

CONTENTS	Page
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.0 GENERAL STATEMENT.....	1
3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES	2
4.0 VIBRATION.....	3
5.0 NOISE.....	4
6.0 MONITORING.....	6

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Purpose: This policy sets out the approach undertaken by Lancaster City Council to reduce the risk of harm related to noise and vibration in the workplace, as part of its strategy for promoting health at work through good practice and to enhance well-being amongst its employees.

This policy aims to ensure the company complies with its responsibilities under Health and Safety at Work legislation. The tools mentioned within this policy are those that have been designed by the Health and Safety Executive.

This policy aims to educate managers and employees, in the companies working practices to reduce the factors that may contribute to noise and vibration related harm such as Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS), hearing loss, tinnitus and white-finger

Scope: This policy applies to all staff and other persons working on Lancaster City Council premises

2.0 GENERAL STATEMENT

Lancaster City Council recognises that exposure to noise and vibration can represent a risk to health.

Lancaster City Council also recognises the extra duty of care towards members of public and vulnerable people to implement the necessary safety measures regarding the control and use of any noise levels and vibration hazards they are exposed to.

Lancaster City Council's policy, therefore, is to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the law on Health and Safety at Work and to this end, the provisions of this policy are centred around eliminating or controlling exposure to noise and vibration to prevent ill health to employees and others who may be exposed by:

- Ensuring that all reasonable steps are taken to eliminate the noise and vibration where practicable.
- Ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out.
- Ensuring that where noise and vibration cannot be eliminated, all reasonable steps are taken to substitute for safer alternatives where these are available .
- To ensure that where noise and vibration have to be used, exposure to them is minimised by adequate systems of control, which manage exposure within statutory limits.
- Providing all employees with comprehensible information and training on the nature and likelihood of exposure to noise and vibration relevant to their position and measures taken to minimise the risks to health.

Lancaster City Council undertakes to control exposure by engineering means where reasonably practicable. Where exposure cannot be adequately controlled by engineering means, appropriate management systems and procedural controls will be implemented and personal protective equipment will be provided.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Organisation meets its statutory obligations and that effective arrangements for the management of health and safety are put in place.

Senior Leadership Team (Chief Officers)

The Senior Leadership Team have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the company meets its statutory obligations and that effective arrangements for the management of health and safety are put in place and are therefore responsible for setting and approving policy direction in relation to noise and vibration.

The Health and Safety Team

The Health and Safety Team have responsibility to advise on Health and Safety including compliance with Health and Safety at Work Act, etc. 1974 and other relevant legislation, best practice guidance and company policies to meet legal and organisational requirements.

The Health and Safety Team are also responsible for the ensuring the provision of arrangements in relation to noise and vibration and ensuring that the company's policy is implemented for their respective services, for providing support and advice to their respective managers and monitoring implementation of this policy within their respective areas.

The Health and Safety Team is responsible for advising on appropriate measures to meet legal and organisational requirements as required

Line Managers

Line Managers have direct responsibility for health and safety matters relating to premises under their control and for persons reporting directly to them and are therefore responsible for the implementation of the provisions of this policy for the departments under their jurisdiction by:

- Consulting employees on work involving noise and vibration.
- Ensuring risk assessment have been completed within the My Compliance system and communicated to all team members.
- Implementing measures to reduce the risk.
- Identify vibration risk activities and reduce vibration at source where practicable.
- Ensure all vibration exposed employees have sufficient information, instruction and training to protect themselves from the exposure to vibration.
- Ensure suitable control measures are provided as identified by risk assessment and facilities are provided for dry and clean storage of Personal Protective Equipment.
- Ensure that all vibration exposed employees attend routine health surveillance as required.
- Ensure that this policy is enforced.
- Ensure new reported symptoms are referred to the Occupational Health Provider

Employees

Employees are responsible for co-operating with Line Managers to enable them to provide a safe working environment and ensure legal compliance by:

