

Annual Report of the Norwich City Agency 2007/08

Report by the Director of Planning and Transportation, Norfolk County Council and Strategic Director of Regeneration and Development, Norwich City Council

Summary

This report introduces the Annual Report of the joint Highways Agency committee and the background to its preparation.

1. Background

- 1.1. Since 1996, the County Council and City Council have jointly overseen the operation of the highways function within the City administrative boundary through the joint Norwich Highways Agency Committee. This is a formally constituted committee under the auspices of the Agency Agreement which was renewed on 1 April 2006 for a rolling 4 year period.
- 1.2. The Agency Agreement, and therefore the activities of the Committee, include delegated functions to the City Council covering – maintenance work, management of on-street parking, design and construction of improvement schemes, traffic management, improvements to safety, highways development control, the development and coordination of programmes and works on the city highway network and specific areas of wider policy development.
- 1.3. There are two principal programmes of work – the revenue funded programme of routine and winter maintenance and the capital funded programme of specified maintenance, traffic and highway improvement schemes.
- 1.4. During the year progress on both programmes of work are reported to each meeting of the joint committee. However, from 2006/07 an annual statement of accounts and a 'Statement on Internal Control' (SIC) was required. From 2007-08 a new Annual Governance Statement, which replaces the SIC, is required and is approved by the Audit Commission. In support of these statements an Annual Report has been prepared setting out the achievements of the committee during the 2007/08 financial year. This is attached as Appendix 1 of this report.
- 1.5. Separate reports are included on the agenda covering the Annual Statement of Accounts and the new Annual Governance Statement.

2. Resource Implications



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- 2.1. **Finance** : None
- 2.2. **Staff** : None
- 2.3. **Property** : None
- 2.4. **IT** : None

4. **Section 17 - Crime and Disorder Act**

- 4.1 There are no implications of this report for the Crime and Disorder Act.

Recommendation

That the joint committee notes this report, approves the Annual Report and considers its key messages, at Appendix 1.

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Background Document (s) :

Directors Name
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Strategic Director of Regeneration and Development

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1. Details of performance data, any targets, and progress during 2007/08, summarised under the headings below, are given in the tables at the end of this appendix. Details of key projects delivered during the year are also provided.

Work of the Committee

2. The work of the Committee may be summarised as follows:

Task	Quantity	
	2006/07	2007/08
Reports received – decisions	34	32
Reports received – performance	7	7
Reports received – information	6	7
Total reports	47	46
Petitions received	4	16
Public questions	18	13

3. It can be seen that the volume of work conducted by the Committee has remained broadly constant compared to 2006/07. The number of reports received shows a very slight increase. There has been a slight decline in the number of public questions.
4. The main increase has been in the number of petitions received which has grown from 4 to 16. In most cases petitions raise substantive issues and will often challenge programme priorities or established policy. By their nature they potentially have greater resource implications compared to other queries and requests. Officers are examining ways to improve efficiency of dealing with petitions to minimise resource impact.

Delivery of programmes to targets and budgets/financial control

5. *Capital schemes*: There were 46 schemes in the 2007/2008 programme, 37 of which were completed by the end of March 2007. Nine schemes are on going into 2008/09. There were no significant Programme changes during 2007/08. Expenditure details are shown in appendix 1a.
6. *Highways maintenance*: There were 46 schemes in the capital programme, 45 of which have been completed. One scheme is on going into 2008/09. By the end of March, 96% of the highway maintenance budget had been spent. The primary reason for the small under spend was a relatively mild winter leading to below forecast spending on gritting, grit bins etc. Expenditure details are shown in appendix 1a.
7. As part of the winter maintenance campaign the Council introduce satellite vehicle tracking to help improve utilisation and to validate which roads were treated. This has helped improve performance. Whilst not directly related to satellite tracking the

performance of the winter maintenance service has been particularly satisfactory in the year with, for example, the successful defence of a claim at the Duke Street underpass based on the systems in use. City Council and CityCare staff have been recognised by being commended as part of the Council's staff awards system.

