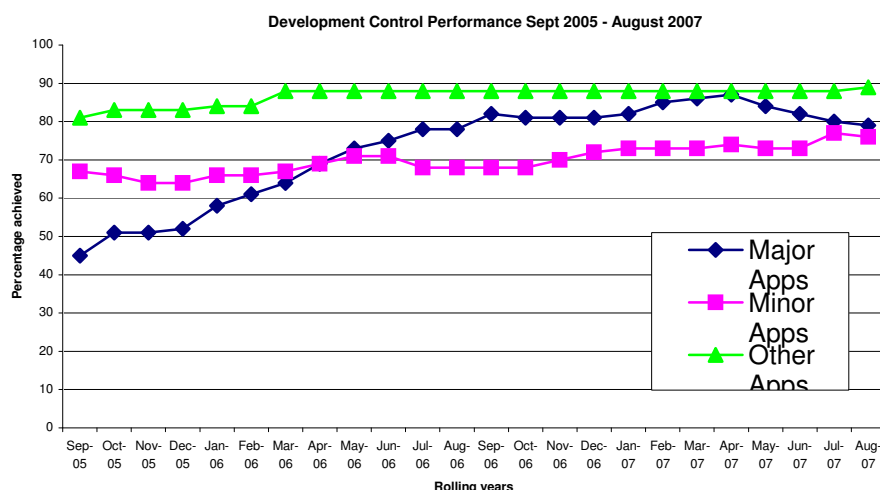


CITY STRATEGY REPORT TO COUNCIL. OCTOBER 2007

I last reported to Council in January 2006 when the City Strategy Directorate had just come in to being. Since then there have been a wide variety of achievements.

Planning performance. This has continued to improve out of all recognition, illustrated by the graph, despite the large number of complicated major applications. We now have processes in place that ensure consistent performance for all categories of applications. We received **Planning Delivery Grant** of £315.6k in 2006/07, and although our performance improved, our grant reduced to £238.8k in 2007/08



Major Developments. Derwenthorpe, Heslington East and Germany Beck were all granted approval after an extensive public enquiry. The Heslington East Forum has held it's inaugural meeting and will allow residents and the University to resolve issues resulting from the expansion. A similar forum is to be set up for Germany Beck with the Derwenthorpe Partnership Committee due to meet in the near future.

The Archbishop of York recently dug the first sod for the new **Manor School** and the new **York College** opened on time at the beginning of the autumn term.

Hungate has received outline planning permission, with reserved matters permission granted for the first building. The biggest archaeological excavation since Coppergate is currently taking place on the site. The Council depot moved to Hazel Court, releasing land for the Morrison development and funding for first part of the, now completed, Layerthorpe Link Rd. Redevelopment of the **Barbican** has at last started.

The **Terry's** planning application is due at Planning Committee in October, the **Nestle South** planning brief has been adopted and the **York Northwest AAP** consultation starts next month. All three sites are subject to extensive public consultation exercises.

Local Development Framework As I predicted in my last report the LDF Working Group, and Officers, have been kept very busy progressing this new process. The following documents are currently being produced. Everything is subject to extensive consultation.

Core Strategy DPD	Currently consulting on Issues and Options 2
Allocations DPD	Issues and Options document due by the end of 07
Statement of Community Involvement	Approved by Government. Adopt at 29 th Nov Council.
York Northwest Area Action Plan	Issues and Options consultation Nov –Jan 2007/08
City Centre Area Action Plan	Issues and Options consultation – March-April 08.

These need to be backed up by the following Evidence Based studies

Strategic Housing Market Assessment	Completed June 2007
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Housing Land Availability Assessment	Phase 1 report due Oct 07. Second phase due Early 08.
Employment Land Review	Stage 1 complete. Stage 2 due Dec 2007
Open Space, Sport and Rec Study	Phase 1 complete. Phase 2 due Dec 2007
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Completed September 2007
Retail Study	Work underway, final report anticipated Oct 2007
Biodiversity Audit	Survey work ongoing. Final study - Spring 2008

Regional links The Proposed Changes to the draft RSS are due to be published at the end of September, with a further round of public consultation before the final plan is adopted in early 2008. Officers attend regional officer groups and will be coordinating a Council response to the Proposed Changes in due course.

The **Leeds City Region** agenda is growing and moving ahead quickly with officer working groups looking at a range of issues. Officers have taken an active involvement in the groups looking at transport, housing and economic development/innovation issues. Officers provide briefings to the Chief Executive and Leader who attend regular Leeds City Region meetings.

Sustainability issues. City Strategy is leading on the production of the Council's **Environmental Sustainability Strategy** which will ensure that we reduce our own emission levels and work effectively with partners to reduce the City's carbon footprint. There are a number of current initiatives that will contribute to this.

