives:

N/A.

12. Do you believe that the proposed new actions for Strategic Objective 1, will deliver an improved air quality evidence base across Northern Ireland?

The proposed actions should improve the air quality evidence base by increasing the quantity, quality and geographical coverage of monitoring data, thereby providing a stronger foundation for assessing air quality trends and informing future policy

decisions. Projects such as Peace Air should support policy development and provide direction for air quality management across Northern Ireland.

13. Are there any additional actions that you suggest should be included within Strategic Objective 1?

No.

14. Do you have any other comments about Strategic Objective 1?

Any expansion of the local air quality monitoring network should be supported by appropriate funding and resources for councils.

15. Do you believe that the proposed actions for Strategic Objective 2, will deliver improved air quality legislation for Northern Ireland?

While the Council supports improved legislation and the tightening of pollutant limits, further policy developments will be required before stricter standards can be introduced. The Council considers that any revision of pollutant standards should be evidence based. DAERA should undertake trajectory modelling for each pollutant of interest to ensure that any proposed changes to limits are achievable within the intended compliance timeframe.

16. Are there any additional actions that you suggest should be included within Strategic Objective 2?

No.

17. Do you have any other comments about Strategic Objective 2?

Should councils have a role in enforcing any legislative changes, appropriate funding and resources should be provided to support delivery.

The Council would welcome further consultation on any proposed legislative changes relating to stove and solid fuel labelling, as well as stove emission rate requirements within Smoke Control Areas.

18. Do you believe that the proposed new action for Strategic Objective 3, will deliver raised awareness and bring about behavioural change?

The Council supports the introduction of air quality awareness and behaviour change campaigns. Annual campaigns targeting key pollution sources should improve public awareness and encourage healthier behaviours. Successful delivery will require consistent and clear messaging, and ongoing engagement with councils and local communities.

19. Are there any additional actions that you suggest should be included within Strategic Objective 3?

No.

20. Do you have any other comments about Strategic Objective 3?

The Council supports the provision of dedicated funding and resources to enable district councils to assist in the delivery of local air quality awareness and behaviour change campaigns. Adequately funded and resourced campaigns will help maximise the effectiveness and impact of key messages.

21. Do you believe that the proposed new actions for Strategic Objective 4, will help to achieve a fair and just transition to phasing out of coal, manufactured solid fuels and unseasoned wood for home heating?

Council agrees that transitioning away from coal, manufactured solid fuels, and unseasoned wood should result in improved air quality. However, consideration should be given to what support mechanisms will be available for households that rely on solid fuel as their primary source of heating, particularly those experiencing, or at risk of, fuel poverty.

22. Are there any additional actions that you suggest should be included within Strategic Objective 4?

The Council considers that additional actions should be developed for commercial premises that utilise similar combustion appliances, techniques, and fuels, ensuring alignment with the overall objectives of the Strategy and the improvement of air quality.

23. Do you have any other comments about Strategic Objective 4?

Appendix 1

The Council would welcome clarification regarding any future enforcement responsibilities arising from restrictions on solid fuel use. Should district councils be expected to undertake compliance monitoring or enforcement activities, appropriate legislation, guidance, funding, and resources will be required to ensure effective implementation.

24. Do you believe that the proposed new actions for Strategic Objective 5, will deliver positive change to air quality in Northern Ireland through working with delivery partners?

The Council agrees that meaningful improvements in air quality will require strong partnership working. The Council welcomes increased investment in active travel and would hope that this commitment extends to towns and well populated villages.

The Council also supports the continuation of the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) Grant, which assists council in maintaining and delivering local air quality monitoring networks.

Council welcomes DAERA's commitment that a Clean Air Forum will be established for all relevant stakeholders, as this is considered to be critical to the delivery of LAQM processes.

25. Are there any additional actions that you suggest should be included within Strategic Objective 5?

No.

26. Do you have any other comments about Strategic Objective 5?

No.

27. Do you believe that the proposed indicators for the Clean Air Strategy will effectively measure the success of the Strategic Objectives and their actions?

Council considers pollutant trends to be a useful indicator of the effectiveness of the Strategic Objectives and associated actions. The pollutant trends are currently being achieved in Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council area, however, based on current PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ trends within other Council areas across Northern Ireland, the proposed compliance date of 1 January 2028 may be unrealistic. Further policy development and mitigation measures will be required to achieve compliance.

28. Have you any comments on the Implementation and Governance proposals for the Clean Air Strategy?

The Council notes and welcomes the proposed inclusion of district councils within the Cross-Departmental Steering Group.

29. Have you any comments on the Equality and Disability Screening Assessment of the draft Clean Air Strategy?

No.

30. Have you any comments on the Rural Needs Impact Assessment of the draft Clean Air Strategy?

No.

31. Have you any comments on the Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment of the draft Clean Air Strategy?

No.

32. Have you any comments on the Habitats Regulations Impact Assessment of the draft Clean Air Strategy?

No.