

Committee(s)	Dated:
Port Health and Environmental Services – for decision	19 July 2016
Planning and Transportation – for information	26 July 2016
Health and Wellbeing Board – for information	16 September 2016
Subject: Draft City of London Noise Strategy 2016 – 2026	Public
Report of: Director of Markets and Consumer Protection	For Decision
Report author: Rachel Sambells, Pollution Team Manager	

Summary

The City of London Corporation published its first Noise Strategy in 2012. The Strategy, approved by the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee on 1st May 2012, expires in 2016.

A draft Noise Strategy for 2016 to 2026 has been produced and is appended to this report. It contains 59 actions grouped into 5 key work areas to manage and minimise exposure to excessive noise whilst striving to enhance the quality of the acoustic environment and soundscape of the City of London.

The draft Noise Strategy will help ensure that the City Corporation fulfil its statutory obligations for managing and minimising exposure to excessive noise. It also reflects the priority placed on the effects of reducing the impact of unwanted sound and the provision of areas of respite from the noisy urban environment on the health of residents, workers and visitors as detailed in the City and Hackney Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that your Committee approves the proposal set out in paragraph 12 that the attached draft Noise Strategy (Appendix 1) undergo external consultation until 17th October 2016, subject to any comments received at your meeting and a further report will be presented to your 24th January 2017 meeting to approve the subsequent new strategy.

Main Report

Background

1. Noise can have short and long term effects on health e.g. annoyance, sleep disturbance, interruption of speech and social interaction, disturbance of concentration (affecting learning and long-term memory), and hormonal and cardiovascular effects.

2. The City Corporation has a statutory responsibility to manage and minimise exposure to excessive and sometimes unnecessary noise, whilst ensuring that the City can continue to function as a modern world-class business centre.
3. In 2012, the City of London produced an innovative Strategy outlining its approach to fulfilling its statutory obligation to manage and mitigate excessive noise and made recommendations for improving the way that the City controls noise and made proposals for protecting and enhancing areas of relative tranquillity.
4. The strategy considered four key areas: mitigating noise from new developments, reducing noise from transport, servicing and street works, dealing with noise complaints and incidents and protecting and enhancing tranquil areas reflecting the concerns of residents, workers and visitors to the City of London.
5. The strategy balanced the needs of the Business City (particularly construction sites) and the City Corporation to undertake noisy works, with the expectations of residents and neighbouring businesses who wish for disturbance to be minimised. In particular, City Corporation officers gave consideration to balancing the authority's statutory noise responsibilities and traffic management needs in relation to minimising disruption from streetworks and the extent to which City night time activities, such as deliveries, refuse collection and street cleansing have been facilitated.
6. An update on the actions of the Noise Strategy 2012 to 2016 was presented to your committee on the 19 June 2015 and a further update on these actions is included as an appendix to the refreshed draft Noise Strategy 2016 – 2026.

Key Policies and Proposals

7. The City of London draft Noise Strategy brings together and updates policies and programmes that are already in place to manage and mitigate noise. In particular, the draft Noise Strategy will help deliver one of the key themes of the Local Plan to “protect, promote and enhance our environment” whilst contributing to the wider policy context of maintaining a world class city that supports our diverse communities and remains vibrant and culturally rich.
8. There are 59 actions contained within the strategy that are divided into the following five key policy areas:
 - Background and evidence base
 - New developments
 - Transport and streetworks
 - Dealing with noise complaints and incidents
 - Protecting and enhancing the acoustic environment and soundscape.

9. The draft Noise Strategy encourages a new approach to the management of “soundscape” (the aural equivalent of “landscape”) in outdoor spaces and hybrid indoor-outdoor places in the City. The Strategy outlines support for measures to promote iconic sounds, lost and disappearing sounds, wanted sounds, added sounds, sound walks, and sound art installations. We will also continue our ongoing initiative regarding the identification of relatively tranquil areas in the City and the development of policies to protect and enhance these spaces. We will be seeking opportunities to encourage both new and existing partners to support soundscape initiatives.
10. The Strategy reflects the concerns of residents, workers and visitors to the City who have previously been interviewed and consulted about the City’s acoustic environment. We will continue to seek feedback and hope to undertake a further survey to monitor the success of the measures we are taking. It is our intention that the policies and actions proposed will help to ensure that the City Corporation fulfils its statutory obligations for noise management, as well as seeking to improve the health and well-being of the City’s residential and business communities.
11. This revised draft Strategy ensures that the City of London’s approach continues to be suitable and appropriate for a world class City.

Proposals

12. I propose that, subject to comments received at your meeting, the attached draft Noise Strategy is published for consultation until 17 October 2016. A further report will be presented to your 24 January 2017 meeting to approve the new strategy.

Financial Implications

13. Work related to ‘Dealing with noise complaints and incidents’ contained within the strategy will be funded using existing resources from within the Port Health and Public Protection Service. Assistance will be required to implement actions relating to ‘new developments’ and ‘Transport and Streetworks’ from the Department of Open Spaces and the Department of the Built Environment (DBE).
14. Opportunities for collaboration, funding and grants will be sought for project work and to encourage both new and existing partners to support soundscape initiatives to fulfil the actions in Chapter 5, ‘Protecting and enhancing the acoustic environment and soundscape’.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

15. The work on noise sits within Strategic Aims 1 and 2 (SA1) (SA2) and of the Corporate Plan: ‘To support and promote The City as the world leader in international finance and business services’ and ‘To provide modern, efficient and high quality local services, including policing, within the Square Mile for workers, residents and visitors’..

Consultees

16. Consultation has been carried out internally (Open Spaces, Department of the Built Environment, Town Clerks and Comptrollers) and the results of this have been considered in this draft.
17. The strategy will undergo full external consultation e.g. Residents, businesses, City stakeholder groups and neighbouring boroughs until the 17 October 2016 and consultation comments will be incorporated into the final strategy where appropriate.

Conclusion

18. The City Corporation has produced a refreshed and updated Noise Strategy to meet the statutory responsibility to manage and minimise noise exposure to excessive noise, whilst ensuring the City can continue to function as a modern world class business centre. Subject to comments received at your meeting, the Noise Strategy will be published for public consultation until 17 October 2016.

Background Papers:

The City of London Noise Strategy 2012 to 2016
Report on Enhanced Working Hours for Street works in the City - Port Health and Environmental Services Committee November 13 2102
Report on Mitigation of Environmental Impacts from Developments - Port Health and Environmental Services Committee April 30 2013
Report on Noise Service Delivery Policy/Noise Complaint Policy - Port Health and Environmental Services Committee July 2 2013
Report on Port Health and Public Protection Out of Hours Noise Service - Port Health and Environmental Services Committee March 1 2014
Report on Noise Strategy Update of Actions Port Health and Environmental Services Committee 19 June 2015

Appendix:

The City of London Draft Noise Strategy 2016 – 2026 – available [online](#) and via hard copy in the Members' Reading Room

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