I am delighted that a **Car Club** was finally launched in York in Sept 2006. Total number of members, including some Councillors, is 212 and rising. A Car Club does give people a real choice about car ownership and new developments will soon be coming on stream with dedicated car club places. We also have 50 corporate members and an increased car fleet. We have developed **Interim Planning Guidance for Sustainable Design and Construction**, which, when adopted in October, will help ensure that new developments are built using the highest levels of sustainable building techniques and that other things such as water butts and cycle storage are provided.

A **Sustainable Street Lighting Policy** is about to be approved as part of our carbon management programme.

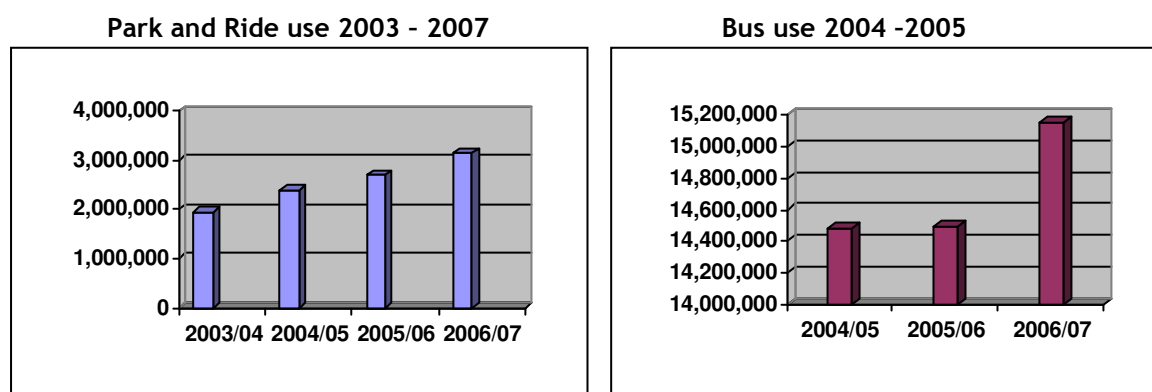
Local Transport Plan Members will be aware that the Local Transport Plan underpins all our transport policies and I am pleased that the Plan for 2006 - 2011 received an "Excellent" rating which was recognised by an extra £460k of funding. This meant that our total LTP allocation for integrated transport for 2007/08 was £4,141k plus £1,419k for Structural Maintenance and £750k for detrunked roads maintenance. Our Delivery Report for the previous 5 years also received an "very good" rating reflecting the fact that we delivered the majority of targets. The current LTP and the Delivery Report are available in the Members library for those who wish to see why we received such good ratings for both.

Highway schemes. Through the Capital programme we have delivered a wide variety of highway schemes which tackle traffic management, congestion and safety issues. These include the installation of new traffic lights at **Crokey Hill** and **Dunnington** giving residents safer and easier access to their communities, speed reduction and local safety scheme on the A19 at **Skelton**, a 20mph zone at **Eastfield Ave, Haxby** and parapet protection works to **Monk** and **Castle Mills Bridges**. Ongoing schemes include the new off road cycle path on **Heslington Lane**, the **A1237/Strensall Rd** roundabout and the **Fulford** pedestrian refuge. Work on the new roundabout at the **A1237Moor Lane/Askham Lane** junction is progressing well and should complete on time. I am disappointed that the Highways Agency has so far been unable to deliver the much needed **Hopgrove** junction improvement scheme.

Highway maintenance. Investment in the highway infrastructure in 2006/07 was £8,320k and for 2007/08 is £8,100 but the favourable price for the retendered Highway Maintenance contract has allowed the same volume of work to be delivered at a lower price - a true efficiency saving. Investment over the last 4 years has resulted in an improvement to the overall condition of the highway. Although the £27.625m backlog to bring all grade 3 highways up to grade 1 was a decrease of just under £2m it becomes clear that we would

never have sufficient money to invest in a major up lift. We therefore took the opportunity to bid for a PFI scheme. Although working to a tight timescale we submitted an expression of interest on time in Sept 06 expecting an answer by Christmas. I thought that they meant Christmas 2006 but we still are still waiting! Roads and footpaths are now in a better condition overall than when we formed our administration in 2003.

Bus issues. Both Bus and Park and Ride patronage continues to increase (see tables). A new Park and Ride contract is about to be let and this will include a commitment to the lowest emission vehicles possible, improvements to waiting facilities and measures to ensure that the service is attractive is the first choice for people wishing to access the City.



Concessionary Fares. We successfully introduced the new bus pass scheme that allows free travel for all pass holders in York and North Yorkshire. Like many other Local Authorities across the country we were given inadequate resources to cover the costs of the scheme and decisions outside this Authorities control mean that we have a forecasted overspend of £640,000 this year. I am delighted with the switch from tokens to passes (see below) which can only mean that more people are choosing to use the bus but the current funding means that the scheme is being heavily subsidised by the Council taxpayer.

