

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure
DATE	19 March 2013
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Environmental Noise Mapping and Action Planning
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI/13029

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of;

- a) the requirements of the Environmental Noise Directive and Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006 that concern transportation noise;
- b) the Scottish Government's approach to enable compliance; and
- c) the specific requirement of Aberdeen City Council to produce a Noise Action Plan

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that members:

- a) note the contents of this report;
- b) agree that, appropriate officers within Housing and Environment and Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure form a working group to ensure compliance with the Directive and that this will include;
 - i) undertaking actions that relate to noise; assess and advise on Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMAs), and
 - ii) supporting the Scottish Government's data gathering requirements, and
 - iii) developing a draft Noise Action Plan for Committee approval and public consultation within the timescales specified by the Scottish Government.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Scottish Government has currently not made any financial provisions available to local authorities to undertake the new duties. The development of a Noise Action Plan will only involve officer time. Consultation on Noise Action Plans will be coordinated by the Scottish Government at no cost to local authorities. Unless future funding becomes available, implementation of the Action Plan will be through existing and future planning, environment and infrastructure policies and development management.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications associated with this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 European Noise Directive (END)

5.1.1 The European Union has estimated that around 20% of the EU's population suffers from noise levels that scientists and health experts consider unacceptable. Exposure to high transportation noise levels can result in annoyance, sleep disturbance and adverse health including cardiovascular effects, hypertension, heart disease and mental health effects.

5.1.2 The Environmental Noise Directive requires member states to consider noise from road, rail and air traffic and from industrial noise in agglomerations. The main objectives of the Directive are as follows:

- To determine the noise exposure of the population through noise mapping;
- To make information available on environmental noise to the public;
- To establish Action Plans based on the mapping results, to reduce levels where necessary, and to preserve environmental noise quality where it is good.

The Scottish Government will take responsibility for the determination of noise exposure and make environmental noise information available to the public. Authorities within the Aberdeen agglomeration, led by the Director of Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure, will be responsible for generating the Aberdeen agglomeration Action Plan and provision of information locally.

5.2 Environmental Noise Directive (Scotland) Regulations 2006

5.2.1 The Scottish legislation describes a 2 round process to manage environmental noise and deliver the requirements of the **Environmental Noise Directive (END)** legislation. Round One was completed in 2009 and required:

- the production of strategic noise maps for major roads, rail, airport and industrial sources in agglomerations with a population >250,000 (Glasgow and Edinburgh areas);
- competent local authorities in the agglomerations to draw up Action Plans to manage noise; and
- the submission of a summary of Action Plans to the Commission.

The Scottish Government undertook the noise mapping process and submitted the required documentation to the EU, however the local authorities within the Glasgow and Edinburgh agglomerations were required to develop the Noise Action Plans for Scottish Government approval. The noise maps and Action Plans produced in Round 1 can be viewed on the website scottishnoisemapping.org.uk.

5.2.2 Round 2 has recently commenced and will follow the process adopted in Round 1. This time the END requires the production of strategic noise maps and Action Plans for agglomerations of greater than 100,000 population and therefore includes the Aberdeen and Dundee agglomerations. These areas are currently being mapped by consultants appointed by the Scottish Government. Following the publications of the maps, local authorities in the agglomerations will be required to develop Action Plans. A Scottish Government Steering Group, with representation from a senior officer within our Environmental Health team has been formed to progress policy and technical issues. A Dundee/Aberdeen working group has also been set up with representation from planning, transportation and environmental health services to support authorities in the development of the Action Plans and address specific operational issues.

5.2.3 The boundary of the Aberdeen agglomeration is similar to the City's boundary, although small more rural areas are excluded and a small part in Aberdeenshire mainly to the south of Aberdeen is included. The requirements of the Regulations and involvement of Aberdeenshire Council has been brought to the authority's attention. As the issues mainly relate to transportation noise, Nestrans the Regional Transport partnership for Aberdeen City & Shire, have also been included in discussions and will sit on the local Action Plan group.

