



**AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT CONSULTATION WORKSHOP:
SHARING BEST PRACTICE – REGIONAL WORKSHOPS
BRISTOL**



WORKSHOP 1

Question 1:

What do you expect to achieve from carrying out your local authority statutory duties for AQM consultation?

Defra

Group 1 (yellow circle)

- General acceptance, guidance, seeking advice, look at them as experts, doing it legally, what we've done is sufficient, endorsement with decisions we're coming up with.
- From their flipchart: General acceptability; Seek advice; Are we legal, sufficient, and accurate?; Endorsement; guidance from experts.

Group 2 (yellow star)

- Did we get it right? Steering and guidance if we don't guide it right.

Group 3 (red star)

- Constructive feedback & advise, funding, grants for monitoring etc.

From their flipchart:

<i>Defra</i>	<i>Public</i>	<i>Internal</i>	<i>External</i>
Constructive feedback	Local knowledge	Environmental information	
Statutory advice	Action groups	Transport	
Funding	Action plan measures	Planning policy	
		Local policing	
		Planning proposals	
		Potential 'hot spots' tourism	
		Staff influence	
		Partnership opportunities	
		Advice/info (past experience)	
		AQMA boundaries	

Group 4 (blue star)

- Technical appraisal, technical feedback, seal of approval, nod from the central government, important for funding.

The public

Group 1 (yellow circle)

- We want to achieve legal compliance. Their feelings that they've been engaged in the process, raise awareness, alerting them to the situation it's been found, whether our problems (AQMA) are actually engaging them in changing their behaviours.
- From their flipchart: legal compliance; feeling of engagement; raising awareness; alerting to situation; Engagement in problem to change.

Group 2 (yellow star)

- Awareness raising (depending on the stage we're consulting); Action Plan: realistic expectation from the public; Attitudes to AQM?; Additional options (in Action Plan?).

Group 3 (red star)

- Local knowledge that we're not aware of, local groups, solutions to options in action plan, policing (if we had declared, they can enforce it)

Group 4 (blue star)

- No agreement on 1 way or 2 way. Important to capture local knowledge, sometimes not aware of what happening on the ground, engaging with communities from the early stage, community involvement, validation/acceptance from the community.
- From their flipchart: Ideas/options; Local knowledge; Local need; Ownership/support; Validation.

Internal departments

Group 1 (yellow circle)

- Provide information, seek collaboration with them, seek acceptable solutions of what's coming out from the process, guidance in their strategies (e.g. planners not to add new incinerators into AQMAs).
- From their flipchart: Provide information; Seek collaboration; Seek acceptable solutions; Guiding their strategies.

Group 2 (yellow star)

- If there any context with their proposals, in the team with them.
- From their flipchart: any conflicts – their plans; A sense of 'team'.

Group 3 (red star)

- Environmental information (geographical info), transport, planning liaison, hotspots, tourism (English tourism increasing parking), health information (PCT), telephone information & other enquiries. Informing boundaries whether it's the whole borough.

Group 4 (blue star)

- Better communication between departments, identifying existing policies (conflict or support what you are trying to do, same directions), influence new policies. Getting to strategy/policy makers and bringing air quality into that. Corporate support, high level within the LA. Internal consultation brings this a lot better.
- From their flipchart: Better communication; ID existing policies; Influence new policies; Corporate ownership: Member communication.

External government bodies

Group 1 (yellow circle)

- Funding from them? Met office with us, perhaps seeking information so we can do a better job e.g. weather system. Health Protection Agency let them know how to deal with aspects of pollution to health.
- From their flipchart: Similar to above; Funding (?); Information to improve public advice; HPA & Met Office.

Group 2 (yellow star)

- Promote collaboration, not expecting to get anything back from them.

Group 3 (red star)

- See the above table.

Group 4 (blue star)

- No comment on the flipchart.

Question 2:

Do our research findings reflect your experiences?

Group 1 (yellow circle)

1: Do we? Defra tells us what to do.

2: depending on structure of LAs

left blank means they agree

4: we don't have a formal consultation strategy, just do what we think it's best response rate.

