

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Net Zero, Environment and Transport
DATE	11 November 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Air Quality Progress
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/272
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Jenni Lawson
REPORT AUTHOR	Ann Marie Rankin
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1, 6

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update committee members on the annual air quality monitoring results for 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Note the findings of the 2025 Air Quality Progress Report (APR) for Aberdeen City Council.
- 2.2 Agree that subsequent Air Quality Annual Progress Reports revert to being provided to Members through Service Updates.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Environment Act 1995, Part IV, as amended by the Environment Act 2021, places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas, and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are being achieved, or are likely to be achieved within the relevant period.
- 3.2 The Scottish Government has stipulated authorities must submit an annual progress report for approval by the Scottish Government and the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA). The Scottish Government approved the appended Annual Progress Report 2025 for Aberdeen City (Appendix 1) on 29 August 2025.
- 3.3 The main pollutants of concern in Aberdeen City are nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulate matter (PM₁₀), related to road traffic emissions. These pollutants have a significant public health impact, particularly for the young, elderly and those with pre-existing medical conditions. In 2018, Health Protection Scotland

estimated that approximately 1700 attributable (premature) deaths in Scotland annually can be attributed to air pollution.¹

- 3.4 Table 1 details the air quality objectives for the purposes of Local Air Quality Management. The air quality objectives are set out in the Air Quality (Scotland) Regulations 2000, the Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2002 and the Air Quality (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2016. The regulations also prescribe the dates for meeting air quality objectives.

Table 1: Air Quality objectives

Pollutant	Air Quality Objective		Date to be achieved by
	Concentration	Measured as	
Nitrogen dioxide	200 µg/m ³ not to be exceeded more than 18 times a year	1-hour mean	31.12.2005
	40 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2005
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀) (gravimetric)	50 µg/m ³ , not to be exceeded more than 7 times a year	24-hour mean	31.12.2010
	18 µg/m ³	Annual mean	31.12.2010

Nitrogen Dioxide Monitoring Results

- 3.5 Table 2 shows the annual mean NO₂ concentrations over the period 2020-2024 at Aberdeen's six continuous monitoring sites. Erroll Park replaced a site previously sited on Erroll Place, which had to be relocated due to the demolition of a housing development on the street; hence why data is only available from 2021. There is also a network of diffusion tubes recording NO₂ concentrations at 60 sites across the city.
- 3.6 Concentrations of NO₂ at all automatic sites in 2024 continued to be below the annual mean air quality objective of 40 µg/m³. Combined trends in NO₂ levels suggest that air quality continues to improve across the city.
- 3.7 No new diffusion tube locations were added to the city survey in 2024, however five introduced as part of the city survey in 2017 ahead of the operation of the

NESS Energy from Waste facility were removed. This was due to no change in monitoring results being recorded at any of the locations throughout the monitoring period, including since the facility became fully operational in 2023.

- 3.8 One diffusion tube located within the city centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) on Bridge Street exceeded the annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³. The measured concentration was 43.2 µg/m³. This exceedance is likely attributable to the rerouting of permitted traffic and several main bus routes along Bridge Street following the closure of central Union Street for active travel improvements and urban realm upgrades. Notably, however, the 2024 measurement is lower than the value recorded at the same location in 2023.
- 3.9 Within the Wellington Road AQMA the annual mean levels recorded at the Wellington Road automatic site and the three diffusion tube locations continued to be below the annual mean objective – a trend that has continued for 7 years.
- 3.10 There were also no exceedances of the annual mean objective recorded in the Anderson Drive AQMA. Although there had been no data capture at the Anderson Drive continuous air quality monitoring station since June 2024 due to equipment breakdown, in the 20 years the station has been operational, there has been no exceedance of the NO₂ air quality objective recorded. Annual mean concentrations of NO₂ have progressively reduced over the last 7 years and are significantly below the air quality objectives. Diffusion tube monitoring locations (DT8, DT45, DT98 and DT100) in the Anderson Drive AQMA also returned measurements well below the objective level, and continued the downward trend seen since 2018.
- 3.11 There were no exceedances of the hourly mean objective at any automatic or diffusion tube sites in 2024.

Table 2: Annual mean NO₂ concentrations at continuous monitoring sites

Site	Annual mean NO ₂ concentration (µg/m ³)				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Erroll Park	N/A	21	16	15	14
Union St	24	25	27	25	23
Market St	22	27	23	24	22
Anderson Dr	12	13	12	11	13
Wellington Rd	25	28	25	24	24
King St	16	17	16	15	14

Objective Value	40	40	40	40	40
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Particulate Matter Monitoring Results

- 3.12 There were no exceedances of the annual mean or 24-hour mean objective at any of the continuous monitoring sites in 2024. The 24-hour mean objective has been met at all monitoring sites for the last 7 years.
- 3.13 Table 3 shows the annual mean PM₁₀ concentrations over the period 2020-2024.

Table 3: Annual mean PM₁₀ concentrations at continuous monitoring sites

Site	Annual mean concentration (µg/m ³)				
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Erroll Park	N/A	10	11	10	11
Union St	10	11	13	13	12
Market St	10	11	13	12	12
Anderson Dr	9	9	10	9	9
Wellington Rd	14	12	11	12	11
King St	11	12	13	12	12
Objective Value	18	18	18	18	18

- 3.14 There are 6 continuous monitoring sites measuring PM₁₀ levels in Aberdeen City. As before with NO₂, data for Erroll Park is only available from 2021.
- 3.15 No exceedances of the annual mean were recorded at any of the continuous monitoring sites.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAS)

- 3.16 The Anderson Drive and Wellington Road AQMAS were reviewed in 2024 and the decision was taken to revoke both areas, due to improving air quality and continued compliance with the objective levels for NO₂ and PM₁₀. Both AQMAS were officially revoked on 1 February 2025.

- 3.17 The City Centre AQMA was also reviewed in 2024, with the decision taken to remove the PM₁₀ annual mean and 24-hour mean from the order, due to continued compliance with the objective levels. This amendment was brought into force on 1 February 2025.

As detailed in 3.7, the City Centre AQMA remains valid for the NO₂ annual mean objective. However, recently established traffic management amendments have resulted in a significant improvement in air quality at city centre locations, together with the enforcement of the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) commencing on 1 June 2024. Monitoring will continue to determine whether the objective continues to be met.

Revert to Service Update

- 3.18 This report updates Members on air quality monitoring progress, and since no Committee approval is being sought for the APR, it is recommended that subsequent APRs revert to being provided to Members through Service Updates.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant			Yes

	risks identified			
Compliance	No significant risks identified			Yes
Operational	No significant risks identified			Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified			Yes
Reputational	No significant risks identified			Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2025-26</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	This report provides an update on air quality monitoring across the city. There are no proposals in this report and therefore has no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	There are no proposals in this report.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	There are no proposals in this report.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	There are no proposals in this report.
Community Empowerment Stretch Outcomes	There are no proposals in this report.
Regional and City Strategies	There are no proposals in this report.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jenni Lawson, Chief Officer Governance on 23 October 2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 (1) Air Quality in Scotland, The Scottish Government, 2021.

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 – 2025 Air Quality Annual Progress Report (APR) for Aberdeen City Council

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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