

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

Self-Assessment Report

10 December 2007

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I. Foreword by Group Leaders

We have a lot to be proud of in the beautiful and historic city York – our city has a deservedly global reputation as a great place to live and visit. Despite having the lowest funding per head of any comparable council in the country, we also have a lot to be proud of with our council. We have been assessed as a good council, but we are not complacent and we have a strong desire to improve – we believe that more can be achieved and we are clear what we want to do.

We as party leaders know that the council is driving the city's success and that through our dedicated staff we will continue to do this. Our senior managers understand that the council's reputation should be as strong as the city's in the services delivered to our customers and in the relationships built at a local, regional and national level. The foundations are already in place for moving our city forward, acknowledging our history and looking to the future and the prosperity of all our residents. We are ambitious for the city and we aim to transform our council into a modern, motivational and inspirational organisation. We do understand the importance of getting the balance right though, so that York remains the city we all love while it continues to thrive. We are looking forward to our Corporate Assessment as a significant milestone in our improvement journey.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A.M. D'Agorne".

Cllr. A. D'Agorne
**Leader of the
Green group**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "S. Galloway".

Cllr. S. Galloway
**Leader of the Liberal
Democrat group**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "I. Gillies".

Cllr. I. Gillies
**Leader of the
Conservative group**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Scott".

Cllr. D. Scott
**Leader of the
Labour group**

II. Introduction by the Chief Executive

I am pleased to have joined an organisation that has such ambition and drive to improve and this document is testament to the commitment I have seen to provide great service, particularly to the most disadvantaged groups in our communities. It shows the pride we have in our city and in our contribution to making York an outstanding place to live, work and do business. It also shows that we have an awareness of our strengths and our weaknesses - that we know who we are and where we are going, that we have plans and ambitions and we have the strategy to achieve those. And it shows where we are up to in that journey.

At the heart of our vision is the passion to secure excellent public value for our citizens. This means we keep the council tax low, we build coalitions of partners working in the public interest, we aim for excellence in our services – great outcomes shaped by and responsive to our customers – and that no one gets left out in York.

Our corporate strategy sets out our priorities and values as we make this journey, based on listening to what our communities tell us is important to them.

Bill McCarthy
Chief Executive

III. Context

1. York is a nationally prominent city for a range of reasons, not least for its history, but also for being one of the UK's most visited tourist centres, its rail links across the country, a centre of academic excellence, and its importance within the Church of England. It is a city where people have lived and worked for over two thousand years. This sense of permanence and national importance has a bearing on the present-day culture of the city and the council. But York is changing very rapidly. The council has been at the forefront of this change and we are keen to sustain and develop it further. We are working from a strong base and we are committed to a culture of continuous improvement, working with, and for, the people of York.
2. City of York Council area covers 105 square miles. Over 186,000 residents live in the boundaries, with some four million tourists visiting every year. York was declared "European Tourism City of the Year" in June 2007 by independent judges from European Cities Marketing (ECM). This level of tourism poses challenges for the city in balancing the needs of our residents, who are our primary concern, with the economic strength and opportunity that tourism brings.
3. York is the lowest spending unitary council in England. Our running costs for 2007/08 are budgeted at £379m, with a net spend of £103m. The key funding streams supporting this expenditure include Dedicated Schools Grant (£84m), Council Tax (£64m) and Revenue Support Grant / Non-Domestic Rates (£38m). We have 47 councillors representing 22 electoral areas. At present there are 20 Liberal Democrat councillors, 18 Labour councillors, 7 Conservative councillors and 2 Green Party councillors. Given this political balance it is vital that staff work effectively with all members in agreeing and delivering our priorities and vision.
4. The Future York Group has said "York's economy has been successful and competitive in comparison to other towns and cities in the region. The city has contributed significantly to the region's economy, and in the science and research and development sectors, to that of the nation. Employment has grown in the recent past by over 1,000 jobs per year and key policy decisions, for example in relation to Science City York, to public transport improvements and in supporting tourism, have clearly contributed to this success"
5. We recognise that we need to be 'one council'. In the past we have concentrated with considerable success on service areas, rather than the corporate whole, but the need for more corporate and strategic approaches has become apparent. We have now established systems and processes that will deliver a more corporate, prioritised and integrated organisation (*please see our improvement story below*).
6. The council has well developed and effective systems for communicating with residents through the quarterly publications [Your City](#) and [Your Ward](#), which cover council business at a citywide and local level respectively. Council tenants also receive [Streets Ahead](#) magazine four times a year. In 2007 we delivered our first printed A-Z to every household since 1999 at minimal cost, financing the publication's printing and distribution through advertising. Meetings open to the

public are frequent through council meetings Ward Committees and [councillor surgeries](#).

7. The council has a good track record in communicating with its staff with over 80% of staff saying they have the information they need to do their job well - the top result in the council's staff survey benchmarking group. The fortnightly bulletin [News and Jobs](#) and quarterly magazine [News in Depth](#) are the main sources of information for staff and are well established. The council has conducted five staff surveys with a 50% response rate in the most recent. This has shown a consistent upward trend in staff satisfaction.

Case study 1: Our improvement story – Kevin Banfield, Service Improvement Manager

Our first CPA corporate inspection in 2002 confirmed we were a good council with some really excellent services. We knew though we could not be complacent so we committed to building on our successes and tackling the areas of weakness. We recognised that while we could (and still can) point to many examples of high quality services, there were a number of issues that we had to tackle and that key to it all was improved corporate working.

We started on an improvement journey which has taken us to our refreshed corporate strategy. One of the biggest steps was the Transforming York project which brought together all the council's improvement activity within one, joined-up change management programme. The IDeA Peer Review then gave us an understanding of the corporate management element of CPA and a 'mock' CPA self assessment in relation to the harder test told us where we were against the new CPA framework. Finally the Organisational Effectiveness Programme (OEP), the four internal priorities from the 2006 corporate strategy, has evolved and given us the improvement tool we need to continue our journey.

As a result there has been a marked cultural shift towards corporate working. In 2003 cross-

directorate working was unusual - now through the Corporate Leadership Group (CLG) and the Senior Managers Group (SMG) it is an expectation of all senior management.

This process has been helped by much more cross-cutting project work that has weakened the old 'silo' mentality and put the council in a good position as part of our administrative accommodation review for moving to one building as one council.

From Transforming York to the OEP the improvement process has affected this cultural change. Transforming York gave us a clear and agreed vision for the council (following extensive consultation with staff) which is now a part of the refreshed corporate strategy. It allowed us to align the council's aims to those of the city, the principles of which have again featured strongly in the corporate strategy and its refresh. It significantly improved service planning arrangements and embedded a positive performance management culture within the council. Finally it provided an improved method of delivering service improvement and an up to date constitution which sanctions decision making responsibility at the appropriate level.

IV. Self Evaluation

a. Ambition

Are there clear and challenging ambitions for the area and its communities?

8. York wants to be a city of quality and innovation, known around the world for its exciting and sustainable future as much as for its historic past. We want it to be a great place to live, work and do business in, now and for future generations. We recognise that we have a major role to play in our city and our region, not just in providing excellent services but by fully engaging with all of our residents and partners. We believe we are well on the way to a shared vision and ambition for the city based on resident's views, the expert opinion of our partners and stakeholders, our analysis and benchmarking and our understanding of government priorities. We are validating this through 'Without Walls', the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) which is effectively delivering the [community strategy](#). It is supported by the [Local Area Agreement \(LAA\)](#), which is owned by our partners and it will be expressed through the Sustainable community strategy.

9. The community strategy was launched in 2004 following an innovative consultation process (see box below from Gill Cooper), with a commitment to review it after three years. It is based on seven themes each with objectives and measures.
10. The LAA, which was produced for April 2007, allowed us to refresh the community strategy with our partners. It updated the outcomes and measures against which progress could be measured and reinvigorated strategic partnership working. York's LAA 2007-2010 was rated very highly by Government Office Yorkshire and Humber, and well received within the city. Partners generally regard the LAA as helping to move the community strategy forward and pave the way for the 2007 review that will lead to the creation of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
11. The process of reviewing the community strategy in 2007-8 includes a range of consultations called Festival of Ideas 2. This consultation and review process is being explicitly linked with the development of the Local Development Framework so that the long term strategy for the city and physical development of the city are aligned. This is entirely consistent with the governments 'Place Shaping' policy as set out in the Lyons Review. Consultation events include an all household questionnaire, ward committees, stakeholder events (for hard to reach groups for instance), public exhibitions and a city summit.

Case Study 2: A Festival of Ideas – Gill Cooper, Head of Arts and Culture

The red carpet was rolled out in July 2004, at the City Screen in York, for a viewing of a film of the city's vision for the future. The vision for York – its community strategy – was developed through a widespread consultation and reflection programme called the Festival of Ideas. The Festival demonstrated the potential of arts and culture to engage people in a dialogue about the future. Getting creative people involved in consultation brought a fresh approach. Many groups, particularly children and young people, are more likely to participate if the activities are innovative and enjoyable. The Festival programme had six main strands:

Video work by hard to reach groups.

Groups identified as hard to reach through normal survey methods were interviewed and filmed by young students from the media course at the local FE college. They included travellers, the homeless, single parents with young children, students, housebound elderly, and people with a mental or physical impairment. The edited 20-minute video allowed these groups to share their vision for York with other people. It was shown at Ward Committee meetings in order to spark debate.

Postcards from the future. We distributed postcards with jokey or unusual visions for York printed on one side and a space for people to write their own predictions. They were in

Three wishes for York events. Staff, easily identifiable in Without Walls t-shirts and with big bunches of yellow balloons, attended many events in summer 2003 "granting" three wishes for York to members of the public. Over 2000 wishes were recorded, 807 from school children, and with 150 of the wishes captured on camera.

Hot topic debates. Each of the Without Walls theme groups was asked to take on a debate about its most contentious issue. Seven hot topic debates were held, with feature articles in the evening press, three live Radio York phone-ins and votes on the hot topic question on the local BBC Radio website.

Art and architecture competition. An art and architecture competition for children up to eleven confirmed for us the strong interest that young people had in living in an environmentally friendly city.

What's the big idea? Every single household in York was asked to tell us what their big idea was, both for the city and for changes at local ward level. Over 1800 ideas came in and were used to contribute to ward based pride plans.

To share the results of the Festival with the public, a special 16-page supplement of York's local paper was published one week before our third City Conference. It included articles

council offices, conference centres, pubs, clubs and used in school personal, social and health education lessons. As the visions for the city came in, they were featured in ward newsletters and in the local paper, sparking further rounds of postcard writing.

on each key theme, special features from the Festival of Ideas events, and it launched the draft vision for the city.

