

Parish Council Liaison Meeting		AGENDA ITEM No. 4b
		PUBLIC REPORT
Contact Officer(s):	Peter Tebb – Traffic Manager Andy Tatt – Inspection and Works Team Manager	Tel. 01733 453519 Tel. 01733 453458

Highway Authority Responsibilities

1. Introduction

At a previous meeting of PALC, general clarification was requested regarding the responsibilities of Peterborough City Council and the Highways Agency and also advice on who to contact in the event of a problem.

With regard to the specific query raised regarding safety issues on the A47 refer to section 5.

2. General Responsibilities

Peterborough City Council (PCC) and the Highways Agency (HA) are “highway authorities” as per the Highways Act 1980, which also defines the responsibilities of a highway authority:

- “The Minister” as the highway authority for any highway which is a trunk road,
- “The County Council” as the highway authority for all other highways within its boundary.

Thus the HA is the highway authority for the strategic road network, and PCC as the local highway authority for the non-strategic road network.

The Highways Agency was established in 1994 as an executive agency of the Department for Transport and is the highway authority for all trunk roads and motorways. Following Local Government reorganisation, Peterborough City Council is the highway authority for all other highways (i.e. those not part of the trunk road network) within its geographic boundary. Any “private roads” are by definition privately owned and maintained and are thus not the responsibility of the highway authority. Therefore the HA and PCC have the same responsibilities but for different parts of the highway network.

3. Structure of PCC as Highway Authority

Within the Council’s constitution (clause 3.27.13) the Head of Transport and Engineering (currently Mike Sharpe until a permanent successor to Mark Stevens takes on the role), has the delegated authority to (amongst others):

- “exercise the executive powers and duties of the Council, acting on its behalf as the local highway authority,”¹
- “to exercise the powers and duties of the Council in respect of the Highways Act 1980”

Transport and Engineering Services is currently divided into three groups, each under the control of a group manager:

- Highways Group (Andy Tatt - acting - : andy.tatt@peterborough.gov.uk : tel. 453458)

Responsible for the maintenance and safety of the highway, including street lighting and road signs, bridges and watercourses and the development control function.

- Traffic Management Group (Peter Tebb peter.tebb@peterborough.gov.uk: tel. 453519)

Responsible for identifying, designing and supervising the construction of modest improvements to the highway, the maintenance and operation of traffic signals, the co-ordination of roadworks, parking and its enforcement, and road safety education, training and publicity.

- Transportation Group (Barry Kirk : barry.kirk@peterborough.gov.uk : tel. 777450)

Responsible for passenger transport, transport planning, travelchoice (delivering the sustainable travel demonstration town project), the parking enforcement project and the production and monitoring of the local transport plan.

Whilst it may not always be readily apparent who should be contacted concerning a specific query, and it is very difficult to comprehensively and specifically define each potential situation, the suggested primary contacts are:

Andy Tatt for issues concerning the condition and maintenance of the highway and its street furniture (e.g. potholes, damaged signs)

Peter Tebb for issues relating to desired improvements or safety issues such as those discussed in section 5.

4. Structure of the Highways Agency

At a national level (England) the Highways Agency is divided into a number of directorates. The Traffic Operations Directorate is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and management of the trunk road and motorway network and is sub-divided into five divisions and contains fourteen Area Teams. Each Area Team is responsible for a specific area, which is based on highway routes rather than local authority boundaries.

The Traffic Operations Directorate has two major functions:

- Maintain and manage the asset of the strategic road network.
- Operate the network, including developing a new function of managing traffic.

To enable this, Agents are employed across the country to deliver a program of works on the road network to keep it in optimum condition.

Of the fourteen areas, Peterborough is principally covered by two of these (Area 6 & Area 7) plus a separate body with responsibility for the A1M, which is a Design, Build, Finance and Operate (DBFO) project, although it has a similar reporting structure. Each Area team and corresponding Managing Agent is responsible for the maintenance of the Agency's roads in their area.

Contact details for each of the above roles, for each of the three areas, is appended to this report.

