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Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

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Date: 22 October 2012

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A MEETING OF THE **Scrutiny Committee**

WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2012 AT 6.00PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, CROWMARSH GIFFORD

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Members of the Committee

Eleanor Hards(Chairman)

Joan Bland
Celia Collett
Steve Connel
John Cotton

Kristina Crabbe
Pat Dawe
Leo Docherty
Will Hall

Paul Harrison
Stephen Harrod
Elizabeth Hodgkin
David Turner

Substitutes:

*Roger Bell
Felix Bloomfield
David Bretherton
Bernard Cooper
Phil Cross
Margaret Davies*

*Mark Gray
Tony Harbour
Marcus Harris
Marc Hiles
Lynn Lloyd
Ann Midwinter*

*Anne Purse
Rob Simister
Margaret Turner
Rachel Wallis
Mike Welply
Jeni Wood*

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1. **Apologies**
2. **Declaration of interest**
3. **Minutes, 21 August 2012 (circulated separately)**
4. **Date of next meeting**

The committee is asked to consider holding an additional meeting in January to consider the implications of the government's financial settlement, and is asked whether to hold or cancel the meeting scheduled for 18 December.

5. **Community safety annual plan- 2011/12 review**

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services (**attached**)

Purpose: to consider and note the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership 2011/12 report.

Representatives of the Community Safety Partnership will attend to present the report and answer questions.

6. **Performance review of CAPITA for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012**

Report of the Head of Finance (**attached**)

Purpose: to consider Capita's performance in delivering the ten elements of the financial services contract for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 and make recommendations to the Cabinet member for finance.

Representatives of CAPITA will attend to answer questions.

7. **Revenue Grants 2013/14 – 2016/17**

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy (**attached**)

Purpose: to consider whether to form a scrutiny task group to consider the revenue grant applications for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and make comments to Cabinet, and to approve terms of reference and delegate authority to the Head of Corporate Strategy to make appointments to the task group.



8. Revenue Grants 2013/14 – 2016/17 – Citizens Advice Bureaux

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy (**attached**)

Purpose: to consider the revenue grant application from Oxfordshire South and Vale of White Horse Citizens Advice Bureau for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and make comments to Cabinet.

Representatives of the Citizens Advice Bureaux will attend to address the committee.

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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Scrutiny Committee Report



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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To: Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 30 October 2012

**AGENDA ITEM
5**

Community safety annual plan - 2011/12 review

Recommendation

To note the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership 2011/12 report.

Purpose of Report

1. This report is a progress update of the delivery of the 2011/12 South and Vale Community Safety Partnership annual plan. It shows how the partnership delivered against its priorities for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

Strategic Objectives

2. Building the local economy

which includes the following corporate priority:

- maintain low levels of crime and anti social behaviour

3. Excellent delivery of key services

which includes the following corporate priority:

- put residents at the heart of service delivery and seek to provide an excellent customer experience

Background

4. The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was formed in April 2011, bringing together the two existing district CSPs that were created in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This was done so that the partnership was coterminous with the newly formed local police area and mirrored the shared working across the district councils. Running one joint partnership has enabled the partnership to pool expertise, knowledge and resources to effectively tackle crime and disorder. It has also reduced the number of meetings that partnership officers and statutory members are expected to attend.
5. Under the umbrella of the South and Vale CSP, a wide variety of local agencies work together to maintain low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. From road safety, enviro-crime action and crime prevention to police enforcement, drug treatment services and alcohol safety campaigns, the partnership is focussed on ensuring that residents feel and stay safe.
6. The partnership involves officers representing:
 - South Oxfordshire District Council
 - Vale of White Horse District Council
 - NHS Oxfordshire
 - Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)
 - Thames Valley Police (TVP)
 - Thames Valley Police Authority
 - Thames Valley Probation Service
 - Sovereign Vale Housing Association
 - Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service
 - Soha Housing Limited.
 - Oxfordshire Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT)
7. The CSP has two 'operational', multi-agency groups which help to deliver its objectives across both districts: South and Vale Nightsafe and South and Vale Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination.
8. This report is a progress update of the delivery of the 2011/12 CSP annual plan. It shows how the partnership delivered against its priorities which focussed around three key areas:
 - projects that tackle concerns affecting the whole **community**
 - projects that support **victims** or prevent people from becoming a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour
 - projects that tackle **offenders** or those who are at risk of committing, crime and anti-social behaviour
9. Once a year, the CSP is required to conduct a Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA) to identify the priorities for the forthcoming year. In 2011/12, we worked with Thames Valley Police and co-ordinated our feedback so it could feed directly into their SIA and we used this information to inform our 2012/13 annual rolling community safety plan. The CSP refreshed its objectives for 2012/13 to ensure

they continue to reflect the national and local community safety priorities. The Partnership's activities remain focused around three key areas outlined above.

10. The election of the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner on 15 November will herald a significant change to the way that policing and community safety is managed and funded across the area. From April 2013, the PCC will be responsible for all Home Office grants for community safety and the CSP does not yet know how the PCC will choose to allocate this funding. However, we do know that the statutory duty to run a CSP remains and the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act places a mutual duty on PCCs and the responsible authorities of the CSPs to co-operate to reduce crime and disorder and re-offending. In addition, both will have to have regard to each other's priorities when drawing up their plans.

Financial Implications

11. None.

Legal Implications

12. None.

Risks

13. The CSP funding from the Home Office has been reducing year on year: in 2011/12, it was cut by 20 per cent. In 2012/13, it has been reduced by a further 40 per cent although Oxfordshire County Council agreed to plug the gap for the county CSPs as a one-off. The Home Office funding will transfer to the PCC with effect from 1 April 2013.