12. In early 2005, prompted in part by the findings of the Peer Review (see our *improvement story – page x*), we committed to developing a long-term corporate strategy for the council. We recognised then that this would be essential to improve the way that we set out long-term ambition, the way we connect this ambition to the aspirations of the city as agreed through the community strategy, the way we prioritise what we do and crucially the way that all this is informed by the needs of residents.
13. The corporate strategy was produced in mid-2006 covering the period 2006 to 2009. The strategy represented a significant step forward in helping the council to set out the direction and priorities of the council over the medium-term. At the heart the corporate strategy were thirteen priorities which articulated our contribution to improving the lives of the people of York. Nine of these priorities focussed on improving services to customers and residents and four focussed on improving the way we do things internally. These priorities were identified through an extensive piece of work during the early part of 2006 involving the Chief Executive, the Leader, Corporate Management Team (CMT), the Corporate Leadership Group (CLG) of directors and assistant directors, Executive and Shadow Executive.
14. The process of developing our original corporate strategy successfully aligned our ambitions to those in the community strategy, and at the same time provided an organisational focus on the issues of the uppermost importance to the people of York. We recognise however that the corporate strategy is by necessity work in progress and needs to be continually reviewed. We also see the crucial need to reflect key elements of the government's modernisation agenda (as articulated in the strong and prosperous communities white paper) within our strategic planning framework.
15. We therefore took the opportunity to take advantage of a number of convergent drivers (including the government's white paper, the May 2007 election, the findings of the Future York study, up-to-date resident opinion feedback) to refresh our corporate strategy in the early part of 2007. This also gave the opportunity to improve the 2006-9 strategy and set out a programme for the four years of the new administration.

Are ambitions based on shared understanding amongst the council and partner organisations of local needs?

16. The council works extensively with its partners to ensure that it has a robust understanding of local needs. Effective cultural and sports partnerships are at the summit of a structure of partnership working that engages all sections of the community. Local information is collected in a systematic way in order to underpin strategic planning. This can be seen clearly in the sports partnership for example with its four 'zones' that are engaging the whole sector in local planning and development and which are establishing clear priorities. Regular survey work, for

example, through the annual residents opinion survey and the annual visitor survey is undertaken to ensure that residents' views are taken on board.

17. Production of the LAA used as its starting point the consultation data generated by the Festival of Ideas which informed the community strategy in 2004 (see Gill's panel). It also sought to reference strategies developed since that time and ensure responsiveness to known emerging city issues. An LAA stakeholder event of 80 delegates from the public, private and third sector helped to shape an initial long list of priorities with a specific focus on the needs of the city and its residents. Hard to reach communities contributed through consultation with Inclusive York Forum and accordingly the communities of interest it represents. The Forum underwent a lengthy exercise to identify the issues which cause exclusion and used the findings of this to develop a list of priority outcomes which fed into the LAA process. Partner organisations also underwent an inclusive process of negotiation that drew on previous plans and their knowledge of the city's needs. The indicators in the LAA are now the basis of performance monitoring that takes place via the Without Walls Executive Delivery Board.

Case Study 3: talkabout – Sophie Gibson, Research Officer

Talkabout, the council's citizens panel, is made up of over 2,000 residents who are invited at random to take part in regular consultation. The panel is balanced on ward, age, gender and working status to make sure it is truly representative of the city and it is also monitored to make sure it represents 'hard to reach' groups properly - we actively recruit members of the BME community to the panel. Every 18 months we refresh a third of the members of the panel. It is one of the largest panels in the country, which allows us to segment the responses and understand how people feel from different backgrounds and social groups. Many other councils used talkabout as an example of best practice in establishing and running citizen's panels.

Talkabout is an essential route for understanding what customers think of our services, allowing us to try out new ideas and concentrate on what residents really want. It goes far beyond collecting data for targets giving the opportunity for service development. We take suggestions for topics of discussion from the panellists themselves, as well as council teams on the ground. We are also able to run questions from our partners when we have the space.

There is a huge input into all of the corporate priorities from talkabout, but especially the corporate value that we should deliver what our customers want. The regularity and commitment of the council to talkabout means that our panel members have a sense of ownership of the process and feel they are doing a 'civic duty' in helping the council. The commitment of our panellists allow us to run focus groups and other types of research that get 'underneath' the results and encourage a more two-way relationship. We give regular feedback through Your City for other residents and an annual newsletter for panellists which explains the results, why we've gathered them and what we will do with them.

The difference talkabout makes to customers is to make sure that our services are truly responsive to customer's needs. For the council talkabout and other research are our eyes and ears - we would be working without a compass if we had no research. And talkabout does make a real difference - for instance questions about accessing council services have had a direct impact on shaping the council's new website and helped in the development of the York Customer Centre.

18. The council is committed to good quality, open and honest consultation having conducted an annual residents opinion survey since 1996. All consultation and research activities are run with the input of a dedicated research team who work to the ethical standards of the Market Research Society. Research work is co-ordinated centrally through an inclusive consultation database which lists all the research and consultation activities planned for the forthcoming year, as well as activity over the last year. The database is an essential way of sharing information

between officers and avoiding duplication. The database also lists all the steps taken to make the consultation as inclusive and accessible as possible.

19. Other consultation on major projects is done through door to door leaflets, face to face or telephone surveys, and recently using the council website. This has proved especially helpful with [budget consultation](#), where many methods are used to engage the public in influencing the council's spending priorities and council tax levels, including leaflets to every household. In 2005 this approach gained a 10 per cent response rate, which is extremely high for this sort of consultation.
20. At a local level, we have embraced the concept of neighbourhood management based on needs of local communities by developing Neighbourhood Action Plans (NAPs) (case study 4). Through recognition of the changing community in York we have developed an Equalities Strategy specifically to address the needs of minority groups and individuals. Workshops were held to gather views from all of the relevant groups, and a conference using the community strategy themes to identify relevant equalities issues was run in 2005. The outcome of the conference was an understanding of the further work that needed to be undertaken within our services, a baseline of 'where we were' in relation to equalities, and gaps in the way that the council works as a whole to address inequality. This formed the basis of our Equality Strategy and action plans, alongside legislative requirements.

Case study 4: Neighbourhood Action Plans – Zoe Burns, Head of Neighbourhood Pride Unit

We have produced Neighbourhood Action Plans for all ward committees by analysing the needs of a neighbourhood (in this context the geographic area of a ward committee), recognising specific local issues and developing a planned approach to tackling these in partnership with the community and service providers. Key to their development has been our desire to engage the public in shaping the content, the recognition that these are dynamic ever changing documents and a desire to put councillors at the centre at the centre of the local process.

We started the process by profiling the wards using census and other statistical information to build a picture of the wards and sending this information to every household. We asked the public what they wanted to see improved in their local area, and taking into account the responses from this, worked with the ward elected members to shape ambitions and visions for each individual ward committee. Most wards have either 3 or 4 ambitions, across the board all wards have included one around environmental issues and most have an ambition to improve crime, disorder and the fear of crime. Since then we have encouraged, through 'participatory budgeting' principals, the public to suggest schemes to be funded which will make improvements in these ambitions and visions. The public are currently voting on these schemes ready

for a final decision by elected members to allocate the baseline revenue and capital ward committee funding for 2008/09 financial year.

The introduction of this approach came from a desire to implement some of the ethos of the Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' and to continue to build on the strong platform of engagement and participation at a local level in a more targeted manner, whilst strengthening elected members role as champions in their community.

We have found that the public have engaged with this process and that other service providers and partners have recognised the potential of this process in supporting their work areas and delivery. For example because seventeen out of eighteen of the NAP's contain an ambition/ vision around crime and disorder and the fear or crime North Yorkshire Police are now utilising ward committees as one of their formal consultation mechanisms to obtain local public priorities for them to deliver against.

We have not completed a full cycle of the delivery of NAP's, however, the future development of NAP's is currently being corporately developed as are the links between the local needs set against the strategic and city vision.

21. In 2007 we held a conference in June with service based workshops, focusing on BME and disability issues, with the results are being used to improve services. For example, the results of the workshops around accessible housing and access are being fed into the LDF. Feedback from the disability conference was also used by the easy@york project in the design of our new customer contact arrangements and these groups also assisted with the testing of both web based services and with the structure of telephone contact arrangements.
22. We have many examples of tailor-made research to suit the audience and to get the most meaningful responses. One example is the Young Person's Health Group (YPHG). We initiated a consultation project to explore how young people's health needs are identified and addressed, perceptions of the annual health check, services and information young people receive from broader agencies such as help with healthy eating and exercise. With guidance from the research team, we engaged GPs, social workers and managers, foster carers and other looked after children by inviting them to complete a postal survey, written with the specific audience in mind and with the help of the young people. The response to the questionnaires was very encouraging. The YPHG helped analyse the results and are currently writing up the findings in their own words. This will be used to devise a leaflet explaining how the research has had an impact on real changes in the provision of health care support for looked after young people, sent to all GPs, social workers, foster carers and looked after young people.
23. York's work on the visitor economy and tourism has been extensively evaluated with an annual visitor survey of the characteristics and attitudes of visitors. These responses have been reflected in targeted marketing activity, and in investment improvements to the public realm (such as architectural and artistic lighting schemes). Most recently the findings of research with residents and visitors on the evening economy has shown strong demand for events to put on activities into the evening - reflected in the Festival of Food and Drink, Illuminating York and Yuletide York promotions which have all featured evening entertainment and activity.

Does the Council and its partners provide leadership across the community and ensure effective partnership working?

24. **The LSP in York is called Without Walls. Its philosophy is that we will see improvements quicker if we work together than if organisations work on their own. Critical to the design and operation of the LSP is the recognition of eight key strategic thematic partnerships through membership from the Chairs of these groups. WoW has an independent chair, and representations from the Chamber of Commerce, the University of York, the Citizen's Advice Bureau and Jobcentre Plus.** The LSP reviews key strategic issues that affect the whole city and considers an appropriate response. A recent example of this is York's anti-poverty strategy. A citywide climate change strategy will be adopted by the LSP. In addition the WoW Executive Delivery Board exists to monitor performance and improve collaborative working between partners. Another example of leadership across the community is the Children and Young People's Plan 2007 – 2010, which describes the partnership work of YorOk (see case study 5).
25. Two of the more established partnerships are the Healthy City Board (HCB) and Safer York strategic partnership board. The Healthy City Board was set up to create an effective alliance across York that could deliver improved health outcomes it has become the delivery body for the Healthier Communities and Older People

block of the Local Area Agreement. It is directly linked to the Older People's Partnership Board. There is therefore clear accountability. Chaired by the jointly appointed Associate Director of Public Health, who holds the PCT-wide portfolio for health improvement. The HCB demonstrated its ability to galvanise partners by introducing a workplace ban on smoking supported by some employers in the city well in advance of the 2007 smoking legislation and at a time when the national debate was very much in the balance.

Case study 5: YorOK Board – Jane Marshall, Director of Commissioning, PCT

I am delighted to be Chair of the YorOK Board in York. It is a partnership body made up of senior representatives of all the services that work with children, young people and parents/carers. I believe it provides a really important symbol of our commitment to working together to improve the lives of children and young people in the city. The Board meets every two months and the meetings are open to the public who, on occasions, come to listen or to express their own views and ideas. Through these meetings we have been able to pool ideas and find creative and innovative ways of developing services that are responsive to the needs of children and young people. The Board is inclusive, with a clear constitution and specific remit in developing and implementing the Children and Young People's Plan for the city and the children and young people's block of the Local Area Agreement (LAA)

We have the Board because we know that children and young people are both precious and our future - we also know that in the past those who work with children and young people and those responsible for services have not always worked well together. The Board is determined to end the potential for confusion that this has created. Although York's work meets national requirements, I think it is particularly important to recognise that we were ahead of the game and that the partnership was established well before national expectations arose.