- Adhering to this policy and any subsequent procedures, processes and work instructions.
- Cooperate with management with regards to implementing controls and safe working practices.
- Ensuring all PPE, provided by the company, is used and maintained.
- Reporting defects, damage and faults with equipment or controls, to management.
- Attending/completing any training related to noise and vibration, that has been provided by the Organisation.
- Ensure vibration control measures are used as identified by risk assessment.
- Attend routine health surveillance as required.
- Not to tamper or modify anything provided for their health, safety or welfare.
- Report any deficiencies in the work procedures or Personal Protective Equipment to their line manager.
- Ensure lost or damaged PPE is replaced before exposure to vibration.
- Report any deficiencies in control measures or faulty equipment to their line manager.
- Report any new vibration related symptoms to their line manager.

Health and Safety Representatives / Trade Union Representatives

Health and Safety / Trade Union Representatives have certain responsibilities and duties and are able to audit and complete inspections where required.

A health and safety representative is a fellow worker who represents other union members to look after the health and safety at work of people they work with.

Health and Safety Representatives have the right to:

- take an active part in workplace risk assessments.
- investigate potential hazards and 'dangerous occurrences' and examine the accident data.
- investigate members' complaints.
- carry out inspections of the workplace in work time, at least every three months.
- be consulted on new working practices and new technology.
- receive safety information from their employer (such as inspectors' reports, hygiene surveys and risk assessments).
- attend union-approved training courses without loss of pay; and have access to a phone and office equipment, and paid time off work, both to carry out inspections and to meet staff and other safety reps.

4.0 VIBRATION

Definition of Hand-Arm Vibration

Hand-arm vibration is vibration transmitted from work processes into workers' hands and arms. It can be caused by operating hand-held tools and hand guided equipment or by holding materials that are being vibrated.

Training

Lancaster City Council will provide sufficient information, instruction and training as is necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of workers who are frequently exposed to vibration levels above the vibration Exposure Action Value.

Managers and supervisors who are responsible for workers exposed to vibration or who organise and plan work where vibration exposure is apparent will also be given appropriate training.

Assessing Hand and Arm Vibration

It is the Organisation's policy to utilise the Health and Safety Executive's HAVS Tool. Each Line Manager must assess each vibrating tool / equipment and upload the completed calculator into the task risk assessment on My Compliance.

A link to the HSE's HAVS Tool is [here](#).

5.0 NOISE

The Health Effects of Noise

Noise at work can cause hearing loss that can be temporary or permanent. People often experience temporary deafness after leaving a noisy place. Although hearing recovers within a few hours, this should not be ignored. It is a sign that if you continue to be exposed to the noise your hearing could be permanently damaged. Permanent hearing damage can be caused immediately by sudden, extremely loud, explosive noises, i.e. cartridge operated machines.

Hearing loss is usually gradual because of prolonged exposure to noise. It may only be when damage caused by noise over the years combines with hearing loss due to ageing that people realise how deaf they have become. This may mean their family complains about the television being too loud, they cannot keep up with conversations in a group, or they have trouble using the telephone. Eventually everything becomes muffled, and people find it difficult to catch sounds like 't', 'd' and 's', so they confuse similar words.

