

Where do we want to be?

1 Working together for Norwich and its people

Norwich is a fantastic historic and beautiful city, and has great economic potential for the future. But like all cities it also has its share of problems, and for example has above average levels of deprivation and crime and below average levels of educational attainment and health.

Norwich City Council has a very clear vision of what it is trying to achieve. The city council exists to serve local people, and has a responsibility to make Norwich the best possible place for everyone who lives here, works here, learns here or visits the city. The city council cannot achieve this by working alone. We have a wide range of partner organisations that we work with to tackle the social, economic, environmental and cultural challenges facing the city and its people.

We must also work within national and regional frameworks and policies that are set by national Government and other statutory agencies. To be really successful we must make sure that all partners are working together on shared goals that directly meet local people's needs, and that each partner has clear objectives and performance targets so everyone can see how much progress is being made.

Diagram 1 shows how the national, regional and countywide priorities are translated down into overall priorities for the city of Norwich, and how in turn these cascade down into Norwich City Council's priorities. The city council has the leading role in driving the city forward, and has direct responsibility for the achievement of many of the key goals.

The Norfolk Local Area Agreement has just been agreed which sets out outcomes and priorities to be delivered over the next three years, although this will be superseded if a Unitary Authority for Greater Norwich is created. As it stands we believe the Norfolk LAA does not meet all of the unique urban needs of the City and does not give a high enough profile to issues such as deprivation and growth, despite the City's presence in negotiations leading up to its conclusion – our voice was just one amongst many. We have a duty to co-operate and deliver the LAA and this plan sets out how we will work to achieve this. The LAA was not concluded until after service plans were set for the current year and we are taking steps to review how we can best help to deliver upon its targets, some of which are set at a District level. Our partnerships will also be focusing upon delivery.

Insert diagram 1 as page 17 of existing plan.

2 Priorities for the whole city of Norwich

Within Norwich, delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and of LAA priorities is co-ordinated through a statutory Local Strategic Partnership, known as the “City of Norwich Partnership” (CoNP). The CoNP brings together a wide range of key public, private and voluntary sector organisations, which make a major contribution to the economic, social and environmental success of the city. The CoNP is steered by a small Strategic Board but overall the Partnership includes around 150 local individuals and organisations, all committed to working together to make Norwich a better place. It is truly a team effort.

The overall citywide vision is “To make Norwich a world class city in which to live, work, learn and visit”. Within this the partnership has established the following priority themes:

THEME 1 - City of economic growth and enterprise

- To make Norwich a premier UK city with a thriving, diverse and sustainable economy, providing all its citizens with opportunities and a great quality of life

THEME 2 - City of environmental excellence

- To make Norwich a place where resources are used in a sustainable manner, and the natural and built environments are protected and enhanced for the benefit of local people and wildlife

THEME 3 - City of culture and creativity

- To make Norwich a lively, creative and energetic city – a place where culture and creativity are a means to raising aspirations and improving well-being

THEME 4 - City of safe and strong communities

- To make Norwich a place where everyone feels safe and secure, and can play an active part in the local community

THEME 5 - City of health and well being

- To make Norwich a city where everyone can enjoy a healthy life with access to good health facilities, housing and social care

THEME 6 - City of learning and personal development

- To make Norwich a place where people reach their full potential.

The Partnership Strategic Board has also set 4 overarching Strategic Priorities which are to:

- Develop the Knowledge Economy
- Raise Educational Attainment & Improve Skills
- Tackle Deprivation &
- Improve Environmental Sustainability

Diagram 2.

*City of Norwich Partnership Vision
and Priorities 2007-20*

3 Vision and priorities for Norwich City Council 2008-2010

Over the next 2 years we will pursue a twin-track approach:

- Track 1 – continuing to improve the City Council services - the Aiming for Excellence programme is being reviewed to focus upon service improvement in our priority areas and other key issues emerging from inspection reports and this will be a strong focus for the current year. We need to keep improving our services in line with our priorities in the existing Council and to prioritise & deliver. Plans will be reviewed in the autumn of 2008 in the light of progress on unitary status
- Track 2 – securing and implementing a new unitary council for greater Norwich - a Boundary Committee review of the whole of Norwich & Norfolk is now underway. If successful, the outcome will be one new council for Norwich instead of the 4 that currently exist which will tailor services to meet local needs.

