

**CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE – 22ND JANUARY 2004**

**SUBJECT: HAND ARM VIBRATION POLICY**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the draft hand arm vibration policy and seek their approval for adoption of the policy.

**2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) is a generic term for a number of medical conditions that can be contracted through the use of hand held tools and equipment. Conditions may arise from regular and prolonged use of vibrating tools, the most commonly known of these conditions is Vibration White Finger.
- 2.2 Vibration White Finger (VWF) has been prescribed under the Industrial Diseases (Prescribed Diseases) Regulations since 1985 and is an area of concern for various areas within the council. In order to deal with the issues surrounding vibrating tools and the possible consequences of frequent use of vibrating tools a policy is needed to give guidance to managers and employees in order to protect their health and safety.
- 2.3 In accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, managers must ensure that a risk assessment is carried out in order to assess the risks from working with high vibration equipment and to take measures to control these risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 2.4 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome has been identified in a number of employees. The level of debility from HAVS varies significantly between individuals affected. The resultant sickness absences not only increase personnel costs and impact on service delivery, but also leave the Council open to civil litigation.
- 2.5 The Health and Safety Executive has recommended health surveillance for all workers in jobs identified as giving significant risk of hand arm vibration syndrome.
- 2.6 Adoption of the policy demonstrates the Councils' commitment to the Health and Safety of their employees.

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)