Annex 4

Performance Framework - National Indicator 14
– minimising the proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer

1. The 2006 white paper *Strong and Prosperous Communities* set out the blueprint for the new Performance Framework which aims to reduce the performance burden on local government and shift the emphasis away from detailed process type performance indicators towards more customer outcome based measurement.

2. In April 2008 a new single set of national indicators was introduced which replaced the existing statutory indicators e.g. best value and removed the requirement for local authorities to produce BVPPs (best value performance plans). Although not a replacement for performance plans, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) with its locally agreed targets (as agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership LSP) from the list of national indicators will become a main focal point for data quality audits and external assessment.

3. NI 14 is one of the 198 indicators against which we will be assessed within the new performance management framework agreed between Communities and Local Government and the Local Government Association. It also relates to the requirement in the central government Service Transformation Agreement to minimise the proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer.

4. Following publication of the Guidance for this indicator in July 2008, there is a requirement to have recording and reporting mechanisms in place by October 2008 with the first report due April 2009. The definition for this indicator includes a list of key service areas, which we will be required to report on. However the Audit Commission, Cabinet Office, and IDeA through their work with the pilot local authorities, understand that we may not be able to record and report for all service areas from October 2008 but we will be required to evidence how we have chosen service areas to record/report in and also that we have a plan to include all areas within the CSR07 period.

5. NI 14 aims to reduce avoidable contact between the community and the council - examples of which include calls from citizens to chase progress on service requests or to report a missed service etc. It means we will need to: -
    a. understand how our customers currently contact us across the different channels;
    b. recognise when customers are able to access information and services at the first point of contact;
    c. identify when customers are forced to make several contacts to get what they need.

6. The benefits that can be achieved by implementing NI 14 broadly reflects the Audit Commission's new use of resources assessment for 2008/09, which considers how well organisations, are managing and using their resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people.

Financial Value	• Measuring and understanding the causes of avoidable contact provides an evidence base for improvement initiatives which can unlock a range of relatively straightforward service improvements • By reducing avoidable contact, there is potential to release resources/capacity from both the front line and back office • These benefits may be cashable or we can choose to take the benefits in the form of increased capacity in the workforce
Organisational value	• Measuring avoidable contact provides a major learning opportunity for us in providing insight • Training and developing staff to record/report NI 14 can result in staff being more engaged and empowered • Can help demonstrate to other parts of the council the contribution made by the York Customer Centre and encourage a whole council approach to improvement
Customer Value	• Can help identify improvements in processes and systems that will have the greatest impact on the way in which customers experience services • Will save customers time and effort in contacting the council • Improve the customers experience of end to end service delivery and recorded customer satisfaction • Improvements in communications, access channels and service design that benefits those customers who find it most difficult to deal with complex bureaucracies
Political Value	• Enhance the reputation and trustworthiness of the council with the local community • Improve communications to ensure we better reach people who are eligible for services and benefits

7. Timeline for implementation of NI 14 recording and reporting

When	What
July 2008	• Easy Programme Board approval for implementation/action plan • Update Performance Officer Group
August 2008	• CMT approval for implementation plan, inclusion into corporate dashboard, reporting schedule • Complete EIA and follow up actions arising where required
September 2008	• Raise council wide awareness • Publicise • Training for managers/staff in Year 1 service areas
October 2008	• Councils expected to have mechanisms in place for data collection to begin
November 2008	• review recording and reporting mechanisms and amend where needed
1st April 2009	• complete report for Oct 08 to March 09; • include in Corporate Performance Management annual report • report to Cabinet Office/IDeA/esd toolkit data interchange hub/Audit Commission

8. Timeline for rollout across service areas

	NI 14 definition key service area	Part of Easy Programme
Year 1 (October 2008 to March 2009)	Highways (conditions of roads, street lighting	Yes
	Housing (benefit claims, council tax benefit)	Yes
	Street Scene – waste collection and street cleaning, including recycling, street furniture and fly tipping)	Yes
	Environmental Health Services (pest control)	Yes
Year 2 April 2009 to March 2010	Childrens Services (school admissions, free school meals, youth services)	Advice & Information / Referral only
	Housing (repairs allocations and lettings process for social housing)	Yes
	General council tax enquiries	Yes
	Planning Services	Yes but further work required
	Adult Social Services	Advice & Information / Referral only
	Parking Permits and Parking Control Notices	Yes
Year 3 April 2010 to March 2011	Childrens Services (school admissions, free school meals, youth services)	No
	Trading Standards	No
	Electoral register	No