It will be demanding for the City Council to respond to both of these requirements. However, we are clear that both will lead to significant improvements for local people, and so we are committed to working hard to deliver both ambitions.

During 2009-2010 the balance of effort and resource between these two tracks will need to change depending on Government decisions. Should our unitary ambitions be realised then the focus in 2009/10 will increasingly be on developing a better council for the future.

4. Our plans for 2008-2010

In order to effectively deliver both Tracks 1 and 2 we will need to ensure that we are deploying our resources effectively on the most important priorities. Consistent with the recommendations of the peer review team, we are therefore simplifying the City Council vision, priorities and outcomes in order to give a much stronger focus in those areas we have prioritised.

Whilst the Council has been fully involved in negotiations for the Norfolk LAA and have influenced its shape, it still does not meet some key issues for the City and does not, in our view, adequately reflect issues such as deprivation and the growth agenda. However, we accept that whilst the two tier system of government remains in place we have a duty to co-operate and to help deliver the agreed LAA and this is reflected in our plans.

Diagram below sets out are our strategic policy framework.

The following pages set out our key objectives, the outcomes we wish to deliver, what will be achieved, how we will measure this and what our targets are along with some short term priorities which combined will deliver the Council's vision.

Note – this section to be completed following Council on 3rd June. The section will contain details of:

- *Priorities*
- *Outcomes*
- *How these will be achieved*
- *How we will measure success – relevant indicators &*
- *Short term priorities and outcomes*

5 Principles governing the way we will work

As well as being clear about what our priorities are for the next two years, Norwich City Council has also agreed a set of principles which will guide the way everyone at the council will work, and setting the standards that our service users and partners can expect when they come into contact with us.

Our guiding principles are:

- **Customer Care** – we will treat our customers as we would like to be treated ourselves. We will be as open and helpful as possible. We will treat our staff with courtesy, dignity and respect
- **First time, every time** – we will take the time to get it right first time, and avoid time-consuming repeat calls or call backs. Where we get it wrong we will apologise, and make sure it doesn't happen again
- **Quality results and quality decisions** - we will improve our services and not tolerate poor service. We will learn from our mistakes, borrow good practice from others, and take responsibility for improvement
- **Visible actions** – we will tell people what we are doing and why, when something will happen and when it will not. Information will be made available when people need it, and in a way that they understand, so that they have the time to raise concerns
- **Doing with, not doing to** – the council exists to serve the city, our communities and our people. We will work with people to shape our services and we will work with our partners to make the most of our city
- **Be proud** – we will lead the way in making Norwich a world class city. We will speak up for Norwich as a city and as a council, celebrating our successes and recognising our achievements.

How will we get there?

1 Performance management

The city council has performance management arrangements in place to monitor progress, and take remedial action where there are any problems or delays for any reason. This performance management approach is also applied to our partners, where for example, we have service delivery contracts with other companies such as CityCare and Steria.

Diagram 4 shows how the city council's priorities are delivered through service plans, financial plans and agreed staff actions. These are all set out in annual service plans - the city council has 12 separate service plans (all available at www.norwich.gov.uk). Each service plan contains specific targets, which are allocated to individual teams or employees to deliver. Progress against these targets is reviewed formally once a year (through an annual appraisal meeting), but with other updates throughout the year.

In addition, quarterly performance reports are prepared for the council's corporate management team, plus formal reports to the council's executive and scrutiny committee.

We are taking positive steps to improve our performance management arrangements. These have included:

- Setting up the Performance Management & Improvement Board to oversee our improvement agenda
- Establishing Performance Champions in each service
- Participating in a regional Performance Management Programme to learn about best practice and embedding this in our day to day work
- Simplifying our reporting arrangements
- Taking steps through this corporate plan to simplify our objectives and priorities
- Building corporate capacity in this area
- Investigating the purchase of a performance management system

In addition we have recently had a performance management inspection by the audit commission and we will be taking steps to implement their recommendations to further improve how we are working.

