
Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

16 July 2007

Report of the Director of City Strategy

YORKSHIRE HIGHWAYS & UTILITIES COMMITTEE (YHAUC)

CHARTER FOR WORKS IN THE STREET

Summary

1. This report briefs Members on an initiative by YHAUC to improve service standards for Utilities and Highway works through a voluntary charter entered into by highway authorities and utilities throughout Yorkshire.
2. Members are asked to approve the recommendation that the City of York Council is a co-signatory to the Charter.

Background

3. The City of York Council, as Highway Authority, sit on the regional Highway and Utilities Committee (YHAUC) covering the whole of Yorkshire: YHAUC meets at 3 monthly intervals to implement national and local legislation and seeks initiatives to help minimise disruption on the highway, by managing street and highway works.
4. The City of York Council, as Highway Authority, have a statutory duty under the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991 (NRSWA) to regulate, monitor, inspect and co-ordinate all works liable to impact on the highway. To this end notices are served electronically and the utilities pay a set fee to have 33% of their work inspected every year.
5. The number of electronic notices received in a 12 month period is approximately 6,000.
6. Powers under the NRSWA include giving directions as to the timing of works, restricting works after resurfacing, co-ordinating works, varying the length of time excavations are open, issuing of licences to work on the highway, measuring the performance of utilities and the power to charge for over-running of works.
7. As part of YHAUC's long-term vision of attaining Charter Mark Status the charter for works in the street has been drawn up to drive improvements in the way authorities, utilities and their partners or contractors work on the highway by setting out a series of commitments that can be measured and monitored by YHAUC.

8. Briefly, the Charter is aimed at the utilities and highways working 'in the spirit of mutual trust and co-operation' in the interests of:
 - minimising disruption;
 - providing effective consultation and co-ordination in respect of works on the street;
 - safety, health and the environment;
 - protecting the value of our assets; and
 - achieving high quality and sustainable standards together with continually improving standards and service commitments.
9. City of York Council has been working with utilities to improve overall measurable performance, which has shown gradual results in signing, guarding and reinstatement quality.
10. It is hoped the Charter will act as a catalyst, to drive forward improvements in the service that both utilities and highway authorities provide to road users.

Consultation

11. Every Highway Authority and major utility company working within the boundaries of Yorkshire has been consulted and it is hoped that most, if not all, will be willing to be co-signators to the charter.

Options

12. Option 1

Signing the Charter by the City of York Council.

13. Option 2

Non-signature of the charter.

Analysis

14. Option 1

This would commit the Council to the commitment and service standards included in the Charter. It would strengthen City of York Council's position when dealing with utilities as well as fulfilling several of the Corporate Priorities.

15. Option 2

Non-signature of the charter would leave City of York Council isolated and in a weakened position when dealing with the larger utilities.

Corporate Priorities

16. Corporate Aim 1: (Environment)

The service and standards embed specific aims to help us in corporate priorities.

Specific priorities:

1. Commitment to reduce and/or recycle extracted materials.
2. Minimise disruption by managing works more effectively.
3. Protecting the environment from excessive noise, fumes, dust and monitoring the safety of the works.

17. Corporate Aim 3: (Economy)

Specific priorities:

1. To make York's roads safer for all types of user.
2. Keep traffic delays to a minimum.

18. Corporate Aim 8: (Corporate Health)

Specifically:

1. Manage the Council's and Utilities assets and property on behalf of York residents.
2. Safe, healthy and sustainable environment, providing customers, especially pedestrians and people with disabilities, with a safe journey through our works.

Implications

Financial

19. There are no identifiable financial implications.

Human Resources (HR)

20. There are no human resource implications.

Equalities

21. There are no equality implications.

Legal

22. The Charter is a voluntary code, there are no legal implications.

Crime and Disorder

23. There are no crime and disorder implications.

Information Technology (IT)

24. There are no IT implications.

Property

25. There are no property implications.

Other

26. If this is approved, then Neighbourhood Services will need to be informed so that the Charter can be included in any future partnership working.

Risk Management

27. In compliance with the Council's Risk Management Strategy, the main risks that have been identified in this report are risks arising from hazards to assets and people (physical), those which could lead to financial loss (financial) and non-compliance with legislation (legal and regulatory).
28. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score for all of the above has been assessed at less than 16. This means that at this point the risks need only to be monitored, as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of the report.

Recommendations

29. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member for City Strategy to:
1. Approve the adoption of the YHAUC Charter and nominate the Executive Member for City Strategy to sign on behalf of City of York Council.

Reason: To continue to assist with, and improve, the working relationship with utilities for the benefit of highway users and the highway asset itself.

Contact Details

Author:

Stuart Partington
Streetworks Engineer
Highway Infrastructure
Tel: 01904 551361

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Damon Copperthwaite
Assistant Director
(City Development & Transport)

Report Approved

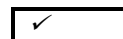


Date 03/07/07

Specialist Implications Officer(s) none

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers.

Annexes

Annex 1 – YHAUC Charter