

Environmental Services Committee

AGENDA

Notice of Meeting:

A meeting of the Environmental Services Committee will be held on:

Date: Thursday 9 July 2020
Time: 9.00am
Venue: Council Chamber
137 Havelock Street, Ashburton

Membership

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Chairperson | Diane Rawlinson |
| Deputy Chairperson | Rodger Letham |
| Members | Carolyn Cameron Lynette Lovett Angus McKay Mayor Neil Brown (ex-officio) |

2 July 2020

Environmental Services Committee

| Timetable | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| 9.00am | Meeting commences |

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Extraordinary Business**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**

Minutes

- | | | |
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| 4 | Environmental Services Committee 12/03/20 | 3 |
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Reports

- | | | |
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| 5 | Submission: Proposed National Environmental Standards for Air Quality | 5 |
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4. Environmental Services Committee

Minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on Thursday 12 March 2020, commencing at 1.30pm, in the Council Chamber, 137 Havelock Street, Ashburton.

Present

His Worship the Mayor, Neil Brown; Councillors Diane Rawlinson (Chair), Carolyn Cameron, Rodger Letham, Lynette Lovett and Angus McKay.

Also present:

Councillors Leen Braam and Stuart Wilson.

In attendance

Hamish Riach (Chief Executive), Jane Donaldson (GM Strategy & Compliance), Neil McCann (GM Service Delivery), Ruben Garcia (Communications Manager) and Aisling O'Reilly (minutes).

Officers in attendance for the duration of their reports: Ian Hyde (Planning Manager), Rick Catchpole (Environmental Monitoring Manager) and Michael Wong (Building Services Manager).

1 Apologies

Nil.

2 Extraordinary Business

Nil.

3 Declarations of Interest

Nil.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

That the minutes of the Environmental Services Committee meeting held on 30 January 2020, be taken as read and confirmed.

Letham /Brown

Carried

5 Six-monthly Performance Report

• Building Regulation

Historical backlog of Code of compliance certificates (CCCs) has gone from 5,000 to 3,389 consents.

It was noted there is an error in the report: IANZ audit advised that the CCC result is 99.5%, not 98.2%.

It was noted for clarification that the swimming pool fence inspection target is to inspect every known pool once every 3 years.

• District Planning

Explanation of 'wave': annual resident survey was previously only done once a year. Now it is carried out in 4 waves throughout the year.

- **Emergency Management**

It was noted that the community response plan developed for Hakatere Huts included both communities in these discussions.

That the Environmental Services Committee receives the six monthly non-financial performance report.

Cameron/Lovett

Carried

The meeting concluded at 1:40pm.

5. Proposed National Environmental Standards for Air Quality

Author *Toni Durham; Strategy & Policy Manager*
GM Responsible *Jane Donaldson; Strategy & Compliance*

Summary

- The purpose of this report is for Council to consider a submission to the Ministry for the Environment Proposed National Environmental Standards for Air Quality.
- The draft submission has been developed following discussion with relevant Council officers.
- The submission is due Friday 31 July at 5 pm.

Recommendation

- 1. That** Council receives the report.
- 2. That** Council approves the submission to the Ministry for the Environment about the proposed National Environment Standards for Air Quality, attached as Appendix 1.

Appendix One – Ashburton District Council draft submission

Background

Background

1. The proposed national environmental standards for air quality have been developed by the Ministry for the Environment (Mfe).
2. The discussion document can be found here:
<https://www.mfe.govt.nz/publications/air/proposed-amendments-national-environmental-standards-air-quality-particulate-matter>

Explanation of the current situation

3. The Government has committed to maintaining the quality of our air, given the relationship it has to the wellbeing of our people and our ecosystems.
4. In New Zealand, the National Environmental Standards (NES) for Air Quality are a key tool for managing air quality. The standards were introduced in 2004 to set a guaranteed minimum level of health protection for all New Zealanders. In the 16 years since then, we have seen improvements in air quality in many urban areas in New Zealand.
5. As the knowledge and understanding of air contaminants and their impact on human health have improved, the need to focus the national environmental standards has become apparent. The focus of the consultation is therefore:
 - to ensure the NES reflects up-to-date research on the health effects of particulate matter, specifically the role of PM^{2.5}.
 - to propose amendments to further reduce the impacts of household solid-fuel burners.
 - to enable New Zealand to meet its international obligations in relation to mercury emissions to air.
6. The COVID-19 lockdown saw the government extend the timeframe for this consultation from mid April to 31 July 2020.