8. A particular innovation this year was the introduction of a brine sprayer for preventing ice forming on pedestrianised streets and main footways in the City Centre. This technique is based on European practice whereby grit is substituted with salt brine. The new technique was introduced without problem and has resulted in cleaner streets, more accurate application (and hence reduced use of salt and therefore reduced pollution) and is popular with shopkeepers who no longer have sand and salt brought into premises on people's shoes.
9. Notable schemes introduced during the financial year include the following:

Barrack Street

10. The Barrack Street improvement is a junction improvement scheme implemented during the year to reduce congestion, improve safety and provide better conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. The congestion benefits are aimed at providing better operating conditions for public transport, in particular future bus services associated with residential development to the north east of the present urban area.
11. The scheme was developed as part of the initial delivery of the Greater Norwich Development Partnership growth programme for the city. It comprises of improvements to the Barrack Street roundabout, carriageway widening on Barrack Street, removal of the Barrack Street/Silver Road roundabout – replaced with a left in/left out only junction and new pedestrian/cycle crossings. The scheme also includes substantial new landscaping to improve the setting of the road within a sensitive urban environment.
12. The scheme was delivered on time and under budget thus helping to prove the effectiveness of the GNDP and continued government funding. Delivery was led by Norfolk County Council working in a wide-ranging and effective partnership involving May Gurney (civil engineering works), Mott MacDonald (technical design), Norwich City Council (landscape design, impact on housing) and CityCare (landscape works).

St Georges Street

13. In the 2006/07 annual report mention was made of the successful delivery of safety, pedestrian and environmental enhancement works at St Andrews Plain. The scheme was extended in 2007/08 to include St Georges Street.
14. The scheme in St Georges Street comprises of its closure to through traffic (other than some delivery vehicles and coaches) to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists both in the immediate area and as part of a key north south route between the main city centre and areas north of the River Wensum. It has thereby delivered a further element of the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) in the City Centre.

15. The scheme also includes significant environmental enhancements including new paving and street furniture, etc. to help improve the setting of local historic buildings and to provide an improved area for visitors to the area to enjoy (e.g. to St Andrews Hall, Norwich Playhouse, etc.).
16. Delivery of the scheme is on-going and due to be completed in summer 2008. At present delivery is on-time and within budget. The project has been funded with funds from EEDA, GNDP, the Local Transport Plan and CIVITAS.

Mile Cross Road/Catton Grove Road

17. As part of the NATS strategy an important element is the improvement of junctions on the Inner and Outer ring road to help reduce congestion and improve conditions for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. One such measure constructed in 2007/08 is a junction widening scheme at the junction of Mile Cross Road and Catton Grove Road.
18. The scheme comprises of widened approaches on Mile Cross Road. With more stop line capacity it is possible to reduce delays at the junction for the benefit of all road users. In addition the opportunity has been taken to improve safe facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. This has included ensuring the junction has adequate facilities for disabled pedestrians (BVPI 165). Lastly the section of Mile Cross Road at the junction also required re-surfacing and this was carried out as part of the scheme to minimise disruption.
19. Due to the scheme's complexity and network management constraints it was necessary to carry over some of the works into 2008/09. Final commissioning of the scheme was recently completed with new signal timings going live. The project was funded from the Local Transport Plan.

Rail/Bus Interchange; Thorpe Road

20. Interchange between rail and bus at the railway station has hitherto been compromised by the variety of potential bus stops. With only relatively few buses using the forecourt the additional journey opportunities provided by Thorpe Road buses were missed. To improve integration and to provide a better environment for waiting passengers a new bus/rail interchange has been implemented completed in April 2008.
21. The new interchange provides an elegant solution to providing improved journey options by bus as it has moved the forecourt stopping point to be adjacent to a new lay-by on Thorpe Road. This allows waiting bus passengers to see buses approaching both stop points. In addition passengers are provided with real-time information about approaching bus services. The interchange itself provides a high quality waiting environment including large shelter, numerous seating and ticket vending machine.
22. A partnership approach to delivery was taken. The scheme led by Norfolk County Council and the strategic partnership also had significant input from the City Council, Network Rail, One (now National Express Anglian) and bus companies. Network Rail has agreed to take on the on-going maintenance of the facility. Delivered as part of the CIVITAS SMILE project with EU co-financing the interchange has increased the

frequency of bus services between the railway station and city centre, 95% of travellers are satisfied with the quality of the new facilities and 80% believe that physical access has improved. Whilst primarily a bus/rail interchange the new arrangements have also enabled improved cycle parking to be provided.