I am greatly impressed with the level of commitment from partners but also their willingness to listen to the views of local children, young people and their families. When we consulted on what should be the priorities in the plan, we issued 25,000 postcards through schools to give to parents, and also received 560 postcards back from the 2000 we sent to young people. The Board really wanted to hear their views, and the priorities we identified are based on the messages they gave us.

I have been impressed with the way that partners have kept focus on making a difference and not just talking about issues in relation to their own service. When we have needed to do things differently, to pool the separate resources that exist in order to tackle a problem, the Board has been willing to do so. This isn't easy, as we all separately have faced budget difficulties but we do know that collectively we can and have made a difference .

The Board gives a strong symbolic leadership message to the rest of the Children's Trust in York - concentrate on improving the lives of children and young people and work together to do so. The Board has already set key priorities and targets for those priorities in its plan and it is now great to hear reports of those targets being met. We know that more children, particularly in less advantaged communities, are doing better at school; we know that more parents are being able to get access to the type of parental advice they want; we know that more children are being able to go to really good child care that they enjoy and which helps them prepare for school. We know that we are building great new places to go and creating more things for older young people to go to but if and when special help is needed it is more easily available. There is still lots to do but I am confident that the partnership in York is so positively established that our work will go from strength to strength. And when you read the most recent inspection feedback on our services you hear a description that confirms our confidence:

"The authority is adept at staying ahead of the game, with continuing involvement in initiatives aimed at further improvement. It has a strong track record of becoming successfully involved in innovative practice which has been recognised at national level. Systems are well established and the local authority is small enough to know its providers well, to be able to build up good relationships with stakeholder and to intervene early to effect improvement."

26. The Safer York strategic partnership Board is chaired by North Yorkshire Police with the council acting as vice chair whilst the delivery and tactical group of the partnership (the 'Executive') is chaired by the council with North Yorkshire Police vice chair. Not content with current performance the partnership has recently

reviewed its delivery structure to work in line with the National Standards for CDRPs and to achieve the six hallmarks of effective good practice. The partnership has also recently delivered a revised business plan and introduced an intelligence based business model to its task groups to focus on key business objectives. The strength of the partnership was recently recognised by the Home Office who commented that the good practice experienced in York should be shared with other CDRP's throughout the UK. See the achievement section for more details (page x).

27. Across the nine external priorities much work has already taken place. For instance the council recruited the Future York Group, a panel of eminent local business and public sector leaders, in response to recent manufacturing closures to advise it on how best to respond to these problems and plan for the future. The group produced a challenging report which is informing the Festival of Ideas 2, the LDF and the refresh of the corporate strategy.

b. Prioritisation

Are there clear and robust priorities within the ambitions for the area?

28. Our corporate strategy states our priorities, what is most important for us to improve and where we want to go as an organisation. They have been picked to best represent the needs of the city and where improved performance will bring the biggest benefit to customers.
29. The priorities were decided in 2005 using data giving customer feedback on what services needed to be improved. This was collected through corporate customer surveys and consultation such as the annual Resident's Opinion Survey and the talkabout panel. A number of possible improvement areas were developed throughout the corporate strategic planning process and these were evaluated against set criteria incorporating the [customer feedback](#). The customer feedback criteria was weighted more heavily than other areas so that resident and community feedback had a significant influence on what improvement areas eventually became corporate priorities.
30. The list of priorities drives our planning and performance management cycles, both at service and corporate level. This ensures appropriate alignment to our priorities for designing action and appraising progress. The CLG were involved every step of the way in the priorities and the SMG (top 200 managers) have been briefed regularly throughout the corporate strategy process. There have also been significant inroads made into raising awareness of the corporate strategy for individual members of staff. From a standing start, 41 per cent of staff in the last staff survey were aware of the 13 priorities, with posters in every office, articles in staff publications and a leaflet to all staff. However, we are aware that this is only a start and our aim is for all staff to be aware of the priorities and know their role in delivering them. All of the council's communications, internally and externally, are being aligned through new communications strategies to reflect the refreshed corporate strategy as the basis of all the council's work, as well as plans to communicate the refreshed strategy itself.
31. Our values contained in our corporate strategy are being managed like our priorities, with champions for each and with supporting delivery and innovation plans (DIPS). We have made them distinct from our priorities in acknowledgement of their longer term and cross-cutting nature and their focus on cultural change. Our direction statements set out key principles which will guide our journey in the

long term. Our decision making will therefore be aligned to these aspirations to ensure that the council manages change in culmination of the things it wants to achieve. The Organisational Effectiveness Programme (OEP) is a mechanism for delivery of the council's values contained in the corporate strategy vision. It is at the heart of our drive to improve the council's organisational culture and effectiveness.

Is there a robust strategy to deliver the priorities?

32. Our strategy is to align our resources, our focus, and our improvement work. The council's financial plans and strategies set out how the priorities will be resourced. The Information Technology Development Plan, Capital Programme Resource Allocation Model and revenue growth budget allocation consider the priorities and rank each bid for funding. The implications of these strategies then feed into the council's overall resource planning model that starts with the production in the summer of the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) and which is then developed into the final budget proposals for full council the following February. The MTFS also factors in the implications of major projects and service developments.
33. In developing the budget proposals there is a strong linkage between potential developments, saving options and the council's priority framework. All proposals are assessed against their potential impact on the corporate strategy. Consideration of the implications are a key element of the ultimate decision making process. However, we recognise we can improve this process and a revised finance and service planning process will be implemented in 2009/10 that will look to bring forward key elements of the process into the spring and summer and provide a clearer development brief to all services based around political aspirations, local needs and performance benchmarking.
34. Since 2004/5, the revenue budget process requires managers to identify explicitly the potential impact of growth, reprioritisation and savings proposals on the council's priorities. These therefore now represent the key strategic drivers for use by managers in making recommendations on the allocation of resources. Given York's fiscal position therefore, pressure to make savings is significant, but these mechanisms ensure that they have a low impact on priorities and customers.
35. At a community level, York has always valued the role of councillors in identifying and addressing the needs of their wards. Each ward has a dedicated [Ward Committee](#) which on an annual basis asks residents to identify their local priorities by voting at meetings or by post against dedicated funds. These committees mirror much of the government's vision for local empowerment and provide a real opportunity for investment in the express needs of local communities.
36. In support of the corporate strategy we have developed delivery and innovation plans (DIPS) which make explicit the means of delivering on our priorities by establishing the actions which will underpin their achievement. Each priority is led by a champion who is responsible for driving its achievement. They ensure that the priorities have a high profile within the organisation and play a vital leadership role in promoting a culture of working corporately across organisational boundaries. The DIPS set out each champion's vision for the achievement of their priority, the critical path of their achievement and demonstration of areas of innovation. The DIPS also set out how we will quantify what success looks like and provide a key reference for ensuring meaningful performance management of the corporate strategy and accountability back to CMT.

37. Our service planning framework sets out how priorities will be delivered, with each directorate having a plan which identifies its contributions to delivering the community and corporate strategies. These are converted into detailed service plans, using our service planning guidance, including key actions from relevant DIPS and a clear focus on residents and users of services. All service plans are subject to member scrutiny, approval and monitoring through the Executive Member Advisory panel (EMAP) process.

Is robust action taken to deliver the strategy?

38. We consistently look to focus our efforts on the medium to long term, and in recent years this approach has been enhanced through the introduction of [three year financial planning](#) and a [four year capital programme](#). In some instances pursuing such an approach has meant that councillors have had short-term political difficulties with localised protest, but we have successfully run a balanced budget every year, despite facing significant budget pressures – evidencing our ability to make hard decisions.
39. Due to the tight fiscal constraints a key element of the annual budget process is the need for resources to be redirected from existing services to support new requirements, whether these arise from contractual changes, legislative requirements, governmental policy, demographic change or local prioritisation. In the 2007/08 budget such reprioritisation totalled £4.8m, approximately 4.6 per cent of the net revenue budget and included significant additional investment in the council's priorities for decreasing waste going to landfill, and increasing skills and knowledge.

In 2006/07 the council identified early in the financial year that some social care services that are prominent in the corporate priorities, were in danger of running out of funds. This was treated as a corporate issue from the outset, and clear action was taken to ensure that savings were achieved in the service departments, as well as some one-off and ongoing resources from elsewhere in the council being identified and redirected into maintaining service levels. This reprioritisation not only protected services for vulnerable individuals but also ensured that the two directorates concerned met their revised budgets for the year.

c Capacity

Is there clear accountability and decision making to support delivery and continuous improvement?

40. York has an unambiguous framework in which decisions are taken. We have clear decision making and accountability and good programme and project management. In May 2006 we adopted a revised [constitution](#) to ensure there was a clear delineation and recognition of the respective member and officer roles in the decision making process. Under the scheme of delegation [officer decision records](#) are published on the internet thereby allowing members to retain an overview, while allowing officers to manage operational issues effectively. It has been realised however that for it to be truly effective the constitution must continually develop and grow. To this end there has been an on-going process of review and revision. The election of a balanced council in 2007 has made such a process of review doubly important.

41. Members have responded to the new political situation with decisiveness. The group leaders have come together to deliver a strategic framework for potential service and functional improvements ([the Policy Prospectus](#)) and have [agreed mechanisms](#) to ensure that the opposition groups have the opportunity to comment on proposals before they are considered by the single party Executive. We have [clear and comprehensive frameworks \(link to diagram\)](#) for the cross party review of decisions. Decisions falling within an Executive Member's portfolio are taken by the Executive Member in the light of advice offered by their cross party EMAP. These panels provide a forum for public debate prior to decisions being made. They are a form of pre-decision scrutiny and make for a more open decision making process. Scrutiny has an important part to play in terms of challenging and developing council policy - there is clear evidence that such challenges have positively influenced the council's overall policy framework.
42. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) make the key links to the Executive and shape and influence papers going for decision - DMTs fulfil the same role for decisions going to EMAPs. It deals with core corporate business, with sub-groups delegated through the constitution to take decisions on CMT's behalf. These groups deal with issues of governance, corporate operation (including CPA), health and safety and quality issues, amongst other things.
43. We have a clear [forward plan](#) covering executive business and the forward agendas of the committees and EMAPs. We have implemented an electronic committee management system which ensures all information regarding the membership of committees, dates of meetings, reports and minutes are all available to the public on line.
44. [The Standards Committee](#) has six members, two of which are independent, and one of the two independent members also chairs the committee. The Monitoring Officer and Standards Committee have undertaken a [number of training sessions](#) on ethical governance issues and the changes to the Code of Conduct. We have undertaken an Ethical Governance Audit in partnership with the Audit Commission to identify areas of the ethical framework that require further development in line with best practice. Preparations for conducting local investigations are in place. We have had training sessions for Standards Committee members and have made a formal appointment of a [Deputy Monitoring Officer](#) to assist with local investigations and provide independent advice to the Committee. The Committee is actively considering how it will respond to the challenge of the local filtering of complaints.
45. The Monitoring Officer has developed working relationships with the Parish Councils through the York Local Councils Association. Also, through the Constitution review delegations to the Standards Committee were reviewed and links made to the new Audit and Governance Committee.
46. The council has taken championing its customers and vulnerable clients very seriously. Not only is there a corporate value to deliver what customers want, which establishes customer standards championed by the Head of Public Services, but there are also three key member championing roles - Executive member for Social Inclusion, Champion for Older People, Champion for Young People. The annual [Performance Development Review](#) process helps to ensure employees are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Our staff survey showed 76% of staff understand how their job 'contributes to the success of the organisation'.