8: some of us don't feel at ease with experts, feel intimidated

From their flipchart:

1: do we lead? Government tells us?

2: some authorities arranged with 'Green Team'

3, 5, 6, 9: agree

4: not all have a formal consultation strategy

7: other depts should be 'required' to respond

8: may feel intimidated? Not at ease

Group 2 (yellow star)

1: if you have the County, the County lead at the end.

2: and land-use planners not development control

3: the county is higher on the list

4: main consultation strategy is one way, AQMA declaration then changes to 2-way

5: NSCA 'how to consult' guidance but most of us are not aware of it

Apathy rather than consultation fatigue, they're just not bothered. Until getting to the action plan, hopefully they're more interested.

Addition from their flipchart: Do not agree re. non-experts vs. experts; Very low impact.

Group 3 (red star)

There are other alternatives than using the Internet e.g. main libraries. But with other bullet points, we agree with your comments. No further comment on the flipchart.

Group 4 (blue star)

- General agreement, no big surprises of what you are saying. Lack of emphasis on resources implications on LAQM/planning process. Consultation is extremely time consuming but it's not mentioned in the key findings. Hard enough to design consultation in the first place, more difficult to actually give it back to the public. Need of guidance to address this, choice of case studies from different LAs, rural or semi-rural authorities are not represented.
- From their flipchart: General agreement; Time & resources (or lack thereof), not really identified as a problem (1/3 officer / LA); Level/content of public feedback difficult.

Discussions

- Time and resources are big issues for everybody. Reporting back and embedding it into the decision maker is a big problem.
- First consultation tends to be quite vast and include everybody, then you're trying to refine it, more targeted so you don't have to report it too much, funnelling down consultation.
- AQMA, action plan is the most important stages. When you start to hassle with people's lives, then it becomes important. AQMA declaration: we're just telling them. We give them an opportunity but nobody comes back to us.
- Getting public awareness, explaining about AQMA boundaries but it's more useful at action plan stage.
- Is there any value or merit in by asking other stakeholders on monitoring (local knowledge) about where to deploy your resources? Early agreement public buying. One South West authority did DA on particulate matter, enormous difficulty getting people agree to put them in their front gardens, the public just didn't want to know and delayed the process. There is a level of apathy from the public if it's simply about air quality or pure science. But if you ask them to move their cars, the apathy is gone.

WORKSHOP 2

Question 1:

Explore 3 aspects of consultation (which stakeholders, at which stage, and what is the most effective strategy) to ensure an effective AQM consultation & to achieve beneficial outcomes from the consultation.

Group 1 (Blackberry MBC)

Which stakeholders?

- As a unitary authority, transport & land-use planners, members etc.
- AQMA in town centre: local businesses, local residents, chamber of commerce.
- AQMA industry: local residents, local businesses in the area, the Environment Agency (as it could end up changing to A1 installation or they might have insight knowledge about it), local transport & land-use planners
- Highways Agency & neighbouring LAs as it can have a knock on effect to nearby roads & authorities, so you can consult them.

Which stage?

- A lot of consultations already before AQMA declarations, you've done your boundaries and it's when you do action plan that's the most important consultation period.
- From their flipchart: Likely that ongoing; AQMA boundaries already set; Further Assessment, keep informed; Action Plan – want feedback.

How?

- 2 different strategies: steering group forums set up, depending on the nature of AQMA & the need to inform businesses/local residents.
- Urban area (town centre): large number of people so use letter or local media, ward members
- Industrial AQMA: small number of businesses and residential properties, so use personal interaction - go around & telling people

Group 2 (Blackberry MBC)

Which stakeholders?

Consult them all, but some would be telling them.

Which stage?

- Passing information until you get to action plan stage. Asking about boundaries of AQMAs. You might not get any response but at least you ask people.
- From their flipchart: 'telling' until AQAP then 'asking' & 'telling' re. AQMA boundaries with statutory & non-statutory consultees.

How?

- Inside the authority itself into planning process because the options usually require traffic control & strategies related to properties (transport and land-use planners). Gloucester had carried out consultation with land-use planners before AQMA declaration before they already knew that it's gonna be a problem.