Minor schemes

23. The above schemes are some of the large and more significant projects delivered during 2007/08. The majority of schemes are more modest in nature, albeit still delivering valuable improvements to the public. To illustrate the nature of these projects mention is made of Ranworth Road, Pottergate cycle link and zebra crossing upgrades
24. Ranworth Road is in the North Earlham area of the City with footways whose condition had become serious. A major footway reconstruction was implemented to a very high quality standard. Anecdotal feedback from the public has all been positive. Finally the scheme has provided a valuable learning exercise for application in the rest of the City.
25. In Pottergate improved cycle facilities have been provided by replacing some of the existing cobbled surface with granite setts. These provide a much smoother surface making the route hugely more attractive for cyclists to use and thereby improving the safety/convenient route between the west of the City and the City Centre via the traffic free Pottergate underpass. Feedback from cyclists has all been positive.
26. Finally a programmed of zebra crossing upgrades was implemented during the year at several locations. This has successfully resolved visibility and ponding issues whilst ensuring that the crossings now comply with disabled persons requirements. Again feedback has been positive.
27. Financial details concerning the agency agreement in the last year are included in a separate agenda item.

Quality of work

28. Each year two schemes are identified for Quality Audit. The schemes selected for the 2007/08 financial year were the Mount Pleasant Area Road Safety and Speed Management Schemes. The scheme audits were completed and found that appropriate procedures were followed. The audits identified certain procedural matters that could be beneficially improved and arrangements are in hand to incorporate these.
29. In addition to the two quality audits, the Committee received a report on the outcome of the audit into decriminalised parking at the September meeting. Following this an action plan was developed to ensure the audit report findings are being followed through. Most crucially was a review of the service level agreement and improvements to financial management. The service level agreement is still outstanding but an agreement on technical issues have been reached and the legal Departments are resolving final issues prior to sealing. Another key area was to improve some of the controls used to administer the system (e.g. permit issuing). These have been also acted on.

30. Following on from the on-street parking audit work the Committee has agreed to form a Task and Finish group to inform the development of decriminalised parking enforcement such as setting enforcement priorities as well as to consider other potential enforcement activity such as bus lane enforcement. The group is due to meet in the summer and autumn for the work of the group to be reported back to the Committee in November. The group's terms of reference are appended (appendix 1b)
31. In accordance with the 2006/07 Statement of Internal Control (and its successor The Annual Governance Statement) an audit was carried out on the Highways Agency Arrangements during July 2007 by Norfolk Audit Services. The audit was carried out, also, as part of the overall audit plan, which is agreed annually by the Norfolk County Council Audit Committee. The audit resulted in a 'Satisfactory' position in terms of compliances. This was reported to the Committee at the January meeting together with a risk assessment and risk register (for copy of risk register see appendix 1f). The risk register is incorporated into the relevant service plans. The latter interpret the agency agreement to ensure operational delivery.
32. The County Council has introduced a performance monitoring procedure, which reviews the monthly nine service delivery objectives. These are rated, subjectively, and suggestions are mutually agreed to implement improvement actions on less than satisfactory functions. Such actions see an improving trend in performance overall.
33. Officer Working Groups have been held in accordance with the new identified structure of the 2006 to 2010 Agency Agreement (with the exception of the City Forward Programme discussion Group and which has now been established in 2007/08). The agreement requires a review of the agency on an annual basis and this is programmed for August 2008.

Compliance with standards, codes and procedures

34. Data is collected monthly for a number of national "Best Value" Performance Indicators (BVPI). The overall annual results are summarised below. Further information is provided in BVPI tables in appendix 1c.

BVPI100 - Number of days with temporary traffic controls or road closure on traffic sensitive roads caused by local authority road works per km of traffic sensitive road

35. The value was 0.65 for the year 2007/2008 compared to a City target of 0.19. While it is disappointing to miss this target, 33 of the 44 days temporary traffic control in the City related to alterations to the Newmarket Road junction with Ipswich Road. It was generally felt that the temporary arrangements during these works did not delay vehicular traffic significantly although there was some short term disadvantage for pedestrians and cyclists.

BV 165 – Percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people

36. The City figure has now reached 100% following further investment in 2007/09. This figure contributes to the overall County target of 100%.