47. Over recent years we have made great strides in embedding risk management into our work. The establishment of a dedicated risk team to support the overall risk management function has helped to formalise the management of risk. Risk assessment is a routine part of the prioritisation and decision making process and risk assessments are used to analyse the impact of all growth and savings. All major projects operate risk logs and the development of a risk management IT system enables improved visibility, accountability and monitoring of risks at all levels. CMT is responsible for monitoring clearly identified corporate risks and use regular sessions with the Executive to explore and mitigate these risks. Project and Programme Boards are responsible for monitoring managing their risks.
48. The Council has a database of over 250 working groups and partnerships with any external partners, across all Directorates. This data is regularly updated and covers a range of issues, including strategic objective links, commitments, risks, accounting and governing documents. In addition the council has a partnership training programme for all staff and members, which is designed to deliver improvements in all aspects of partnership working particularly performance, governance and accountability. Partnership and Working Group Guidelines have been created. Incorporating a risk assessment tool and a 30 point template for governing documents which includes defining the roles and responsibilities of all partners alongside the production of action plans and performance targets

Is capacity used effectively and developed to deliver ambitions and priorities?

Through the budget process

49. As the lowest spending unitary council in England York gives value for money to its communities, continually ensuring we are . The budget process is built upon a rigorous challenge of future spending plans and this service level challenge is backed up by an on-going [programme of efficiency reviews](#). All services are challenged through the budget process and as a result the reasons for areas with above average spending are well understood. Our success can be demonstrated by our well above target performance under [Gershon](#) and our value for money assessment of 2005 and 2006 have both been rated at three. As a result, we demonstrate bottom quartile expenditure across many services.
50. We have looked to enhance the use of comparative information in the service and financial planning process. Initially this focused around selective benchmarking of services but for the 2006/07 budget process this was extended to provide a more comprehensive assessment of relative service performance across the council. The results of this analysis then fed into the decision making process that underpinned the council's efficiency review programme. For the 2008/09 budget process the council has integrated this assessment of performance into the budget process with all saving, growth and reprioritisation proposals being required to assess their direct and indirect implications and their relative financial costs and overall performance.

Working with partners

51. We have used our opportunities to improve service delivery via public and voluntary sector partners. Councillors have taken decisions to invest funding into such provision in order to enhance or maintain the quality of service delivery such as the [Arclight Homelessness Hostel](#), the [joint approach to improving public health](#) with the PCT and the appointment of a joint Associate Director of Public Health for York. Another example is using a voluntary sector provider, [York Rotters](#), to provide recycling services to areas which the council's traditional models of delivery would struggle to reach.

52. The council has worked closely with the Council for Voluntary Services to create and deliver a new external funding/grants training programme, specifically designed to improve skills in the voluntary sector. The 6 course programme has been fully evaluated and is entering its second year of operation. It is the councils intention to roll out the current internal partnership training programme in a similar way, in the next 12 months

Through our staff

53. We want a well trained highly motivated workforce, satisfied with their roles and confident in their ability to understand and respond to customers. The [HR Strategy](#) outlines the key strategic objectives of developing an enabling culture, effective organisation of people resources, managing performance, developing employees, valuing and involving employees, and working in partnership.
54. 'Developing Employees' is achieved by a corporate learning and development function in HR and by a significant amount of directorate training activity focused on specific service needs. Corporate provision includes a suite of in-house short courses aligned to the Leadership and Management Standards to support development needs identified at [Performance and Development Reviews \(PDRs\)](#), a nationally-recognised regional [mentoring partnership](#), support for 'out of hours' [learning](#) and provision of an extensive range of regional development activities through partnership with other North Yorkshire authorities.
55. The council's strategic approach to workforce planning is the focus of the HR Strategy, and at an operational level is driven by directorate service planning. Some directorates, for example Housing & Adult Social Services, have developed a focused workforce planning group chaired by a Chief Officer and working with private partners and the Health and Safety Executive to invest in additional reporting & recording systems to help managers respond more effectively to the high sickness rate.
56. The council's poor performance in managing sickness absence is being addressed by comprehensive new procedures and guidelines underpinning a new [Attendance at Work Policy](#) which places an emphasis on maximising employee attendance. Launched in October 2007 this approach is being strengthened by a wide-scale development programme to equip managers to effectively manage absence and make timely use of management data.
57. In response to the high cost of temporary agency staff, we have introduced a recruitment pool operating on a full trading basis, covering all admin staff up to SO1/ 2 and drivers. Instead of going to a temporary agency, managers contact the recruitment pool which provides them with fully occupational health-checked, telephone screened, interviewed and tested casual staff. This has proved highly effective and in its first year generated over £100,000 of efficiency savings with a BME representation of 7.3% (above the council average) supplying approximately 90% of the council's administrative temps every month.
58. With the influx of new councillors in May 2007 a [comprehensive training programme](#) has been developed and delivered that will assist individuals in becoming effective advocates for their communities and providers of strategic direction for the organisation.

Through project management

59. We believe establishing strong and effective project management has been a major cultural shift for the council. It is key to projects such as the Administrative Accommodation Review, [easy@york](#) and the Pay and Grading review. These are managed by boards with clarity about lines of responsibility and reportage, including the provision of regular information for councillors and staff as part of comprehensive stakeholder management strategies. The council utilises [Prince 2](#) as the basis of its approach and provides training for relevant staff. It has adopted the OGC Managing Successful Programmes Methodology for the delivery of large and complex programmes of work, ensuring that the council is able to deliver the desired strategic objectives. Audit reports have identified [easy@york](#) (see box below) as an exemplar of good programme management practice and York has invested in formal training and accreditation for its Programme Managers.

Case study 6: [easy@york](#) – Tracey Carter, [easy@york](#) programme director

[easy@york](#) (Electronically Accessing Services in York) is an innovative programme of change, that transforms our contact with customers, putting their needs at the heart of service planning and delivery whilst making our end to end services both more efficient and more effective. The Programme has established a multi disciplinary, corporate customer contact centre, focussed on the web and the telephone, which delivers redesigned, technology enabled services to customers in four of our main customer facing services. Through a process of service improvement, involving clear identification of desired outcomes, BPR, innovative integrated technology deployment and change management techniques, we have created a single customer entry point into the organisation which has transformed the customer experience.

Through this route we will handle 2.5million customer transactions in the first year. Since going live we have seen 99% of customers satisfied with the service received, £307k of efficiencies, cashable and non cashable savings and an 88% reduction in complaints. We now have speech recognition technologies handling 25% of telephone contact, 72% of revenues transactions handled entirely at point of customer contact and 92% of all service request completed within SLA. Finally the transactional web site has had 27,000 service requests processed in first year.

The [easy@york](#) project was initially conceived to deliver a comprehensive response to the e-government agenda and to implement the recommendations from a Best Value Review of access to services. We identified that a more transformational approach was needed which led us to examine the end-to-end processes and

systems used. We looked long and hard at policies and targets that encouraged ways of working that were not customer focussed. This fundamentally changed the scope of the Programme, making it primarily about cultural change, rather than technology.

The Programme sits at the heart of the Council's Corporate Strategy to improve services to customers and make the Council more efficient, and it has been supported with over £1m capital grant funding and £3.3m revenue funding over three years.

To deliver the Programme we have adopted the OGC Managing Successful Programmes Methodology, accrediting key staff, establishing a specialist Programme team, providing sponsorship at Director level and establishing a Member champion. Stakeholder management has established the commitment to change, clear programme definition has enabled us to articulate the benefits and envision a blueprint of the customer experience in the future. This led to the development of workstreams to convert the desired outcomes into a resourced and deliverable plan of outputs that would create the required changes.

Through internal business knowledge, an array of specialist technical skills, external challenge, rigorous programme management, HR change management processes and highly effective stakeholder management, we have successfully implemented a huge range of changes that have effectively forged a new model of customer service delivery which is now being deployed across the entire organisation.

Through more efficient procurement

60. Over the past three years the council has continued to develop its approach to procurement with the formal adoption of a [procurement strategy](#) and the development of internal networking groups, via the creation of a [procurement community](#) of relevant officers. The effectiveness of these initiatives can be seen

through the continued delivery of services via joint commissioning for example. The re-tendering of home care to locality providers on block contracts in 2006 achieved very significant savings, and there has been a reduction in incidences of breaches and waivers that are reported to councillors via the Audit and Governance Committee.

With the voluntary sector

61. We have a specific post within the council to help build the capacity of the voluntary sector, which focuses particularly on ensuring that the voluntary sector funding (VSF) budget is used effectively in order to achieve Council and citywide objectives. A key achievement of this post was the establishment of a Credit Union in the city. We have worked closely with the Council for Voluntary Services to create and deliver a new training programme specifically designed to improve skills in the voluntary sector. The six course programme has been fully evaluated and is entering its second year of operation. It is the council's intention to roll out the current internal partnership training programme in a similar way, in the next 12 months.
62. We are also working with a large number of third sector organisations such as Bike Rescue, Friends of St Nicholas Fields and the Friends of Rowntree Park in more informal partnership ways but which deliver improved efficiencies and are extremely effective – these three examples deliver across a number of city priorities, draw in extra external resources and illustrate the way we work with the community.

Through greater innovation

63. The council has been effective in using innovation to support and increase the quality of services. Such innovation has not been concerned with protecting internal delivery models but about delivering the best solution for residents. Key examples of this would include the [Museums Trust](#), new [homecare arrangements](#), [Whizz Go](#), and [payments of parking](#) via mobile phone and text message. To support its 'invest to save' and innovation activity in 1997 the council established a [£4m Venture Fund](#). To date advances from this fund have supported 35 projects with £4.8m of funding.

Does the Council, with its partners, have the capacity it needs to achieve change and deliver its priorities?

Through our people

64. We feel that we do. Improving our internal leadership management arrangements has been a key focus over recent years. Work to date includes the development of [leadership and management standards \(LAMS\)](#), which form a blueprint of the York leader for the future and support the corporate priority to 'improve leadership at all levels'. These have been rolled-out to all managers and are being first embedded in PDRs followed by recruitment, training, and induction. We are also undertaking [360 degree feedback](#) assessments aligned to the LAMS. The council also provides two popular in-house modular [management development programmes](#) to ensure that our managers have the skills to work to their full potential.

Through external funding

65. The council has also successfully utilised innovative funding to maximise the efficiency and delivery of its services. Outcomes from this have included the council's innovative [EcoDepot](#), a [joint transport review](#) with the East Riding and Ambulance [Trust](#) (funded by the regional assembly, regional centre of excellence

and DCLG) and new schools and children centres through the private finance initiative.