What others have done

7. The Canterbury Planning Managers forum have agreed to not make a collective submission to the consultation.
8. Officers are aware that individual councils, including Environment Canterbury, Christchurch City and Waimakariri District Council, will be making submissions to the Ministry for the Environment on the proposals.

Options analysis

Option 1 – Do nothing

9. This is not the recommended option. Council may decide to stay silent and not make a submission on the air quality national environmental standards proposals. This could result in Council missing an opportunity to advocate on behalf of the district.

Option 2 – Approve the submission as attached in Appendix One (recommended option)

10. This option would see Council officers lodge the appended submission to the Ministry for the Environment.

Legal/policy implications

11. The lodging of a submission does not breach or trigger any statutory or legal duty of the Council.

Financial implications

12. There are no financial implication in making this submission.

| Requirement | Explanation |
|--|---|
| What is the cost? | Officer resource in preparing the submission. This has been met from within existing operating budgets. |
| Is there budget available in LTP / AP? | Yes |
| Where is the funding coming from? | Strategy & Policy |
| Are there any future budget implications? | No |
| Finance review required? | No |

Significance and engagement assessment

| Requirement | Explanation |
|--|--|
| Is the matter considered significant? | No |
| Level of significance | Low, not significant |
| Level of engagement selected | 1. Inform |
| Rationale for selecting level of engagement | The community will be informed of the Council submission through appropriate media channels. |
| Reviewed by Strategy & Policy | Toni Durham; Strategy & Policy Manager |

Next steps

- The document released by MfE is a discussion document. The dates for the publishing of the summary of submissions and the Minister's final decision have not been confirmed.

Submission

Proposed amendments to National Environmental Standard for Air Quality (NES-AQ)

| | | | |
|--------------|---|---------------|--|
| PREPARED BY: | Ashburton District Council PO Box 94 ASHBURTON 7774 | SUBMITTED TO: | Ministry for the Environment Air Quality NES Consultation PO Box 10 362 WELLINGTON 6143 |
|--------------|---|---------------|--|

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AirQualityNESsubmissions@mfe.govt.nz

Introduction

1. Ashburton District Council ('Council') welcomes the opportunity to submit on the proposed amendments to the National Environmental Standard for Air Quality (NESAQ). This submission is being made on behalf of the Council, who approved the submission on 9 July 2020 at its Environmental Services Committee.
2. Located an hour's drive south of Christchurch, more than 34,800¹ residents live in the district, with the main town of Ashburton accounting for over 50% of residents. Ashburton township boundaries are very similar to the Ashburton airshed boundaries. The rest of our residents live rurally or in smaller towns or villages.
3. Ashburton district has experienced moderate and sustained population increase since the mid-1990's, increasing by 23% between 2006 and 2013 (a 3.3% increase per year). This growth, however, is now slowing, with an average growth of 1.3% per year since 2013. The expansion of irrigation and agricultural diversification on the Canterbury Plains have been major factors in this growth.

General Comments

4. Council is generally supportive of the proposed amendments to the NESAQ while noting that the primary responsibility for managing air quality under the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) lies with regional councils.
5. Council supports PM^{2.5} standards becoming the primary regulator tool for managing ambient particulate matter within the proposals given the accepted scientific evidence that exposure to fine particles can cause disease and premature death from respiratory and cardiovascular causes.
6. Council notes the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment Reports of 2015 and 2019 concluding that the most important ambient air quality guideline is for long term exposure to PM^{2.5}. Both an annual average, and a 24 hour national standard are supported (to capture both

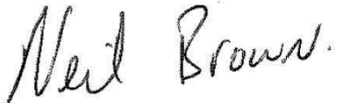

¹ Source: Statistics New Zealand Population Estimates 30 June 2019

long-term and short term exposure), provided the daily standard is calibrated to a daily winter average.