BV 223, 224a, 224b and 187a – Road condition assessments

37. The following table summarised the City position as well as the overall County position:

Road type		City	County	Nat. (top quartile) (06/07 %ages as latest figures available)
BV223	A roads	2%	3%	6%
BV224a	B and C roads	-	7%	9%
BV224b	U roads	50%	32%	10%
BV187a	Footways	27%	18%	17%

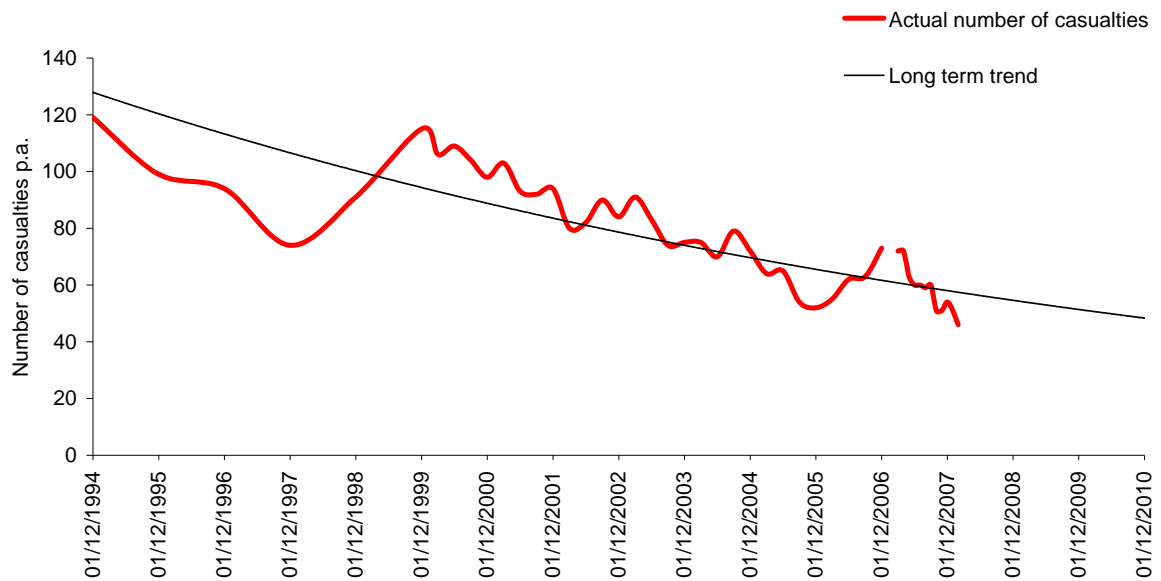
% values represent proportion of road (by length) in particular class in need of repair

38. Please note that the above data relies on annual surveys and the also that the way these surveys are undertaken has changed. Therefore the B and C class road data is presently unavailable. Members will be updated on the results when they become available.
39. It can be seen from the table that the state of the Norwich and Norfolk A, B & C roads is within the upper quartile of principal roads nationally. This reflects the investment in recent years in these highways. However, the state of the unclassified (U) roads of Norwich is in the lower quartile. Officers are looking to maximise maintenance expenditure on such roads without prejudicing the condition of A, B and C roads which have the highest volumes of traffic.

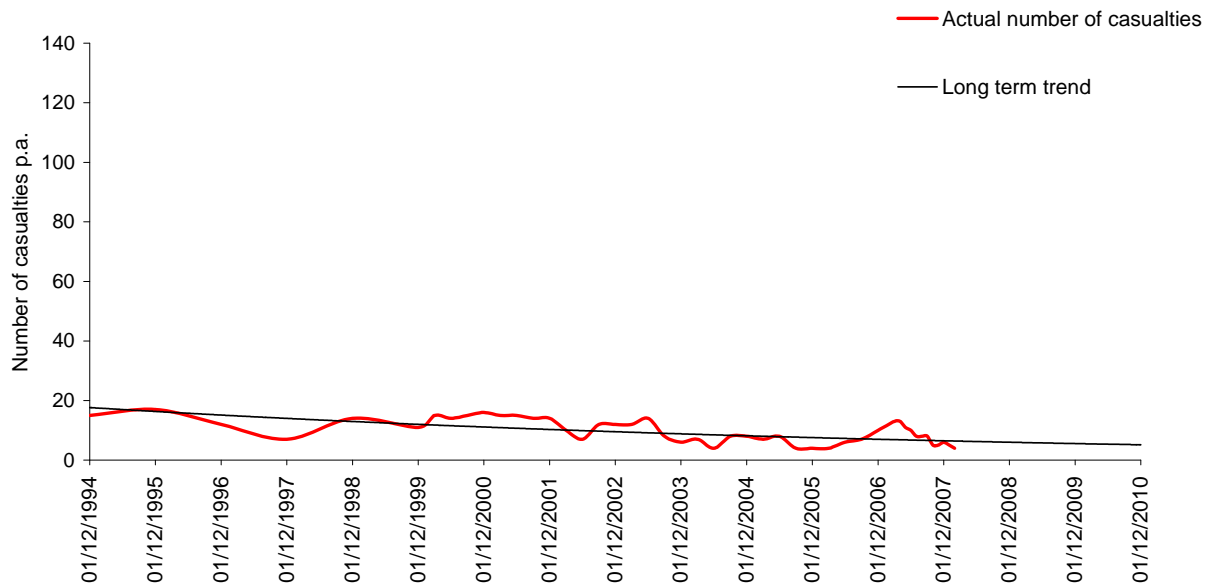
BV 99 – Road accident casualty reduction