Group 3 (Cherry CC)

Which stakeholders?

- Highways Authority: statistic on traffic figures, vehicle emissions. Transport planners, operators, LA depts in relation to taxis, neighbouring LAs, freight management groups, town centre management.
- From their flipchart:
- Transport planners (LA), Highways Agency; Transport operators (public & private); LA licensing dept (e.g. taxis); Economic Development (LA21); Neighbouring authorities; Department for Transport, VOSA.

Which stage?

- Following a DA before declaration so we have proper data.

How?

- Local media & target specific groups. Public & business side of things in terms of transport & freight operators. Public meetings at ward levels. From a practical point of view, largely transport people already did action plan options for you.
- From their flipchart: Media – target ‘groups of interest’; Focus groups/meetings – at appropriate scale. Getting internal & external consultees together, you can begin to fit everybody into a story.

Group 4 (Blueberry DC)

Which stakeholders?

- If there is no problem, information exercise. If there is a problem, to statutory consultees and other means to reach the public. Local politicians at the early stage, business community, PCT (?) if there is a looming public health issues then it's better to get PCT involved at early stage.
- From their flipchart: not many unless a problem discovered. Assuming there is a problem:
- Internal (transport etc); Statutory consultees (as appropriate); Public (targeted); Local politicians (town/parish councils); Chamber of Commerce or business representatives; PCTs; Use this to inform development of a steering group (?).

Which stage?

- When we were looking possibly to declare an AQMA. Before that it's just a technical process. From their flipchart: not until declaration (which this LA hasn't); Information dissemination for USAs etc; ‘consult’ Defra (technical appraisal).

How?

- Determine whether we declare an AQMA or not. Preliminary establishment of a steering group. From their flipchart: Depend on exceedance area/data. Steering group as main vehicle for consultation. To be set up at early stage in the process.

Question 2:

What are the barriers to and opportunities for implementing our steps to better practice?

Group 1

EH don't have that much experience in consultation.

Group 2

- Self inflicted barriers: no time & resources
- A movable community: they were there when the tubes were up but have moved when the results came up; Difficult to create interest; No straight forward answers, might not be useful to have prescriptive advice as each LA have different problem.

Group 3

- Cost, resources, apathies, conflicting political interest (what they want at ward levels not necessarily the same as they want at town levels).
- From their flipchart: Barriers: Cost, time resources; Differing priorities; Shifting the problem?; Conflicting political interest; Seasonal trends; Apathy (again!).
- Opportunities: Ancillary benefits (congestion, emissions); Support & make the most of existing networks; Education & awareness raising.

Group 4 (Blueberry DC, blue star)

- Barriers: Cash. Extended period for consultation doesn't fit with LAQM timescale. Depends whether your LA have AQ as priorities. Depends on history of policy in your LA (e.g. of bypass that. General perception from the public is that AQ is better that's why they move there.
- From their flipchart: Barriers: Cash; Specific LAQM timescales; Staffing resources; LA priorities; Historical policy priorities; Perception of 'clean' rural areas
- Opportunities: corporate plan, make AQ as community plan measure. Development process: section 106 agreement, influence development process for AQ gain. LTP: review LTP alongside AQAP. Opportunities: Corporate plan; Development process (input on AQ terms & cash); LTP; Citizens Panels.

Discussions

- Different courses for different horses. Different experiences.
- Sheffield is a specific example that doesn't represent 90% of English LAs. Tapping into funding is a big difference. It is not going to work to dump Sheffield model somewhere else. The idea of community monitoring is interesting but the problem is setting it up.
- There are some areas where politicians are keen on air quality issues but in Gloucester they rather hide it. It's very difficult.
- Interesting messages to take away: one size doesn't fit all. Sheffield experience is unlikely to be reproducible in other locations and perhaps it's not beneficial due to the nature of the problem. Lots of examples in community engagement. Outputs to take to Defra, whether they're gonna take it into account is another matter. We can capture & build that in. how do we enable those better practice, grant system running so LA can buy in to the fund for consultation. Those sorts of things we can carry forward. They're quite open on the advice of what best to do.