Diagram 4 from existing plan page 23 to be inserted.

2 Linking it all together

It is clear there is a complex structure of different services, priorities and targets, being delivered by a wide range of public, private and voluntary organisations. The key to making a real difference for local people is in the ability to pull this all together into coherent delivery plans that complement each other.

Diagram 5 below shows how this is achieved within Norwich City Council (*NOTE – diagram 5 needs some revision to delete old priorities and to insert new outcomes and priorities and to bring in the LAA*). It shows that there:

- Is a direct relationship between citywide priorities and city council priorities and commitments
- Are clear strategies in place to show how these priorities will be addressed
- Are clear political and management arrangements in place to ensure that actions are being delivered, and progress monitored
- Are strong partnerships, with a range of agencies working closely together, to make best use of resources.

This means all our staffing and financial resources are organised in order to ensure they directly support the achievement of the city council's priorities, and in turn the overall priorities for the city of Norwich.

3 Leadership and management

Elected members are responsible for setting the overall priorities of the council (see details of all elected members at Annex 3). The executive will take the leading role in determining the overall strategy for the city council, and in setting priorities and in shaping policy and service delivery.

The corporate management team will ensure that staffing and other resources are deployed effectively and efficiently to deliver the political priorities.

4 Key supporting strategies

The city council uses a set of key strategies to determine the shape of key services (i.e. “what we will do”), and to set the style of the council (i.e. “the way we will do it”). Some of these key strategies are summarised below.

The council’s strategic management framework includes the following key strategies.

- **Customer care** – we will always treat our customers the way we would like to be treated ourselves – with dignity, courtesy and respect. We will be as open and helpful as possible at all times
- **Communications** – we will work hard to keep local people and organisations in touch with what the city council is doing. We will be honest about our successes and our failures at all times
- **Financial management and efficiency** – we will never forget that local people pay for our services, and therefore we will always strive to deliver services as efficiently and effectively as possible
- **Continuous improvement** – we will always strive to improve our services. We will listen to users and customers, and we will build their views into regular and thorough service reviews
- **Quality staff** – we will develop and train our staff to provide the best possible service at all times
- **Growth and development** – we will plan ahead to get the best possible solutions for Norwich. We will make sure that as the city grows we balance new development, housing and jobs with appropriate infrastructure, sustainable development, and protection of the historic nature of the city
- **Neighbourhoods** – we aim to work closely with local communities to develop service delivery on a more neighbourhood basis. We will aim to get closer to local people both to listen to their views, but also to engage them in service design and delivery. Our elected members will take an active role in supporting their local communities
- **Procurement** - a new strategy and action plan was agreed in May 2007. A new purchasing system has been installed and improvements in contract management have been implemented. Savings have been achieved on telephone call charges and for pool cars
- **Asset management** – the council’s approach to management of its assets has significantly improved with additional investment being made in community facilities and CCTV
- **Diversity** – We aim to consolidate the work that is already happening within the council on equality and diversity and put in place a framework for integrating this work and putting equality and diversity at the heart of all decision making and service planning
- **Environment** – a draft strategy is in place which focuses on the council’s roles as community leader, as a service provider and as a partner and outlines 7 key areas where the council can maximise its impact. The Council is also participating in the Local Authority Carbon Management Programme to assist it in its policy on reducing its carbon emissions by 6% per annum
- **ICT** – The strategy focuses on systems to support service delivery, and exploiting emerging technologies and key developments to achieve Best Value.

5 Monitoring and review

This is a living document. It will not sit on shelves and gather dust. This corporate plan sets out the priorities and key actions for the city council for 2008/10. It will be

actively used by all councillors, managers and employees to ensure all our efforts and resources are targeted on the things that matter most to local people.

If you have any comments on this plan, please do not hesitate to contact the city council at rogerdenton@norwich.gov.uk or 01603-212535.