40. The figures for the City area for the financial year 2007/08 show an improving trend in the overall Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) category. The number of combined Slight Injuries also shows a gradually improving trend.

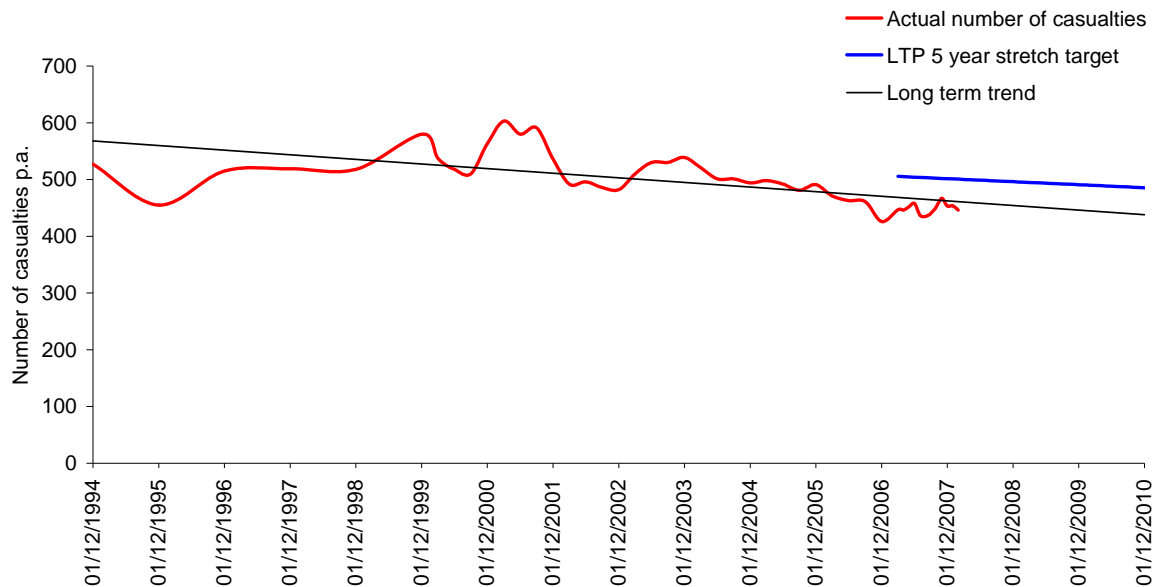
No. of killed/seriously injured



No. of child killed/seriously injured



No. of slight casualties



41. Monthly data is also collected for the following local performance indicators (LPI) to contribute towards the Councils' Service Plans. Further detailed information is presented in appendix 1d

The percentage of repairs to dangerous damage to roads which were carried out within 24 hours

The percentage of repairs to dangerous damage to footways which were carried out within 24 hours

42. A cumulative total of 96 reports of dangerous damage to roads and 69 reports of dangerous damage to footways were received during 2007/08.
43. The combined percentage of repairs to dangerous damage to roads and footways which were carried out within 24 hours' was 100%, compared to a City/County target of 100%.

The percentage of utility work schemes which were completed on time

44. The figure was 99.5% for the 2007/08, compared to a City/County target of 96.5%.

Percentage of priority routes gritted within three hours of mobilization from the depot

45. The figure was 100% for the 2007/08 winter season, compared to a City/County target of 100%. This is an improvement on 2006/07 and in spite of a slightly more severe winter. The introduction of vehicle satellite tracking contributed in meeting the target.

The percentage of highway material that was recycled by City Care

46. The figure was 95% for 2007/08, compared to a City target of 96%. The materials are recycled on other works rather than in situ. The latter is usually impractical within an urban area due to services and other features.