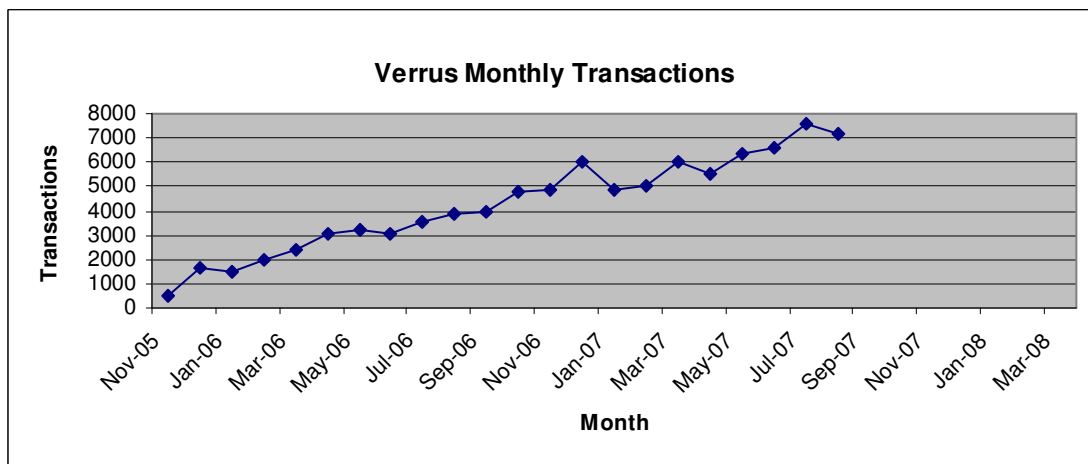
	2006/07	2007/08	Difference
Token claimant	15,875	13,040	-2,835
Bus pass claimant	24,000	27,000	3,000
Parking concession	184	184	0
Total	40,059	40,224	165

The **Yozone card scheme** has been re-launched and, working in partnership with schools, 4766 new cards have been issued. The scheme allows young people to travel by bus anywhere in the City for 50p. Getting children into the “bus habit” early encourages them to be bus users later in life and making bus travel affordable is the first step. The card also gives discounts at leisure facilities and we are grateful for the support of the bus companies in supporting this initiative.

The **Quality Bus Partnership** has been successfully relaunched with a new Chairman, John Carr. The partners are determined to focus on the specific issues where they feel that they can make a real difference to improved bus services in the City.

Road Safety We have received £247k funding towards Road Safety campaigns and a full programme of work has been drawn up. This includes working with children and young people on a variety of education programmes as well as partnership working with the Police and Fire Service. One of the most visible actions we have taken is the introduction of the Vehicle Activated Signs on roads that have been identified as having a speeding problem. This have been well received by residents and surveys have shown that they do reduce vehicle speeds. Officers are now investigating if there are more roads where VAS signs might be appropriate.

Car parking Getting the right balance between providing parking and encouraging people to use public transport can be difficult and car park provision has been used as a demand management tool in York for many years. We have responded to concerns that restrictive parking policies were having negative effects on the City's economy by freezing all day time charges for the second year running. We decreased the cost of parking at Foss Bank to 70p an hour and this has proved very popular with a major increase in use. In 2005/06 there were 98,420 hours of paid parking rising to in 429,430 hours 2006/07. This suggests that usage has quadrupled. Put another way each of the 338 spaces were used for 48 mins each day in 05/06 but in 06/07 this increased to 3 hours and 30 mins each day! Quite a success story. I feel that the structure of day time charges allows people a choice with higher charges at the most central car parks. We have successfully introduced the **Pay by mobile phone** system and this has been expanded to allow users to pay by sending a text message. This latest initiative resulted in 6000 new registrations in July and the suppliers asking if they can use our marketing material to promote the scheme in other areas.



I am delighted to report that last week the Council received the Association of Chief Police Officers **Park Mark Award** for car park security. 10 City of York Council run car parks have been awarded Park Mark Status making York one of the safest cities in the UK to leave your car with virtually zero crime reported on any of these sites. Members will be interested to know that all our Park and Rides already have Park Mark Award and are regarded by ACPO as examples of national good practice.

Waste Management This has come into my portfolio since my last report and Members will be aware of the recent award of £65m of PFI credits to the City and North Yorkshire to manage our waste disposal in the long term up to 2033.

Finally some unsung heroes. Right across the Council we have Officer who carry out their duties efficiently with little fuss and little praise. In City Strategy, **Land Charges** and **Building Control** fall into that category. Both are successful services that deliver an excellent service to their customers. Land Charges have a consistent 100% turnaround of applications and we have recently been able to invest more of the Building Control income in the service to improve it yet further. Although developers can use private sector building control firms many still choose us because of the excellent professional service they receive.

I would like to thank all the Officers in City Strategy for their hard work to help the Department provide the best possible service. The achievements outlined above could not have been possible without everyone's dedication.