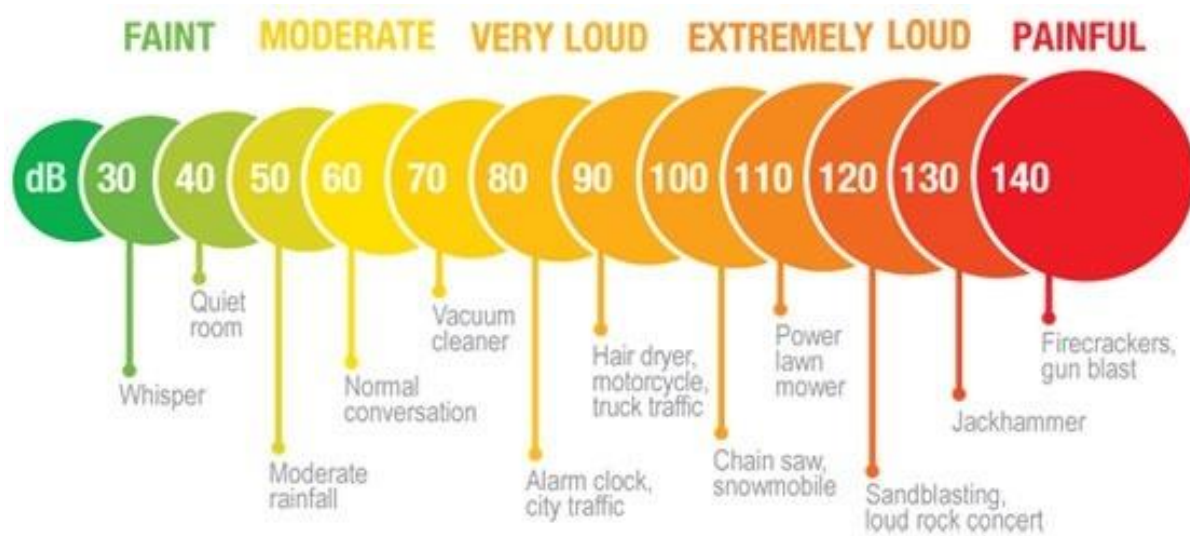
Hearing loss is not the only problem. People may develop tinnitus (ringing, whistling, buzzing or humming in the ears), a distressing condition which can lead to disturbed sleep.

How is noise measured?

Noise is measured in decibels (dB). An 'A-weighting sometimes written as 'dB(A)', is used to measure average noise levels, and a 'C-weighting' or dB(C), to measure peak, impact or explosive noises. You might just notice a 3dB change in noise level, because of the way our ears work. Yet 3dB doubles the noise, so what might seem like small differences in the numbers is quite significant.

Noise Appreciation Chart

The following chart is to help you appreciate the levels of noise that you may be exposed to.



Noise Levels and Limits

Noise Action Levels and Limit Values

The Noise Regulations require us to take specific action at certain action values.

These relate to:

- the levels of exposure to noise of our employees averaged over a working day or week; and
- the maximum noise (peak sound pressure) to which our employees are exposed in a working day.

The values are:

- lower exposure action values:
 - daily or weekly exposure of 80 dB;
 - peak sound pressure of 135 dB;
- upper exposure action values:
 - daily or weekly exposure of 85 dB;
 - peak sound pressure of 137 db.

The actions you need to take are described in the flow chart shown at figure 1 later in this document.

There are also levels of noise exposure which must not be exceeded. These are called exposure limit values:

- daily or weekly exposure of 87 dB;
- peak sound pressure of 140 db.

Noise Risk Assessments

It is important that our employees understand the risks they may be exposed to. To ensure that this happens, the company will carry out risk assessments of all areas where there *may* be a risk from noise.

These risk assessments will:

- Identify where there may be a risk from noise and who is likely to be affected.
- Contain a reliable estimate of exposures and compare the exposure with the exposure action values and limit values.
- identify what you need to do to comply with the law, e.g. whether noise-control measures or hearing protection is needed, and, if so, where and what type.
- Identify any employees who need to be provided with health surveillance and whether any are at particular risk.

Hearing Protection

We will provide hearing protection where necessary. This hearing protection will be issued on induction to the Company and is the responsibility of the holder to ensure that they are looked after and kept in good working order.

Should these need replacing at any time, the manager is to be informed who will arrange replacement. At no time should any work, requiring hearing protection, be carried out without the correct, serviceable protective equipment being worn.

Disposable hearing protection is available in all locations that experience high levels of noise.

Noise Monitoring

Where specific tasks / workplaces have noisy areas a Noise Assessment / Monitoring must be completed at least on an annual basis.

6.0 MONITORING

The requirements of this Policy will be monitored by way of a risk prioritised process of auditing, regular inspections and periodic self-audits.

The training and responsibilities of individuals will be monitored by the company through its management and appraisal processes.

Where necessary the company will take appropriate action to ensure that this policy is upheld.