Accident Claims

47. The County monitor the number of claims received and the settlement rate of claims for highway and personal injury claims. Further detailed information is presented in appendix 1d as well.

Percentage of personal injury claims successfully defended

48. The figure was 71% for 2007/08, compared to a City target of 75%. A total of 52 claims were received. Of the 49 claims settled during 2007/08, 14 have resulted in payment. The number of personal injury claims has remained relatively static at about 1 per week for 4 years, compared with 109 for the 2002/03 financial year. Whilst the City target was not met, the position has improved compared to 2006/07 where 66% of claims were successfully defended.

'Percentage of non personal injury claims successfully defended

49. The figure was 88% for 2007/08, compared to a City target of 75%. A total of 9 claims were made in the financial year 2007/08. Of the 9 claims settled, 1 resulted in payment. The small numbers of claims involved create significant fluctuations to the overall percentage figure. The position is nonetheless an improvement on 2006/07 where 69% of claims were successfully defended.

Process monitoring

50. In light of audit advice and to ensure continuous improvement in performance the Councils have begun to monitor additional indicators which measure performance in delivering key processes associated with the agreement. The indicators are scored jointly by City and County officers on a monthly basis. A summary of the results is presented in appendix 1e.
51. In general terms performance has improved during the course of the year with 9 of the 10 indicators¹ finishing with index scores at or above 7. Performance in respect of NSRWA/TMA compliances has been poor throughout the year however because systems have been absent to enable proper notice processing. It is also recognised that additional staff are required to provide the service in light of the TMA legislation. Computer systems supported with training are now being made available and officers are presently developing proposals to address the staffing issue.
52. Poor performance in relation to NSRWA/TMA compliance has had an effect on the sufficiency of claims/reports although as can be seen this is now being addressed. Also there has been considerable effort to improve responsiveness to enquiries from the public which consequent gains in performance.

¹ The % of material recycled is now quantified and reported in paragraph 46 above

53. It should be noted that as systems become available to quantify these indicators such information will be used to substitute the current officer based index scoring system.

Appendix 1a

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT : Expenditure to (Supported through LTP)			5-Jun-2008										
			Original budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Spend to 5-Jun-2008 £'000	Spend to Rev. Budget %		No's of schemes programmed	No's of schemes behind schedule	No's of schemes on/ahead schedule	No's of schemes built behind schedule	No's of schemes built on/ahead schedule
	Local Safety Schemes		295	325	328.3	363	112		9	0	2	1	6
Norwich Area Strategy	Cycling schemes		145	144	132	121	84		6	0	2	0	4
	Pedestrian schemes		290	310.6	251	221	71		8	0	2	2	4
	Speed Management		605	426.3	407	411	96		9	0	0	0	9
	Other Schemes		586	741.6	745	746	101		14	0	3	1	10
	TOTAL		1921	1947.5	1862.89	1861	96		46	0	9	4	33
CAPITAL MAINTENANCE (inc fees)													
	Principal Resurfacing		523	523	340	340	65		3	0	0	0	3
	Non Principal Surfacing		333	333	132	133	40		3	0	0	0	3
	Non Principal Footways		996	1051	1051	1022	97		40	0	5	5	30
	Surface Dressing		185	185	185	188	102		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	TOTAL		2037	2092	1708	1683	80		46	0	5	5	36
HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE													
	Maintenance												
		Routine	876	860	860	900	105						
	Structural Maintenance												
		Patching	522	505	505	593	117						
	Winter Maintenance		494	494	494	318	64						
	TOTAL		1892	1859	1859	1811	97						

Appendix 1b

Member/Officer Task and Finish Group

Terms of Reference for Controlled Parking Scheme in Norwich

Review, Examine and Endorse the following issues:

1. The Context of the Scheme
 - robustness
 - officiousness
 - zero-tolerance
2. Level of Charges
 - PCNs
 - Dispensations
 - Residents Permits
3. Level of Waiver's
 - Policy
 - Process
4. Running Costs
 - Enforcement
 - Dispensations
 - Residents Permits
 - Split between On and Off Street Charges
5. Central Services Recharges
 - Supplies and Services
 - CDS
6. Potential for increased empowerment under the Traffic Management Act
7. Communications
8. Enforcement
 - Areas
 - CPZ
 - Parameters

Appendix 1c

BVPI Reporting 2007/08

Key to table:

Actual 2006/07 The figure reported for the end of the 2006/07 reporting year in the Annual Performance Plan

Quartile 2004/05 The *relative* performance in 2003/04 against other county councils expressed as a quartile. Quartiles are arrived at by breaking all the authorities performance into 4 bands, with quartile 1 containing the top 25% of each of authorities for an indicator, and quartile 4 containing the worst 25%, with quartiles 2 and 3 in between.