5.2.4 The strategic noise maps show an average noise level for an average weekday in the year. A prioritisation process, based on the maps and a complex formula, is then used to create a 'ranking' of potentially noisy 100m links. The top 1% are then selected for consideration as Candidate Noise Management Areas (CNMs).

- 5.2.5 The END and Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006 also require that Quiet Areas (QAs) within agglomerations are included in the noise maps and that Candidate Quiet Areas (CQAs) are identified in a similar way to NMAs. QAs are designated areas of quiet and tranquility in urban organisations that provide a range of benefits to health and well being. They aim to ensure changes do not happen within, and to a certain extent, outwith, the quiet area that will result in an increase of the noise level or a reduction in the size of the quiet area. Quiet Areas should therefore not be viewed in isolation, but incorporated into the authority's future Local Development Plan where appropriate and protected via the development management process.
- 5.2.6 The END noise mapping process considers existing transportation noise. The mapping process itself does not predict future noise exposure arising from proposed road, rail or air infrastructure or industrial, residential or commercial development that have the potential to influence current noise levels. Major road building projects such as the AWPR and 3rd Don Crossing are therefore not taken into account in the noise mapping process but their effect on transportation noise in the Aberdeen agglomeration will need to be considered in the Action Planning process.

5.3 Development of a Noise Action Plan (NAP)

- 5.3.1 The Scottish Government is producing the noise maps and identifying CNMs, however Aberdeen City Council is responsible for the identification of those CNMs that may be appropriate to take forward as Noise Management Areas (NMAs) and the subsequent development of a Noise Action Plan. Consultation with the public and other key stakeholders is required however this will be coordinated by the Scottish Government at a national level.
- 5.3.2 The Scottish Government was required to submit the Strategic Noise Maps to the EU by 14 December 2012 and Action Plan information is required by July 2013. This means local authorities must work to a very tight timescale. It is evident the process is multi-disciplinary requiring input from officers across various council services, but predominantly Environmental Health, and Planning and Sustainable Development. Environmental Health Officers will be required to evaluate the noise data and potential CNMA, with support from the Planning and Sustainable Development where required, and provide technical and procedural guidance. Officers within the Planning, Environment and Transportation Sections will take responsibility for all planning policy, development management, traffic and environmental matters, for example relating to Quiet Areas, and the publication of the draft Action Plan for consultation.
- 5.3.3 In reality, and with no additional funding, actions to reduce noise in these areas most affected by transportation noise are likely to focus on

existing and any proposed traffic reduction and infrastructure measures. The Action Plans, however, provide an opportunity to manage transportation noise to restrict any increase in noise exposure in the noisiest areas, control development in these areas to limit new exposure, consider the potential creeping effect from increased development and protect Quiet Areas.

5.3.4 The links between air quality and noise are strong. The majority of the measures in Aberdeen City's Air Quality Action Plan are aimed at road traffic reduction and therefore are likely to have a positive benefit on environmental noise. The Noise and Air Quality Action Plans should be cross referenced and future infrastructure and planning actions evaluated to ensure that noise and air quality mitigation measures are examined and, where possible, mitigation measures adopted that will benefit both air quality and noise.

5.3.5 The Scottish Government has indicated it expects councils to link transportation noise management to other key policies measures including Local and Structure Plans, Transportation, Environment and Climate Change policies. The Action Plan will therefore be an evolving Plan that can be developed in a similar way to the Air Quality Action Plan taking account of new technical information, national policies and local developments.

5.4 Conclusions

Implementation of the END provides an opportunity to protect and hence improve the amenity and health of resident living in the noisiest locations of Aberdeen and protect designated Quiet Areas. The Council is required to develop a Noise Action Plan in accordance with Scottish Government timescales. This report summarises the Noise Mapping and Action Planning process and steps that are required to meet our statutory duties. Development of the Action Plan is a multi-disciplinary process and the Council must ensure appropriate officers are instructed to contribute as required and within specified timescales to meet our legal obligations.