Through use of assets

66. We have begun the implementation of Area Asset Management Plans (AAMP) which take the priorities set by the Corporate Asset Management Plan and focus on community areas, looking at council and non-council community needs. It incorporates partnership working and promotes asset rationalisation and shared use of buildings.

Via the IT Development Plan

67. There is a clearly defined framework to manage investment in new and replacement IT systems. In addition to this the council has also directed resources to fund its investment in the [easy@york](#) programme which has delivered both the government agenda and also contributed to the delivery of our customer services and efficiency priorities, supported by £900k of government funding.

With our partners

68. We work with our partners across all sectors to build and sustain financial and leadership capacity. The council has well established management arrangements with the NHS and NYCC to improve service delivery, value for money and efficiency in social services. The Community Equipment Loans Service is a consistently top quartile performing service run by the council covering provision of health and social care equipment across York and parts of North Yorkshire and East Riding. This means one route into getting equipment for staff and patients and the service has been able to expand to meet increased demand without reducing its delivery times.

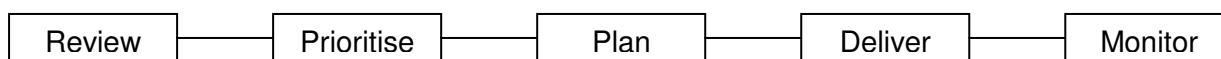
69. The council is also responsible for an integrated health and social care learning disabilities service covering York, Selby and Easingwold. Again this simplifies issues for clinicians and patients with one route into all services. A Commission for Social Care Inspection in 2006 one year after the service was set up was positive (two stars). Formal arrangements also exist for the PCT to deliver integrated mental health and occupational therapy services on our behalf.

Through equalities

70. Work has been done to help raise the profile of equalities within the council through a generic equalities awareness course. A highly successful theatre-based session using actors and designed to evoke empathy, was piloted with senior staff and will be rolled out to all staff. Using feedback from managers, a workbook has been developed in Easy Read format containing York context, equalities information, tips and links to further information. This will be available to all staff in 2008.

71. Following a review by the Scrutiny committee, the [Social Inclusion Working Group](#) was formed. It involves councillors, community groups representing equality strands and officers whose primary role is to consider the impact of council decisions before they go to the Executive. The group choose which items to scrutinise based on their perceived importance and impact on social inclusion. The results are fed back to the Executive by the Chair of the Group, the Portfolio Holder for Social Inclusion and Youth, and are used to inform decisions. The minutes of the group are produced in Easy Read format, and the meetings are open to the public. The agenda enables two-way communication as the group can ask for items to consider that are not on their way to Executive, such as the council's response to the Future York Group report.

d. Performance Management



The golden thread of improvement – Our Performance Management Framework

Review	Vision & Prioritisation	Develop Strategies & Plans	Delivering Improvement	Monitoring and Managing Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDB (Executive Delivery Board) consider year-end outturns – baseline review • Year-end performance reports considered at DMTs & EMAPs. • Year-end performance report – special CMT & Executive member session. • Customer/Resident consultation (Talkabout or Resident's Opinion Survey) • Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) refresh and formal self assessments • Review of comparative performance • Period Peer R reviews • Audit & Inspection recommendations <p><i>Underpinned by Policy & Guidance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Actual performs</i> • <i>3-stage Data quality model – including significant variance analysis</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Strategy refresh process (every 3 years) • Local Area Agreement refresh process (annual) • Political manifesto & mandate • Corporate Strategic refresh (annual) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Our vision and 4 values ✓ Our 10 priorities 	<p>Partner/Corporate level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Vision • Community Strategy • Local Area Agreement • Corporate Strategy • Medium Term Financial Strategy • HR Strategy • Asset Management Plan • Capital Programme • Risk management planning & register • IT Development Plan • Corporate project plans <p>Directorate & Service level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directorate business plans • Other directorate level plans (LTP, EDP, etc) • Service plans <p><i>Underpinned by Policy & Guidance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Service planning guidance & templates</i> • <i>Target setting guidance and proforma templates</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplans • OEP (Organisational Effectiveness Programme) • Project plans & programme management • Corporate priority champions • Procurement management • Constitution - decision making (e.g. EMAPs, scrutiny, CMT, Executive, etc) <p><i>Underpinned by Policy & Guidance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Corporate DIPS (Delivery & Innovation Plans)</i> • <i>PRINCE2 Project planning policy & guidance</i> • <i>Data quality policy & guidance</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EDB consider monitor report on progress against the Local Area Agreement. • Monitor 1 & 2 performance reports at DMTs & EMAPs. * • Monitor 1 & 2 corporate performance report – special CMT & Executive member sessions. (emphasis on our priorities & corporate health)* • Monthly Priority Champion meetings take place monthly to review progress. • Capital Monitor Group (CAPMOG) monitors progress on capital projects, many of which help us achieve performance improvement across directorates. • IT Development Board monitors progress on key IT projects across the council. • Regular Service & Team level performance management meetings. • Staff appraisal process is used to disseminate improvement actions to team and individual level. Mid-year appraisal reviews also take place to review progress. <p>* Consider both service & financial performance</p>

72. Since our last formal CPA assessment, the new framework has become an effective driver for improvement across priority service plans areas. Notable achievements include

- Recycling and landfill** Waste recycling levels have more than doubled over the past three years, with nearly 42% of waste currently being sent for recycling or composting. As a result, the tonnage of landfilled waste has also declined by 30%, despite household waste levels rising in York. By avoiding significant government LATs charges, the reduction in landfill has had a very positive impact upon the council's financial position.
- York Pride** This has been the top political priority since March 2004 and has helped drive significant improvement in areas such as street cleanliness, removal of graffiti, fly-tipping fly-posting and abandoned cars.
- Community Safety** March 2008 is the end of the three-year Community Safety Plan period, when the targets set by the home office will reach a conclusion. These were very challenging targets with the overall aim being to reduce crime in the city by 24% by 2008. We have made extremely good progress towards all these targets and the vast majority will be achieved or exceeded. To put this achievement into context, our target for 2007/08 was 13,600 crimes or less. Current forecasts predict that we will end up with around 11,600 crimes. If achieved, this would represent a 35% reduction over the period which started with nearly 18,000 crimes in 2004/05.

- d. **Educational attainment** York's provisional key stage 4 results for 2007 are at 68%. This represents an extremely good trend for 5 A*-C grades at GCSE and this is now 5% above the comparative early national results. It also represents a 9% increase over the past 3 years.
- e. **Processing planning applications** Our performance has significantly improved from being a 'standards' authority we now exceed national performance targets for all categories of applications (for instance in March 2003 we only determined 18% of 'major' applications in the target time, by March 2006 this had reached almost 70% and we have since maintained a high level of performance).

Is there a consistent, rigorous and open approach to performance management?

- 73. We have a well-established performance management culture and framework (PMF), with significant improvements having been made over the past two years, as we have recognised the importance of having a framework that supports transformational change and drives improvement. Our corporate management team (CMT) have carried out a [review of our PMF](#) which has led to changes in the way we review and report performance corporately. We have also identified a set of '[high-risk](#)' KPIs to help focus on performance that has strategic implications. This has also allowed us to strengthen the golden thread between our LAA/strategic priorities and service delivery.
- 74. Performance management information plays a key role in the development of strategic goals and priorities (both service and financial). [Corporate performance reports](#) are used to inform decision-making forums and the Leader used the 2006/07 joint service and financial [year-end performance report](#) to set out areas of particular importance for the forthcoming year. This was used to help refresh our corporate priorities and develop a revised corporate strategy.
- 75. The council carries out three formal corporate performance management events which start at service level and end with a joint Executive and CMT monitor session. The in-year monitors take place in September and December, with a year-end review session in May. [Budget sheets](#) are completed by finance managers alongside [directorate performance scorecards](#), which provide performance headlines to allow us to focus on areas of strategic performance importance. At a corporate level, our framework uses the principles of exception reporting to help dedicate time to addressing the big issues in-depth.
- 76. Currently, we use directorate EMAP performance reports to review progress at a corporate level. We are currently reviewing our IT based performance management and will use this opportunity to exploit the fact that the government have now introduced the new performance framework and review our IT requirements with the key LSP partners, allowing us to procure a web-based system which can be used by everyone.
- 77. There is a high degree of [cross-party involvement](#) in performance management (including EMAP and shadow Executive). All four parties can use the [calling in procedures](#) within the constitution. A regular meeting of all [Performance Officers](#) seeks to address current weaknesses in our PM system, and share good practise. The outcome of corporate monitor sessions gets [disseminated to departments](#) and services and [progress on remedial action](#) is measured at the next corporate monitor session. Remedial action on problem areas of performance or slippage on key actions is effective at EMAP level.

78. Under our framework, directorates review particular areas of performance on a shorter, necessary basis if this has become a cause for concern. We also try to solve performance problems at an early stage. Recent examples of both these approaches include:
- a. Problems with the roll out of alternate weekly waste collections, which could have affected the achievement of recycling targets. Repercussions for our corporate priorities, and for the financial LAT penalties, were identified at EMAP and the corporate monitor sessions. This led to more regular monitoring and corporate support to address the issue.
 - b. Driving improvements on the processing of planning applications. This transition was monitored closely at DMT, EMAP and corporate monitor sessions as it affected our CPA block score and the levels of Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) we received from the government.
 - c. Reviewing specific areas of library services provision to avoid a possible drop in our CPA culture score, which could have knock-on effects for our overall corporate CPA score.
 - d. Addressing the council's staff sickness. Our performance framework has allowed us to review the issue at all levels of the organisation and this led to a CMT/Executive decision to commission a major review of our absence management procedures.

Do the council and partner organisations know how well they and each other are performing against planned outcomes?

79. Reporting and managing performance at a partnership level has become much more effective with the launch of the [LAA](#) in April 2007. An LAA performance management framework is in place via the Without Walls Executive Delivery Board. Each of the themes from the community strategy have been linked to LAA indicators and KPIs and each LAA indicator has been allocated to a partner. The partnership training programme based on the council's guidelines and on good practice is designed to improve performance management within partnerships focused on four key aspects: clear aims, linking to strategy, action planning and performance management. The partnership database underpins that activity and monitor the improvements, for example by reviewing the partnerships governing documents/agreements. A draft competency framework to underpin the training programme will be completed in the next six months.
80. The Reducing the Performance Burden changes recently introduced by the government will help us integrate our corporate performance 'collection', 'reporting' and 'management' much better with LSP arrangements. Although we can demonstrate a golden thread of delivery and improvement from the LAA down to service delivery, this needs to be supported by a more seamless framework – shared by all key partners. Work is underway to develop a shared PM framework, operated under a single performance management system.
81. Where directorates need to gather or provide performance data to and from partners, this works well. LAA performance information is managed at varied levels of the organisation, and this is fed into various forums, including the [Safer York Partnership](#), the [Social Inclusion Working Group](#), [corporate monitor sessions](#), [Corporate Management Team](#) and [Departmental Management Teams](#).
82. Partnership performance information is becoming mainstreamed in the council performance management framework. The Local Public Service Agreement ([LPSA2](#)) is now reported to both CMT and the Executive and the partnership EDB.

Performance management with partners is also very effective at service and directorate level. Reports and PM meetings with [Yorwaste](#), and [housing repairs](#) are just two examples of this.

