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PRINTERS

Cumbrian Newsprint, Cumbria

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TACKLING POLLUTION ON LONDON'S DIRTIEST ROADS

Mayor Boris Johnson has committed to work with the vehicle manufacturing industry to develop an affordable black cab that emits 60% less pollution by 2015 - and a zero-emission black cab by 2020. He said: "We are also planning to introduce age limits on taxis to eradicate the oldest, dirtiest vehicles. As part of this work, we are talking to manufacturers to develop a wonderful new black cab that emits no fumes by 2020." Proposals also include the introduction of age limits for taxis and minicabs to ensure the most polluting of these vehicles are removed from London's roads subject to consultation with the taxi and private hire trade. The Mayor continued by saying: "We are taking tough action to clean up London's air by targeting measures where they will have the most impact. These are creating a city where buses and taxis are becoming progressively less polluting, where cycling and transport choices such as electric vehicles will become more widespread."



DETAILED PLANS

He has set out detailed plans to tackle air pollution hotspots to ensure London meets legal targets for particulate matter by 2011 and that 250km of the dirtiest roads meet NO2 legal targets by 2015. 'Clearing the Air', the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy, is now out for public consultation, with a range of pollution-busting measures to reduce concentrations of particulate matter (PM10) by an estimated 10 to 20 per cent at priority areas in central London. These include: Marylebone Road, Euston Road, Marble Arch, Hyde Park Corner, Victoria Embankment, Upper Thames Street and Tower Hill. Possible solutions include power-washing roads to remove particulates from traffic, applying dust suppressants to road surfaces and changing traffic light timings to increase traffic flow. The Mayor said: "As part of this drive for a cleaner city, from January 2012, I am proposing to push ahead with the inclusion of heavier vans and minibuses in the Low Emission Zone. But London simply cannot crack this pressing problem alone, not least because a significant amount of pollution is blown in from outside our boundaries. It is estimated that air quality is contributing to the deaths of up to 50,000 people every year across the UK. That is why I am calling on the Government

to implement and provide adequate funding for initiatives that will tackle pollution in London. We've set out specific measures we're calling on Government to adopt that we believe will enable compliance with all limit values."

ON TRACK TO MEET TARGETS

The latest figures show London is on track to meet PM10 legal limits by 2011, but these areas have been identified as being most at risk of breaching limits when weather conditions are poor. In addition, the strategy proposes measures to clean up roads across London so that 250km more of London's roads will meet legal targets for NO2 by 2015 which would otherwise have breached these limits. This includes retrofitting older buses with equipment to bring them up to cleaner Euro 4 standards for NOx and the introduction of a new NOx standard for larger vehicles that have to comply with the Low Emission Zone standards.

The Mayor has also proposed that - subject to statutory public consultation on the implementation date - the oldest, most polluting heavier vans and minibuses will be included in the Low Emission Zone from January 2012.

These detailed proposals form part of a public draft of the Mayor's air quality action plan, which is now open to consultation. The strategy outlines the key sources of London's harmful airborne pollutants and proposes an action plan to reduce emissions. The pollutants of particular concern are nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and particulate matter (PM10) - road transport is the main source of emissions - with emissions from gas used in homes and businesses also a large contributor of NO2.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES

The Mayor also has ambitious plans to make London the electric vehicle capital of Europe - this took a major step forward recently with the confirmation of up to £17 million additional funding for electric vehicle infrastructure. This will deliver a network of around 7,500 charging points by spring 2013 with around 1,600 charge points to be installed over the next 12 months. But the Government faces large fines of potentially millions of pounds from the European Union if legal air quality limits are not met across the UK.

The Mayor's air quality strategy can be seen at: www.london.gov.uk/priorities/environment/vision-strategy/air-quality