5. Specific Query Regarding the A47 Trunk Road

The following query was raised at a previous meeting of PALC.

“The section of the A47 Trunk Road between the A1 and the Sutton Roundabout has a bad accident record and is very substandard in comparison with the other sections of the A47, especially the Castor Bypass. Particular accident sites are at the junctions of Sutton Heath Road and The Drift each with the A47. Sutton Parish Council is aware that major improvements to this section of the A47 in the form of dualling are regarded as low priority in relation to region-wide demands on funding. However there are clearly small-scale actions which could be taken to address the problem in the interim- e.g. a prohibition on right-turning out of Sutton Heath Road and a right-turning lane provided for right-turners into The Drift.

We recognise that the responsibility for this road rests with the Highways Agency, but, bearing in mind that the victims of accidents at these junctions will often be Peterborough ratepayers, what action has the City Council taken /is prepared to take in the future to press the Highways Agency to bring forward safety schemes for these junctions?”

The accident rate for any particular section of highway reflects a number of factors (e.g. the number of lanes present in a given direction, the number of side road junctions present, the geometry of the highway and the volume of traffic using the road amongst others. It is therefore not appropriate to directly compare the safety record of the section in question (a single carriageway with side road junctions) with the Castor Bypass (a dual carriageway with no junctions designed to modern standards).

Cambridgeshire Constabulary supply both the Highways Agency and Peterborough City Council with details of road traffic collisions where some form of injury has occurred to one or more of those involved in the collision. This data informs the scheme assessment process for each highway authority.

Having examined the historical records for the junction of The Drift and Suttons Heath Road there have been four collisions in total at each junction over the years 2004 to 2006 inclusive. It is highly unlikely that either of the two junctions would rank sufficiently highly under any assessment methodology to warrant major highway improvements of the type suggested.

With regard to the prohibition of vehicular movements at a highway junction between two highway authorities, the responsibility defers to the highway authority with responsibility for the more major road, which in this case would be the Highways Authority. Consequently Peterborough City Council would be unable to implement such a restriction at any junction with the A47.

Based on the above information Peterborough City Council would be unable to present a sufficiently robust case to the Highways Agency for engineering treatment at these junctions. Neither would the City Council be able to influence the assessment process.

	Area 6	Area 7	DBFO
Area of Responsibility	A47 (east of the A1*)	A1 (north of the A1M)	A1M
HA Contact	Peter Smith	Paul Cockell	Iain Semple
Tel	01234 796094	0121 678 8329	01234 796045
e-mail	peter.smith@highways.gsi.gov.uk	paul.cockell@highways.gsi.gov.uk	iain.semple@highways.gsi.gov.uk
address	Woodlands, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW	5 Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham, B15 1BL	Woodlands, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7LW
Managing Agent	Atkins (Lee Cornwell)	AMScott (Steve Toon)	Road Management Services (Peterborough) Ltd (Pat Swain)
Tel	01473 835891	01623 676555	01733 245445
e-mail	lee.cornwell@atkinsglobal.com	area7@amscott7.com	julie_anderson@rmspeter.demon.co.uk
address	Mason Works, Bramford Road, Great Blakenham, Ipswich, IP6 0JX	AMScott Managing Agent Contractor, Ransom Wood Business Park, Southwell Road West, Rainworth, Mansfield, NG21 0HJ	North Street, Stilton, Peterborough, Cambs, PE7 3RR
Contractor	Amey Mouchel (Mike Thompson)	AMScott (Steve Toon)	Road Management Services (Peterborough) Ltd (Pat Swain)
Tel	01473 835854	01623 676555	01733 245445
e-mail	mike.thompson@ameymouchel.com	area7@amscott7.com	julie_anderson@rmspeter.demon.co.uk
address	Mason Works, Bramford Road, Great Blakenham, Ipswich, IP6 0JX	AMScott Managing Agent Contractor, Ransom Wood Business Park, Southwell Road West, Rainworth, Mansfield, NG21 0HJ	North Street, Stilton, Peterborough, Cambs, PE7 3RR
* the A47 to the west of the A1 has been detrunked and is now the responsibility of PCC			