83. Unitary and All England [quartile data](#) is used at a corporate level for reporting (especially year-end) to help provide more comparative context for our performance improvement results. Resources also [produce CIPFA benchmarking data](#) for managers and this is used in the [annual VFM statement](#). We also participate in the [National People Skills](#) scoreboard exercise each year, which involves an assessment of our staff training and development services. The results are shared with other councils and a report showing comparative costs and activity is produced for all members.
84. We communicate performance very effectively externally and internally including leaflets to all households, special articles in Your City and the staff publications. All performance reports and supporting data are made public through EMAP and Executive committee papers and we have a good, open culture of debate.

Is knowledge about performance used to drive continuous improvement?

85. Service managers develop [local indicators](#) to reflect the local perspective on performance in the city. These are developed from our extensive customer feedback and involvement processes. [Service standards](#) are in place for most core services (currently under review), which provide more transparency on the level of service they can expect from us. Again, these standards were developed around customer requirements, rather than service capabilities.
86. We have a robust [target setting procedure](#) in place at service manager level. This is complimented by a corporate [three-stage data quality policy](#) which requires [target proforma templates](#) to ensure all targets are set within realistic improvement and capability limits. Further guidance has recently been produced to allow CMT and Executive members to review improvement targets which have corporate strategic implications. Any proposals to stretch performance levels beyond those predicted by services will be reviewed in the context of re-direction of resources.
87. All areas of staff welfare and performance are regularly reviewed at all levels of the organisation. We also have a proven [grievance and complaints procedure](#) in place and a good culture of dealing with complaints. Evidence shows that this is taken seriously, with very few [ombudsmen complaints](#) compared to other councils. We monitor customer first statistics on dealing with complaints showing that we deal with most stage 1-3 complaints in a timely and effective manner.
88. We accept that we could improve the way we learn from our successes and failures. Recent work has involved a number of lessons learned workshops in service areas and a work shadowing pilot. The purpose of the pilot is to offer staff from across the council a structured approach to sharing best practice, gaining new perspectives and sharing learning with each other. It aims to help challenge departmental 'silo thinking' and to offer opportunities to demonstrate how staff are using the new Leadership & Management Standards in their work. Once the pilot is evaluated it is intended to roll-out this model to all staff.

e. Achievement

89. We have achieved much as a council since our last CPA by establishing the golden thread from community need via the community strategy, through to our priorities in our corporate strategy and onto our actions and achievements. Our ambitions and priorities are clear and our achievements below show that overall there has been widespread improvement. Our education provision and attainment continues to be a four star service and our traditional areas of strength – transport, housing, social care – continue to thrive as shown below.
90. Where we are able to compare our performance with other unitary councils the picture is very encouraging. We use consultation and research to understand our customers' needs and through the corporate strategy we balance competing priorities and agree what's important. Resources are allocated to strategies and priorities and we deliver services with our partners and through our highly successful and innovative services – monitoring performance against delivery.

Sustainable Communities and Transport

Sustainable Economy

91. We have well developed strategic objectives for the economic development of the city as set out in the [community strategy](#). In addition, partnership working is well embedded through the [Economic Development Partnership Board](#), [Science City York](#), [York Tourism Partnership](#), [City Centre Partnership](#), [york-england.com](#) as well as other partnerships focussed on learning and skills. The council plays a pivotal role in leading, developing and facilitating these partnerships along with our involvement in sub-regional and city regional working to support economic development.

**Case study 7: Science City York – From Lord Sainsbury of Turville
Review of Government's
Science and Innovation Policies :- A Race to the Top, October 2007**

The development of Science Cities is based on the notion that, in the global economy, the UK's future prosperity depends, first, on the capacity to expand knowledge through science (in the widest sense) and translate it into innovative products and better services and, second, on achieving this by building critical mass in clusters based around world-class universities.

Science City York (SCY) is a partnership between the City of York Council, the University of York, Yorkshire Forward - the RDA for Yorkshire and the Humber/and business. SCY is strengthening business - university links to develop and increase the competitiveness of the knowledge-based cluster in and around York. The aim is to develop the economy and employment opportunities and to ensure that new jobs are available as opportunities in York's traditional industries decline.

SCY works through three main clusters: bioscience and health, IT and digital, and the creative industries. SCY has a number of mechanisms in place to promote an environment in which technology, skills and business can thrive:

• cluster managers and business promoters help entrepreneurs to develop their business ideas and provide mentoring and business advice;

• direct access is available to two early-stage funds for technology-based businesses;

• businesses are put in contact with a wide range of schemes in the universities and other sources in the region;

• appropriate incubation and grow-on space is provided at science parks for knowledge-based businesses; and

• a programme of public understanding and support is used to promote the science-led economy.

Key employers and clusters are brought together with the universities, further education and schools to identify and address the skills needed to ensure successful growth.

Since the start of Science City York, over 60 new companies and 2,600 new jobs have been created in the technology-based cluster in York, and as many people are now employed in this sector as in tourism. Following support for the Science City concept from government, Science City York has recently been re-formed as a company limited by guarantee owned by the city and the university, and has appointed a high-level Chief Executive to lead it into a new and more entrepreneurial phase with even closer involvement of the private as well as the public sector.

92. [Future Prospects](#), two times winners of the Matrix Award for Information, Advice and Guidance reward for learning and work, excel in specifically identifying groups and areas within the city at risk of disadvantage. Future Prospects Specific programmes show marked increases in getting those at risk into training and employment, and are aimed at the most deprived Super Output Areas in the Authority. An increasing number of help sessions are created specifically targeting groups such as the disabled, single mothers, carers, (funded through the carers grant to meet national carer strategy objectives), and people from ethnic minorities etc.

93. Over the past four years, through funding from its supporting partners, Yorkshire Forward, NYCC, and the council, york-england.com has successfully assisted in the relocation of 61 companies, directly creating over 580 jobs. This results in more than 2,000 when additional jobs in the supply chain are included.

Housing Market

94. The [2006-9 Housing Strategy](#) was developed in partnership with key stakeholders. It clearly established the links to the [Regional Housing Strategy](#) objectives, creating better places and delivering better homes, York's City Vision as well as the council's corporate strategy. A [Housing Needs Survey](#) was completed in 2002 and updated in 2006 via a [Housing Market Assessment \(HMA\)](#). A new HMA, commissioned via the LDF has been completed and has been adopted for Development Control purposes by the Planning Committee. In response to national planning guidance as well as local pressures the focus of planning policy has resulted in a significant shift to brownfield development. The city led the way regionally in developing its affordable housing policy, and in response to local needs, a target of 50% affordable housing on all developments (subject to thresholds) was introduced in 2005. Following the recent publication of PPS3 and the completion of the new HMA, thresholds will be reviewed so that our policies continue to reflect local need.

95. We work closely with our partners to ensure new development proposals consider any wider impact. We are on target to meet the decent homes standard by 2010 for our own stock and we are working towards the regional target of 70% of vulnerable households in the private sector living in decent homes by 2010. During 2006/7 over 1200 minor adaptations were carried out enabling vulnerable people to remain in their homes, and 342 private sector renewal grants were awarded to help people bring their homes up to the decency standard. A new private sector stock condition survey has been commissioned to replace the existing one. A key improvement with the data from the new survey will enable us to work with our partners to map private sector non-decency, and then proactively target available resources towards areas of low thermal comfort, the biggest element of private sector non-decency in York. In the last three years the council has also converted older people's accommodation to provide more specialist supported accommodation in two extra care schemes.

Environment

96. The council has agreed to implement an [Environmental Management System](#) and a new post has been created and filled to take this forward. This system will reduce the impact of council activities on the environment and help us deliver the new sustainability corporate priority.
97. We have completed the national benchmarking questionnaire the Index of Environmental Engagement every year and this year we received a certificate as a 'significant improver'. An [Energy and Water Working Group](#) has been set up and is now demonstrating reduced energy use and has established baseline consumption figures for water. The council is an active participant in the European DISPLAY campaign and a [sustainable procurement strategy](#) is in preparation. We are now members and have started [the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme](#), which will form the focus for coming activities to reduce the carbon footprint of the council and key into the signing for the Nottingham Declaration.
98. We are taking an active role in the development and application of [ecological footprinting](#) and is the only authority in the region to have purchased the policy profiling tool associated with it, [REAP](#). We are developing measures to reduce the carbon footprint of our current buildings and activities by 25% in the next six years. Measures to reduce energy and water consumption and expand recycling facilities in our own buildings are underway. The construction of a new single headquarters to replace a number of old buildings with high energy consumption will give a large contribution towards the council's carbon target. A specific sustainability objective is being built into the refresh of the IT Strategy to ensure that we undertake carbon assessments as part of the procurement of IT equipment but also use IT to reduce our carbon footprint through reduced paper (DMS), reduced travel (flexible working) and reduced energy consumption (server virtualisation, thin client devices and centralised printing). To pull these and other activities together into a coherent and coordinated approach a [sustainability strategy and action plan](#) the sustainability strategy and action plan was approved by the Executive in September 2007.

Case Study 8: The EcoDepot – Kristina Peat, Sustainability Officer

York EcoDepot is the council's newest development – a 15kW 15m tall wind turbine will be arriving in the

and was occupied by the Neighbourhood Services Directorate in December 2006. As you would expect from the part of the council that manages the cities recycling and waste, repairs its road, sweeps its streets and mends what's broken it's a very hardworking and functional site and not somewhere you'd expect to find a building made from straw!

The old council depot at Foss Islands was outdated, due to service changes and consumed a lot of water and energy. In 2003 we spent on this site alone £25,000 on water, £24,000 on electricity and £14,000 on gas. It was these figures that formed the basis of a business case for doing something very different with the new depot. The strong desire in the council to save money on utility bills, reduce its green house gas emissions, protect the council against increasing utility costs in the future, demonstrate our commitment to sustainable design and construction and provide a regional exemplar project combined with drive and enthusiasm from officers and elected members has resulted in the largest timber frame straw bale building in Europe.

The whole depot boasts a number of sustainability features including underground storage for rain that falls on the workshops which is then used to wash refuse and other council vehicles, dramatically reducing the water bills. Also the large area of concrete pad used recycled aggregates (some of it from York roads),

new year (subject to funding) and the main office and amenity block holds York's largest set of solar panels making electricity for use in those buildings and any surplus sold to the Grid.

Undoubtedly the centrepiece of the EcoDepot is the main office building that is made with a timber frame and walls of straw. Both the timber and the straw are materials that require little fossil based energy to make so have low embodied green house gas emissions and the straw also gives insulation levels three time better than that demanded by building regulations (2006). These high levels of insulation coupled with; highly efficient under floor heating; a natural ventilation system instead of air conditioning all managed by a building management system mean the building offers 76% efficiency savings compared to a building of the same size with traditional materials and air con. The solar panels on the roof provide approximately 40% of the electricity used in the building and the interpretation room has given information and educational opportunities to 1000 visitors from age 6 upwards from local, regional, national and European areas.

The EcoDepot is a regional exemplar of sustainable design and construction for Yorkshire Forward who provided support and funding and is a development we are very proud of that demonstrates the council's commitment to tackling climate change.