Target 2007/08 The target for this BVPI as published in the Annual Performance Plan.

The figure where applicable for the current quarter. If this figure is not available, a date should be provided when the figure will be published

Year end projection

A projection of the actual at the end of the reporting year 2006/07, based on current levels of performance. It is accepted that these figures will be subject to error and change, but every effort should be made to account for the various factors influencing each BVPI. Where an actual is already available, this should be noted.

Traffic Light A traffic light of red, yellow or green based upon the judgement of PI co-ordinators and managers.

 Green

 Amber

 Red

Comments	Where relevant, comments should be made about the direction of travel, actions around the targets and, where appropriate, explanations of low performance.
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[illegible]

Appendix 1d

Norwich City Performance – LPI's and necessary sub-sets together with useful Local Benchmarking Info

Key to table: Same as BVPI

[illegible]

PROJECT RISK REGISTER

Norwich Agency Risk Register

C.MITCHELL

Norwich Agency Risk Register

Version No:

Risk No	Date Identified	Risk Source (Lack of... Failure to...)	Risk Consequences (Leads to... Results in...)	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Score (L x I)	Risk Class	Project Control Measures	Progress - Description	Target Risk Score	Prospect of reducing risk to acceptable level	Target Date	Risk Owner
1	01/11/2007	Base budget not keeping pace with inflation leads to reduced service capacity	Historically agency has been funded to justified highway need ,prioritised in context with County programmes and funding resources	3	4	12	High	Monitor departmental Business and Asset Management Plan,prioritising services and business objectives	Risk is being considered	8 (2x4)	Uncertain	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
2	01/11/2007	Inability to recruit and retain staff	Inability to recruit and retain staff leads to direct service impact.	3	3	9	Medium	Monitor retention and development of skills,ensuring deficiency by engaging County Council Consultancy and Construction Partners in projects	Procurement of appropriate resources taking place	4(2x2)	Improving	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
3	01/11/2007	Lack of effective internal project management leads to loss of service delivery,programme delivery and satisfactory financial outcomes	loss of customer care and poor road safety provision	3	3	9	Medium	Constant monitoring throughout the year.Additional assistance by County Managers to meet identified needs	Progress is being made and Co-operation taking place	4(2x2)	Improving	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
4	01/11/2007	Failure of ICT systems and loss of management controls	Failure of information systems including website leads to reduction in service internally and externally	3	3	9	Medium	Ensure effective backup systems are in place and are frequently applied	Improved awareness by Managers and attention to practising requirements	4(2x2)	Improving	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
5	01/11/2007	Failure of effective Agency Agreement controls	Lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities as defined in the Agency Agreement in respect of evolving statutory duties.	3	3	9	Medium	Ensure information is disseminated at the earliest opportunity and impact on services adequately scoped relating to introduction of new Government Legislation	Actively pursuing service requirements where changes to current practises are inevitable	4(2x2)	Progress being made	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
6	01/11/2007	Failure to comply with legislation	Failure to comply with legislation and standards leads to reputation issues,penalties and funding opportunities.	3	3	9	Medium	Ensure frequency and effectiveness of controls in place take place ,monitored and performance data published	Mechanisms in place to demonstrate and measure these controls.Performance Indicators in place	4(2x2)	Progress being made	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
7	11/07/2007	Local Government and internal review	Ensuring continuity of good service delivery to the public	3	2	6	Medium	Ensure service delivery continues to departmental and corporate expected standards at all times	Maintain continuity of adequate skilled resources at any stage of changes	4(2x2)	Continuous monitoring	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
8	14/02/2008	Unavailability of property,plant and resources	Failure to carry out statutory duties	1	5	5	Medium	Activate emergency planning systems and back-up contingency plans	Maintain backup systems	3(1x3)	Continuous monitoring	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell
9	14/02/2008	Lack of on-street surplus	Unavailable finance to fund NATS programme	3	3	9	Medium	Apply the Audit action plan	Continuous review and update action plan	4(2x2)	Continuous Monitoring	Mar-08	Chris Mitchell