Air quality in Ashburton District

7. The urban township of Ashburton has been gazetted by Environment Canterbury as one of eight airsheds in the region. This has resulted in the regional council monitoring concentrations of various contaminants over the past fifteen years.
8. Attached to this submission is the Environment Canterbury produced summary of the Ashburton airshed for winter 2019. **Appendix one – Ashburton airshed summary**
9. Surrounding the Ashburton airshed is highly productive land that is of importance to the district, regional and national economies. Council is mindful of the issue of urban growth into productive rural land and restricted the expansion of non-rural activities in rural zones through the second generation District Plan (operative since 2014).
10. While smoke discharge is recognised as an issue for urbanised areas adjacent to farm land, stubble burning is an important process for cropping farmers in Ashburton District as a valued rotational tool. While the Council is generally supportive of the proposals, it is concerned that additional consenting requirements for farmers to undertake stubble burning will have detrimental effects on the viability of farming operations.
11. The current Canterbury Regional Air Plan within part 7.11 provides control over stubble burning. Whilst historically there have been instances where smoke from stubble burning has breached the Ashburton airshed, Council submits that this may be due to actions being undertaken in breach of the existing rules and this forms a compliance issue rather than one of a lack of control through existing regulation. Council would be concerned if controls in the NESAQ were more restrictive than those in the current Canterbury Regional Air Plan.
12. Council supports the changes proposed to solid wood burner requirements and notes that as the Canterbury Regional Council rules for solid wood burners in the region are already stricter than the current NES for Air Quality, the region likely to be already compliant with the proposal.
13. The previous Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment noted in her 2015 report (Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, 2015) that home heating from solid wood burners is an important health issue for households to keep warm in winter, particularly for the South Island, and particularly for the elderly. It is important that policies that are designed to improve human health by reducing particulate matter in the air are balanced by the basic human health need to keep warm in winter. Often the price of electricity means people in colder regions are reluctant to convert to heat pumps, as they fear being unable to heat their home due to the cost.
14. Those fears may be slightly allayed by the Electricity Authority's recent decisions on the transmissions pricing methodology, which are forecast to lower transmission costs in this district. This will assist the implementation of NESAQ in mid-Canterbury.

15. Council considers that the most effective way to improve air quality would be to reduce the cost of electricity, and educate people on the efficiency of other heating methods. Until the cost of electricity is reduced for households, solid wood burners will continue to be popular.
16. The Council thanks the Ministry for the opportunity to make a submission on the proposed amendments.

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| Mayor Neil Brown | Chief Executive Hamish Riach |

Appendix One – Ashburton Airshed Summary

AIR QUALITY IN ASHBURTON

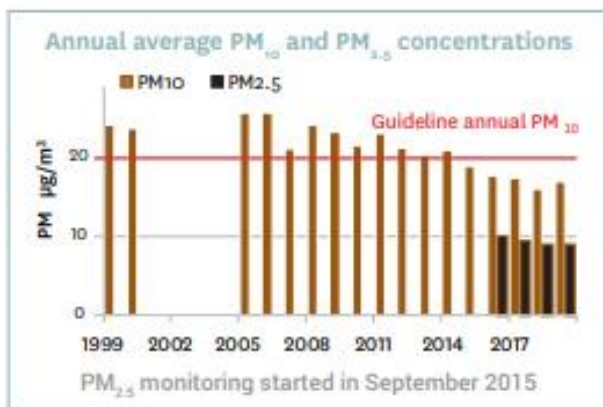


Winter 2019

The Ashburton airshed

Key Points

- Air pollution can be an issue in Ashburton, mainly during the coldest months
- Of the five contaminants listed in the NESAQ, PM₁₀, SO₂ and CO have been measured over a number of years, and there have been no breaches of the NESAQ for SO₂ or CO. NO₂ and O₃ are unlikely to breach the NESAQ
- Annual average PM₁₀ concentrations in the last few years have been below the national guideline
- Daily average PM₁₀ concentrations exceeded 50 µg/m³ on one day in 2019
- The number of PM₁₀ exceedances has reduced over time from 28 to 1 each year of monitoring (annual graph). A reduction in PM₁₀ emissions may still be needed to continue to meet the NESAQ of no more than three exceedances from 1 September 2016 and one exceedance from 1 September 2020
- Of the three main sources of PM₁₀ (home heating using wood and coal, industry and transport), an estimated 93% of the PM₁₀ comes from home heating on a typical winter day
 - Other contaminants of concern include PM_{2.5}, benzo(a) pyrene (BaP) and arsenic
 - The annual average PM_{2.5} concentration in 2018 was 9 µg/m³, below the WHO guideline of 10
 - Daily average PM_{2.5} concentrations exceeded the WHO guideline of 25 µg/m³ on eight days during 2019
 - Home heating is the main source of PM_{2.5} and BaP in winter
 - Arsenic is emitted when treated timber is burned
 - Strategies that reduce PM₁₀ emissions from the burning of wood and coal for home heating, will lower emissions of PM_{2.5}, BaP and possibly arsenic.



See: lawa.org.nz/explore-data/air-quality/ to check air pollution in Ashburton in the last few hours and days. You can also find more information on Environment Canterbury's air quality page: www.ecan.govt.nz/data/air-quality-data