99. York has undertaken significant and numerous recycling initiatives which have enabled the performance to substantially exceed targets. It has also identified the reduction of biodegradable waste as one of its 13 key improvement areas. The Waste Section was inspected by the Audit Commission during the Spring 2007. The outcome of the inspection was the auditor considered that our waste service had been "transformed" having significantly improved recycling rates whilst making excellent progress in areas such as performance management, customer satisfaction and missed bin collections. The council's recycling performance has increased from 24% in 2005/06 to 39.9% in 2006/07 following significant investment in one of our priority areas.
100. We have been working in partnership on waste management across North Yorkshire to deliver a [joint waste strategy](#). This involves initiatives in all parts of the waste hierarchy, and particularly in relation to waste treatment where a joint bid for PFI funding has been submitted to DEFRA for waste treatment facilities.
101. Through the Development Control Local Plan we put particular emphasis on the quality of new development and the need to embed sustainability principles. We prepare comprehensive development briefs for major sites (such as Nestle South, and Derwenthorpe) which set out our requirements in more detail linked to specific visions for each site. These are subject to comprehensive consultation and we then work collaboratively with site owners or developers to masterplan these sites using a cross-council 'development team' approach. This has proved successful in achieving

high quality developments. At Germany Beck and Derwenthorpe where all 1200 homes will be built to Eco-home Excellent or Very Good rating and to 'Lifetime home standards'. There will be significant elements of affordable housing (35% and 40% respectively), community facilities and comprehensive frameworks of open space. The independent Planning Inspector for the Derwenthorpe and Germany Beck schemes concluded that "It is rare in my all too extensive experience to come across schemes of such quality and that exhibit in their different ways pioneering approaches to large scale residential development."

102. Work on our LDF is well underway with significant additional resources committed to ensure we have a comprehensive planning framework in place by 2010. We have commissioned a significant suite of 'evidence base' studies including a housing market (and needs) assessment, a housing land availability assessment, and city-wide retail, employment, open space and flooding studies. The latter was carried out in close collaboration with the Environment Agency to build up the most comprehensive ever picture of flooding issues facing the city and recommending a policy approach for addressing this.
103. We are using our Housing Market Assessment on detailed negotiations around mix and type of housing needed in York with excellent results in terms of achieving higher levels of affordable housing and a greater mix on family homes. Work on an Area Action Plan for York Northwest is underway working in partnership with Yorkshire Forward to achieve an "exemplar sustainable community" with a new central business district and wide range and type of high quality housing. Work on an Area Action Plan for the historic City Centre has also now begun and joint work with the Local Strategic Partnership to review the Community Strategy and progress the LDF in tandem is in progress. This includes joint visioning work and joint work with the Stockholm Environment Institute to embed the use of eco-footprinting.
104. To ensure we embed sustainable development principles into development from the outset we have prepared an Interim Planning Statement on Sustainable Design and Construction to give detailed guidance to developers on how Policy GP4a on Sustainability should be implemented. This has been subject to widespread public and stakeholder consultation and will be taken to Planning Committee in November seeking approval to use for development control purposes.
105. The council has a clear plan for investing in its parks and open spaces, working in partnership with a wide range of friends groups and other community bodies. The result is that eight sites now have formal management and maintenance plans of which three have attained [Green Flag](#) status. More are in the pipeline. Public satisfaction with parks and open spaces is rising, and at 78%, is top quartile, with parks being used by 88% of residents. The number of playground conforming to national standards is rising and currently stands at 49% whilst allotments have been transformed to the extent that many sites now have a waiting list. We have established four Statutory Nature Reserves.

Transport

106. The provision of an effective transport system is particularly important for York. Rising vehicle numbers combined with the historic road layout could result in longer journey times and reduced air quality in the city centre, and in the late 1980s we recognised that traffic congestion would become a critical issue for the city if it was left unchecked. The council was one of the first to introduce a policy that put pedestrians, cyclists and public transport at the top of the hierarchy of users and

began one of the first Park and Ride (P&R) services in the country. P&R still forms one of the most important components of our strategy to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

107. We have submitted Local Transport Plans for 2001-6 (LTP1) and 2006-2011 (LTP2). LTP1 was successful in limiting peak period traffic levels to 1999 levels and increasing bus patronage by 49%. LTP2 set some challenging targets particularly in relation to traffic levels (less than 7% growth) and bus journeys (17.5m passengers/year) with a programme to deliver integrated schemes. This plan was assessed by the DfT to be "excellent" because of its overall approach to delivering improved transport solutions. However there is significant pressure on the delivery of the proposed strategies as annual funding of the LTP is projected to fall by approximately 50% over the plan period as a result of the formula based allocation regime introduced by DfT.
- 108.** We have shown our commitment to transport with the setting of a corporate priority to "Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport" for which there is a delivery DIP, giving greater focus to some of our transport services. The principle behind the approach to meeting the transport demands for the future are in their adoption of the hierarchy of users, encouragement to a modal shift to public transport, cycling and walking through better facilities and the provision of a credible alternative to the car. The P&R service has been a huge success with patronage increasing steadily. The contract for providing the service has recently been tendered and a new improved service is expected to start in Spring 2008. This is one of the few P&R operations in the country that operates without a subsidy.
109. The city has a long history of cycling and provides a significant network of on and off road cycle routes as well as cycle parking in the city centre and at other key locations. We are committed to developing cycling in the city and to extending the network to make it more attractive for users. We have an extensive cycle training programme particularly in primary schools where young children can be taught good road safety habits and also learn the longer term benefits of cycling.
110. The city centre has an extensive area of footstreets, where limited or no vehicular access is allowed during most of the day, which will be reviewed shortly to see what possibilities there are for extending. Other softer measures are used to encourage different modes of travel to the car. We are developing methods to improve bus information, which includes not just better timetabling at the stands but access via telephone, internet and SMS messaging and we operate public transport information columns around the city that have real time information on the stands.
111. In the near future we have planned to complete our strategic plan for transport needs together with a further review of the commercial bus services. Integrated ticketing is becoming a more realistic proposition with the improvements in technology and we will be investigating an extension of the West Yorkshire Metrocard into the York area.
112. Finally we are preparing a major scheme bid "Access York" to be submitted to the Regional Transport Board and DfT. The bid will be for major transport improvements to the city including traffic congestion relief, new bus facilities with additional park and ride sites linking to the rural hinterland and supporting the major developments planned for the city including York Northwest.

Safer and Stronger Communities

Reduce and Prevent Crime and Fear of Crime

113. Reduction of crime and the fear of crime have been identified as key priorities in the council's corporate strategy and the North Yorkshire Police Control Strategy. We work closely with our CDRP partners to address crime and fear of crime. There are a number of groups and strategies that work toward this aim including, [Community Safety Plan 2005-8](#), [Nightsafe Task Group](#), [Domestic Violence Steering Group](#) (both contributing to reduction in violent crime), [Anti-social behaviour steering group](#), [Burglary Task Group](#), [Cycle Theft Task Group](#), [Begging and Rough Sleepers](#), [Road Safety](#) and [Vehicle Crime Task Group](#).
114. The CDRP (in York this is the Safer York Partnership (SYP)) has recently reviewed its structure and delivery mechanism and the recommendations have been implemented. The SYP has undertaken a gap analysis and a new business plan is currently under review. In terms of PSA targets, the council has contributed to the SYP already achieving its overall crime reduction target, one of only two CDRPs in the Yorkshire and Humber Region to achieve this.
115. A large range of consultative methods have used to assess need and perception including residents associations, neighbourhood watch and task groups and Travellers Liaison meetings. There has also been consultation on alley gating. These consultations help us make sure resources are placed in the areas of greatest need.. York is a High Crime Quartile CDRP and as such, great emphasis is placed regionally on its contribution toward the Governments PSA 1 crime reduction target.
116. In addition to SSCF funding, further funds have been made available from internal council budgets to support further the delivery of initiatives aligned to the Safer and Stronger Communities block and in recognition of Safe City as a top priority for the council. These include the pooling of Ward Committee and Target Hardening funds to support the wider implementation of an alleygating programme in the highest crime area of the city and joint funding to contribute to multi-agency days of action aimed at increasing reassurance and community safety. SYP chairs a number of multi-agency task groups aligned to the key themes under Safer and Stronger Communities within the LAA. These groups are comprised of representatives from the statutory responsible authorities, including the council.

Reduce anti-social behaviour (ASB)

117. Reducing ASB is a priority for the council and as a result, a key area of focus. Objectives for SYP include improving resident's perception of levels of ASB and impact on quality of life, and achieving the action plan for the Anti-social Behaviour Steering Group.
118. SYP has identified three levels of intervention to address anti-social behaviour and the council contributes significantly at all levels either through the routine activities of our officers or through participation and engagement in multi-agency problem solving at Levels 2 and 3. We successfully communicate regarding antisocial behaviour issues through Your Ward and have widely publicised the system to report incidents. A three month Feeling & Being Safe in York proactive media campaign has focused on positive press stories aimed at providing the community with information on activities being undertaken to reduce fear of crime. Criminal damage is currently 6% lower than at the same time last year. Vehicle interference is 45% lower than at same time last year

119. The council has formed and chairs the Anti-Social Steering Group, and has developed a 'Hate Incident' strategy, involving key partners. A great deal of work has been undertaken by council tenancy enforcement and Legal Services team towards the development of the multi-agency anti-social behaviour referral panel and to taking out anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) on those individuals who are seen to cause significant disruption within communities. The Tenancy Enforcement Team also supports witnesses of ASB. We currently have 25 ASBOs in York. The purpose of the panel is not just to determine appropriate enforcement action but also to monitor and track the status of cases. In addition, the panel looks at the relevant support required for each case such as where dispersal orders are made, it is essential that diversionary activities are put in place to prevent displacement.
120. Finally we manage [Network 2](#) working with those young people already engaged in or at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour. This provides them with opportunities to change their behaviour and participate in organised activities.

Reducing drug and alcohol abuse

121. Action is delivered through various avenues including the [Adult Drug Treatment Plan 2007-8 \(DAAT\)](#), the [Young Peoples Substance Misuse Plan](#) and [service plans \(CYC Youth Services\)](#) and the [York and North Yorkshire Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy](#) (final draft for SYP Board approval). [SYP](#) is a merged CDRP/DAAT. Further work is being undertaken to ensure better integration of the DAAT and CDRP agenda, including a [DAAT needs assessment](#).
122. A multi-agency task group (Nightsafe) has been in existence since 2003 with a remit to reduce alcohol related violence linked to the night time economy. In 2006/07 this group reduced alcohol related violence in the city centre by 28% through the development of a number of multi-agency initiatives. The group has identified a cumulative impact zone which effectively restricts the number of new applications for licensed premises based on the impact these could have to crime and disorder. This has been tested through appeals but has enabled the council to maintain a strong stance on ensuring that a balance is maintained between economic development and reducing levels of alcohol related crime and disorder in the city.
123. Headlines improvements that have been achieved through the above plans include 16 alcohol exclusion zones and a 28% reduction in violent crime in the city centre 2006/07, while education and prevention of drug and alcohol abuse are being addressed through schemes such as the Healthy Schools Scheme, and the One Stop Shop for young people.

