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Dear Peter

**Re: Air Pollution in Lowestoft**

I am writing in response to your letter dated 19 November 2018 to which I apologise for the delay in responding.

Thank you for highlighting your concerns regarding air pollution in Lowestoft.

I would like to confirm the actions we are currently taking and to assure you that we will be supporting initiatives recommended in the NHS Long Term Plan to cut the health service's carbon footprint by 51% by 2025, including efficiency through widespread implementation of LED lighting and smart energy management. The Long Term Plan has also committed to cutting mileage and air pollution from rapid response vehicles, patient transport and staff journeys by a fifth by 2024 and ensuring nine out of 10 vehicles are low emission within a decade.

Our Public Health colleagues at Norfolk and Suffolk County Council, have used the – “impact of air pollution tool available from Public Health England”. The tool provides estimates of the impact of air pollution for local authorities in England using different scenarios.

The table below shows the estimated annual impact of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and impact of NO2 (nitrogen dioxide) in terms of the average number of **additional cases of disease associated with air pollution** in the population each year over 10 years to 2027.

<b>Great Yarmouth and Waveney</b>	<b>NO2</b>	<b>PM2.5</b>	<b>Total</b>
coronary heart disease	0	72	72
copd	21	35	56
stroke	0	20	20
asthma	0	6	6
diabetes	0	67	67
lung cancer	0	2	2
deaths	0	52	52

Each year there are about 2,600 deaths in Great Yarmouth and Waveney. This model uses a simulation approach and estimates about 2% of deaths are attributable to air pollution.

This attribution is part of a new approach that is not yet mainstream across the country. Until now, air pollution has not been included in the environmental risk factors contributing to disease. For example current information on environmental risks for cancer, include asbestos, other environmental exposure (e.g. fertilisers), sunlight and radiation as the environmental factors contributing to cancer prevalence. We will ensure that this is locally recognised as a matter of importance as air pollution gets included in national policy and the framework around this develops.

It is recognised that the public sector has a vital role to play in driving improvements to reduce air pollution. Our colleagues in Great Yarmouth Borough Council and East Suffolk Council are active in the area and have schemes that support the reduction of air pollution.

For East Suffolk Council, these include:

- Moving speed limit signs further out of villages.
- Provision of information to the public and commerce on reducing emissions from solid
- Fuel and wood burning, including the Government's 'Ready to Burn' campaign.
- Assessment of all relevant planning applications for air quality by the Environmental Protection Team.
- Improving the charging network within Suffolk to aid uptake and use of electric vehicles.
- As you are aware, the Lake Lothing third crossing in Lowestoft will reduce traffic congestion within Lowestoft particularly around the Bascule Bridge and improve air quality in this area.
- The Bascule Bridge control system has now been suitably modified and connected to the traffic signals control system, allowing the signals to respond to the bridge and re-direct traffic accordingly. This should make it possible to set different signal timings to optimise traffic flow, not only at busy times, but to completely change the signal priorities when the Bascule Bridge lifts, thereby reducing congestion and associated emissions.
- Network Rail have undertaken work to reduce the rail crossing barrier down time in Bridge Road, Oulton Broad, this work has improved the situation by relieving congestion in this area. Urban Traffic Management and Control systems (UTMC) are now installed and working within Lowestoft.
- Assessment of all relevant planning applications for air quality by the Environmental Protection team
- Making cycling easier by introducing cycling lanes

In Great Yarmouth Borough Council the following actions have been taken to address air pollution and specifically PM2.5:

- From 2018 monitoring the ambient atmospheric concentrations of PM2.5 within the Borough of Great Yarmouth, in order to be aware of what concentrations the residents and visitors are exposed to, and also to enable the Council to work effectively to reduce exposure targets.
- The Council continues to work through the Norfolk Environmental Protection Group's (NEPG) Air Quality Sub-Group, to ensure regular two-way engagement with representatives of Public Health England, and the Director of Public Health at Norfolk County Council;
- The Council's programme to encourage active travel, exercise, healthy choices, and avoidance of areas of poor air quality by residents and staff within the urban areas will continue.
- The Council will continue meeting and working with the Norfolk Director of Public Health's Office to provide local monitoring data and help embed air quality within their work; their Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, to ensure that it is discussed at the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board;, and to provide data to improve the Public Health Outcomes Framework indicator 3.01 'Fraction of mortality attributable to particulate air pollution' estimate;

The strategy of reducing overall air pollution and a variety of initiatives are in line with recommendation from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines. The sections - "Clean air zones" clearly states that the focus needs to be on reducing exposure to air pollution across the **whole zone rather than focusing on air pollution hotspots**.

We have looked into the information on GP practices in Waveney, this ranges from the lowest value of PM2.5 for Sole Bay in Southwold at 7.83 and the highest value for Alexandra Road at 16.18. This corresponds with the environments of these practices.

This matter will be discussed at the Suffolk Chief Officers leadership team to look at how collectively as public sector leaders we are taking note of the impact of air pollution on health and well-being in our area.

We will continue to work in partnership with our colleagues in local councils and Public Health in relation to air pollution and build this into our future plans.

Yours sincerely

**Melanie Craig**  
Chief Officer