6. IMPACT

Corporate - This report is linked to the improvement in the health of the people of Aberdeen and a reduction in health inequalities. Aberdeen City Council is a partner in the North East Health & Transport Action Plan and implications of the NMAs should be presented to the HTAP as appropriate.

Public – The report is likely to be of interest to the public due to the health effects of transportation noise. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment are not

required for this report as these matters have been address nationally by the Scottish Government.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- The European Parliament and Council Directive for Assessment and Management of Environmental Noise 2002/49/EC
- The Environmental Noise (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- Scottish Government Guidance: Environmental Noise Action
- Nestrans/NHS Grampian Health & Transport Action Plan

8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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Appendix 1

**Environmental Noise Directive
Draft Action Plan Template**

**NOISE ACTION PLAN FOR THE
INSERT NAME
AGGLOMERATION**

Prepared by the **Insert Name** Agglomeration Working Group

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1 Introduction *To be completed centrally*

1.1 The Purpose of This Document

Table 1: Key Tasks in the Scottish Legislation – Round 1

2 Background and Context

2.1 The European Directive on Environmental Noise *To be completed centrally*

2.2 The Legal Context *To be completed centrally*

2.3 Introduction to Strategic Noise Maps *To be completed centrally*

2.4 Airport Maps *To be completed centrally*

2.5 Data Reported to the European Commission *To be completed centrally*

2.6 Description of the Agglomeration *To be completed by working group*

2.7 Requirement For Action Plans *To be completed centrally* Error! Bookmark not defined..

2.8 Health Effects *To be completed centrally*

2.9 Public Consultations *To be completed by working group with central assistance*

3 Noise Action Planning

3.1 Noise Action Planning

3.2 Competent Authorities and Key Partners *to be completed by working group with central assistance*

3.3 Steering and Working Groups for Action Planning

4 Prioritisation Methodology and Matrix *To be completed centrally*

4.1 Need for and Development of Prioritisation Matrix

4.2 Industrial Noise

4.3 Development of Prioritisation Matrix

4.4 The Process of Determining Candidate Noise Management Areas

4.5 Identification of Candidate Noise Management Areas

4.6 Airports

4.7 Process of Assigning Noise Management Areas CNMA to NMA

5 Quiet Areas

5.1 Introduction to Agglomeration Quiet Areas *to be completed by working group*

5.2 Current Research into Quiet Areas *To be completed centrally*

5.3 Candidate Quiet Area (CQA) to Quiet Area (QA) *To be completed centrally*

5.4 Protection of Quiet Areas **to be completed by working group with assistance from centre**

6 Aligning Noise Action Planning

6.1 Aligning Road and Rail Noise Initiatives **To be completed by Transport Scotland**

6.2 Planning and Noise **To be completed centrally (Planning)**

6.3 Noise Reduction Measures in Force and Projects in Preparation **To be completed bby working group**

6.4 Existing Local Initiatives Aimed at Reducing Noise **To be completed by working group**

7 Next Steps To be completed by working group

7.1 Preparing for Round Two Mapping and Action Planning

Appendix 1 - Maps To be completed centrally

Appendix 2 – Prioritisation Matrix To be completed centrally

A2.1 _____ Purpose

A2.2 _____ The Building Prioritisation Score (BPS)

A2.3 _____ BPS Maps

A2.4 _____ Source Prioritisation Score (SPS) for Roads and Rail

A2.5 _____ Airport SPS Maps

A2.6 _____ Prioritisation Matrix

A2.7 _____ Source Prioritisation Score Example

Appendix 3 – Actions To be completed by working group

Appendix 4 - Strategic Environmental Assessment To be completed centrally

Appendix 5 – Bibliography To be completed centrally

Appendix 6 Noise Management Areas To be completed at a later date.