Reducing accidents and making people feel safer

124. The council uses well established partnerships with health, police, highways and fire authorities, to reduce accidental death and injury. Relevant work includes the [road safety task group](#), [police attendance at ward committees](#), [traffic calming](#), [smoke alarm work](#) and [CCTV](#). These are reducing accidents - in the first six months of 2006 76 people were killed or seriously injured in 53 accidents. In the same period in 2007 the figures were 52 and 48 respectively.
125. Policies and procedures are led by health and safety considerations. We work with our partners to identify those individuals most at risk from accidents, can identify hot spot locations, and we act accordingly to a reduce the risk of death and injury.

126. As a result of consultation with residents road safety is identified in the LAA and the Community Safety Plan as a major issue. A multi-agency Road Safety Task group is chaired by the Fire & Rescue service with the police and council road safety teams as key members, and Safer Communities Policing Teams attend ward committees to both identify residents' concerns and feedback on actions taken by themselves or through SYP to address their priorities

Response to emergency situations

127. Our emergency arrangements are fit for purpose and would allow the council to respond to emergencies, support emergency service partners and communicate effectively with the public about an emergency at any time, while continuing to deliver critical public services. Emergency Plans are in place to deal with most appropriate risks and an emergency handbook allows for effective communication procedures – for instance the council and its partners successfully put its plans into action when dealing with the recent local emergencies including flooding and foot and mouth. Our emergency planners maintain a 24/7 duty officer rota to ensure emergency service partners are able to obtain the necessary support at all times, while a flood line operates in time of flood emergency, a particular issue for York. A Flood Recovery Group is responsible recovering property after a flooding incident and getting people back in their homes. Co-opted onto the group are representatives of the benefits agency, CVS, the NY trauma counseling service (MERT) and social services. These agencies help secure appropriate support for the vulnerable.
128. The council has an up-to-date [local risk assessment](#), developed through North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (NYLRF), which informs business continuity plans based on risk assessments for major incidents including flooding and fuel shortages. These arrangements are tested and activity, including promotion and training, is aimed at reducing and preventing relevant risks. Flood Room exercises involving council directorates and blue lamp services have been run to confirm and validate the existing Flood Plan. In 2006 the Emergency Planning Unit ran a corporate level exercise to test the councils response to such an outbreak of pandemic flu and two workshops to examine the Fuel Plan and Local Risk.
129. Communication with the public has been addressed through the NYLRF Warning and Informing sub-group, with the council chairing, and the NYLRF media group, with active council participation. The [community risk register](#) produced by this group has been distributed to Parish Councils and libraries throughout the authority area, and the Parish Plans identify local risks relevant to their particular parish.

Building stronger communities

130. The council has a [Neighbourhood Management Unit](#) (NMU) which works with the community, elected members and parish councillors to help administer local decision making forums (Ward Committees) and deliver local priorities through neighbourhood action plans. The NMU also assists representatives on [local management committees for community centres](#) and it supports tenants groups. The main focus is around trying to build community capacity and offer training support.
131. The council listens, supports and responds to the local community and the voluntary and community sectors and involves them extensively in service delivery. The council and its partners have also signed a local compact in place for consultation and engagement of communities and the voluntary sector.

132. A York anti-poverty strategy has been approved by the LSP and the SYP is continually monitoring information relating to disadvantage and mapping this against levels of crime and disorder. This work enables all partners to be able to place resources into the areas of greatest need.

Healthier Communities

133. Action to address health improvement and reduce health inequalities has been identified through the Healthy City Board, a sub committee of the Without Walls Board. York is a relatively healthy place to live but the city is not immune from the trends that are affecting the rest of the country, and the [Annual Public Health Report 2006](#) identifies concerns about teenage pregnancy, alcohol misuse, obesity, levels of physical activity and smoking, including smoking in pregnancy. In general mortality rates are good, with low rates of early death from coronary heart disease and stroke and from cancer and low death rates due to smoking. However, in many aspects inequalities in health outcome can be seen to relate to relative levels of deprivation.
134. Improving the health and lifestyles of people who live in York is one of the 13 priority areas for improvement in the corporate strategy with an identified champion). The council and PCT engaged with the Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Health Authority to promote a whole systems approach to reducing health inequalities. York is one of the non-spearhead areas that are focussing on reducing the intra-area gap in health inequalities. This whole systems approach promoted by the Strategic Health Authority is delivered at three different levels to support change.

Level of Intervention	I. <u>Brief Description</u>	Examples of Initiatives in York
Population Health	II. Health protection measures, societal changes, influencing behaviour, policy and legislation etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Library learning centres ➤ All schools have joined the National Healthy School programme – 50% achieved the standard, on course for all to achieve by 2010. ➤ Enforcing laws on under-age tobacco or alcohol sales. Successful smoke-free legislation roll-out, support and enforcement. ➤ Fuel poverty and benefit check services/campaigns ➤ Air Quality Action Plan Integrated into the Local Transport Plan promotes walking and cycling and regulates industrial emissions
Personal Health	III. Treatments, Therapies and technologies effective at a personal level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Chair based exercise in care homes and smoking cessation, action on nutrition campaign. ➤ Pinetrees wheel chair dance sessions, disability community sports coach scheme ➤ Exceeded the national targets for children and young people accessing GPs and health workers as part of strategy to reduce teenage pregnancies. ➤ Social care support to help people to maintain or develop their optimum level of independence and control over their lives
Community Health	IV. The choice of behaviours and treatments that fit with the cultural and belief system of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Active engagement in the in-depth multi-agency Tang Hall Needs Assessment followed by Council Asset Management Plan for the area. ➤ Allotment schemes and distribution of organic grown food

	community – improving conditions in the community through their health and well being'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ City 2 school sports partnerships, extended school club links within an overall physical activity plan. ➤ Meeting Decent Homes standard by 2010. Provision of warm home schemes and care and repair schemes.
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Older People

135. There is an agreed overarching strategic framework for developing support to older people across York and North Yorkshire. This framework is underpinned by more specific strategies but it recognises that both councils are responsible for developing the strategic needs assessment with the PCT. Within York there is a regular [Older People's Partnership Board](#) chaired and supported by the council involving delegates from the [Older People's Assembly](#), the Older People's Champion and officers from the NHS and the council. This was originally established to oversee implementation of the Older People's NSF (?). To achieve this the Board, following extensive consultation over a twelve month period, developed the '[Never Too Old](#)' Strategy and subsequently has evolved to take on the additional role of monitoring [LAA objectives](#) through formal representation on the Healthy City Board.
136. Across the council there are a number of plans that contribute to the well-being of older people including [Adult Services \(Older people, Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment plan\)](#), the [Learning Disability Services](#) the [Older People's Housing Strategy](#), [Physical Activity Plan](#) and the [Stock condition and Housing Needs surveys](#) to identify needs and priorities. The most comprehensive attempt at long-term planning based on strategic needs assessment is the current development of a [10-15 year commissioning plan](#) for social care services for older people. This has been developed in conjunction with the Institute for Public Care and local stakeholder representation. It will form the basis of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment to be developed with the PCT.

Case study 9: Older People's Long Term Commissioning Strategy – Kathy Clark, social care information analyst

We knew from national projections on population that there would be a growing number of older people over the next 10-15 years. We wanted to be able to meet the challenges of an ageing population and describe how care and support services need to develop to meet the changing needs and aspirations of people. We had worked with local partners in 2004 to consult with older people and agree what their aspirations and priorities were. Very clear messages emerged from this work forming an excellent starting point for our Commissioning Strategy.

We were being encouraged through the White Paper "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" to deliver better outcomes for our customers and had the opportunity to be supported in our work by the Institute of Public Care, because the Department of Health was keen to explore examples of how Local Authorities could commission services in a more strategic way. The work was published by the Care Services

an analysis of where the gaps will be and what will be the priorities for change to meet the challenges that the future will bring. We worked with health colleagues, provider partners and representatives from the Older People's Assembly and their input has been invaluable to challenge and focus our analysis. We returned to all of these partners to consider our conclusions with them, before publishing our strategy.

We now have a document which will help us plan how we will use our investment decisions in the next 3-5 years to begin to shape and change the market to meet the priorities we have identified. Using this data we are now undertaking a city-wide consultation with staff, with service providers and with older people about some of the options that we have on how best to meet the future challenges.

The strategy has already helped us to agree joint priorities for action with the Primary Care Trust,

Improvement Partnership in 2007 as part of an exemplar "Key Activities in Commissioning Social Care".

The Commissioning Strategy is an analysis of what is known about current needs and what changes are likely over the next 15 years; what is known about current services and the extent to which they can meet needs now and into the future;

including reshaping older people's mental health services to improve the support available within the community, and developing services that will promote health and well being. It has also led to a recognition of older people's needs within the development of the Local Development Framework, and targeting of leisure and fitness activity at older people within the council's leisure programmes.

137. The council has established an internal partnership approach to benefits and finance issues. There is a particular focus on older people who use services and are more likely to have low incomes, such as older women and black and minority ethnic elders. The council can demonstrate that older people's incomes have risen substantially as a result.
138. Most council consultation activity with the community engages with older people, especially through talkabout and residents associations. We use [talkabout](#) to assess Adult Education in terms of the nature of the courses provided, the facilities used and the learning techniques used. We undertake capacity audits for identifying training for members of resident and tenant associations of which a large number are older residents. In leisure services partner networks are used to advertise activities.
139. Examples of how consultation has been used to influence the development of policy and services includes workshops to shape the [easy@york](#) project, research into the over 50 age group preferred leisure services, and specific consultation on social care provision, including long term commissioning plans. The challenge is to ensure that all sections of the older community of York can be engaged and that the needs of all communities are reflected in the plans.
140. The council has challenging targets ([KPI and LAA objectives](#)) in supporting older people to live independently. We meet these through increases in extra care, home care and [direct payments](#) that have resulted in [reduced admissions to registered care](#), supporting [voluntary organisations](#) to provide a range of local services, making good use of '[Supporting People](#)' and practical support. This last comes from sources such as the [York Home Improvement Agency](#) (HIA), the [Private Sector Renewal Policy](#) assisting vulnerable people to remain in their own homes through Disabled Facilities & Repair Grants and a [free garden grooming service](#) for older tenants.
141. We are also providing assistive technology through a fully integrated community equipment store and we commission and deliver, with partners, a co-ordinated and comprehensive range of services. These include home care 24/7, registered care homes, intermediate care, advice and support services for the voluntary sector and warden services.
142. The current emphasis on older people's services is on the modernisation of approaches to care management and service delivery with specific emphasis on inclusion, developing choice, using resources more efficiently, developing preventative and diversionary services in the community and utilising partnerships within the council and with key statutory and voluntary partners. The development of the long term commissioning plan for social care and its associated investment

plan will have major challenges for delivering support across the council to the growing older population in York.

Children & Young People

143. Children and Young peoples services: this is a significant area of strength within the authority as acknowledged externally by the national awards of Beacon status to the authority in 2006 (Early Intervention Children at Risk) and 2007 (School Improvement). The services consistently rank in the top quartile of performance and the authority has been a key pathfinder/pilot area for key national initiatives. Further detail of this area of performance will be covered in more detail as part of the concurrent Joint Area Review process.