Other Implications

14. None.

Conclusion

15. The CSP has successfully delivered its priorities during 2011/12 and there was an overall positive direction of travel in terms of achieving outcomes to reduce crime and the fear of crime for residents in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. Through the year, the partnership demonstrated added value in addressing local community safety issues in a joined up and efficient way and paying particular attention to the needs of the most vulnerable people in our districts. In 2012/13, the CSP aims to continue delivering this standard of service and preparing for the introduction of the PCC.

Appendix attached

- South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) summary of projects 2011/12

Background Papers

- South and Vale CSP rolling annual plan 2012/13

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South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Summary of projects 2011/12

This report provides a brief account of the priorities, results and activities of the projects funded or co-ordinated by the CSP. To measure the impact of its work during 2011/12, the CSP agreed to monitor overall 'direction of travel' using a broad range of indicators, rather than set specific targets. The Partnership carried out this monitoring on a quarterly basis and focussed on exception reporting.

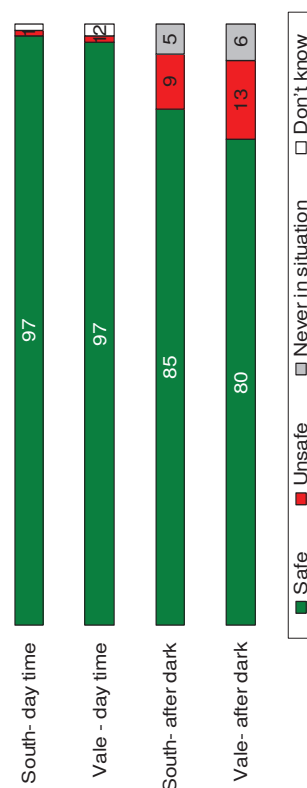
OVERALL CRIME FIGURES IN SOUTH AND VALE DURING 2011/12

South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse remain very safe areas in which to live, work and visit. This is reflected in the overall reduction in all crime between 1 April 2011 and 31 March 2012:

- in **South** there was a 19 per cent reduction from 6992 crimes during 2010/11 to 5678 crimes during 2011/12. This equates to 1314 fewer crimes.
- in **Vale** there was an 11 per cent reduction from 5006 crimes during 2010/11 to 4450 crimes during 2011/12. This equates to 556 fewer crimes.

In 2011/12, residents' feelings of safety also remained high in both districts:

How safe or unsafe do you feel in each of the following situations? Walking alone in your local community during daylight/ Walking alone in your local community after dark
(Base: all responding, 560-South, 409-Vale)



CSP PROJECTS THAT TACKLED CONCERNS AFFECTING THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

Reducing anti social behaviour

During the year, we continued to support a partnership approach to reducing antisocial behaviour, particularly where it was criminal or targeted at vulnerable victims.

The tables below show the use of ASB powers and legislation in the districts during 2011/12 and the number of ASB repeat victims. The definition of a repeat victim is 'an individual or household who has suffered three or more cases of antisocial behaviour within a three month period'.

2011/12 ASB interventions by neighbourhood	ABC ¹	Alcohol seizure letter	Warning letters	Section 27 ²	Section 59 ³
Abingdon	22	43	10	181	6
Didcot	9	22	37	35	12
Faringdon	5	5	30	9	1
Henley	19	17	37	101	15
Thame	10	5	46	22	5
Wallingford	7	13	167	28	10
Wantage	9	3	17	155	15
Total across South and Vale	81	108	344	531	64

	South and Vale 2010/11	South and Vale 2011/12
Repeat victims	Not recorded	95

¹ ABC = Acceptable Behaviour Contract

² Section 27 notices (violent crime related dispersal) are issued by the police to people aged 16 and over who have been involved or are thought to be at risk of being involved in violent alcohol related crime. The notices ban people from a specified area for up to 48 hours. The notices are most effective in town centres where the night time economy is more active.

³ Section 59 notices (anti social use of motor vehicles) are issued to vehicle drivers/owners who undertake antisocial use of vehicles and can lead to the vehicle being seized and possibly destroyed. The police firstly issue a warning letter to the owner/driver, and if within a 12-month period, the vehicle is used in the same manner or the same person uses an alternative vehicle in a similar manner, the vehicle is seized.

The Thames Valley Police ASB Officer and Administrator work with the district councils' community safety, housing and environmental protection teams and housing associations to tackle issues at an early stage which helps to ensure that problems don't escalate and require interventions like Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs).

As part of this multi-agency approach, the ASB Officer holds regular Neighbourhood ASB meetings which are attended by neighbourhood officers and representatives from partner agencies (including the Shared ASB Co-ordinator) where local cases are reviewed and actioned.

When young people are involved in ASB, there is an emphasis on trying to change their behaviour whilst supporting their family to help implement any changes through services like Oxfordshire County Council's youth service hubs. For example, each time alcohol is seized from under age drinkers, the ASB team sends letters to the parents/carers warning them that if the young person is reported for drinking alcohol again, they risk being the subject of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract. The letters also sign post parents/carers to relevant support services.

Some residents do not feel comfortable reporting cases of ASB to the police and often contact the district councils' Shared ASB Co-ordinator to ask them for help in resolving problems which range from harassment, parking disputes, noise nuisance and disturbance caused by young people. The officer works with other council teams and external agencies to investigate the issues and ensure the complainants are kept informed through-out the process.

Any repeat cases of ASB or those which are classed as being medium-high risk are reviewed by a wide range of agencies at the monthly Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (JATAC) meetings. This helps to ensure that significant cases are being managed effectively.

Tackling repeat ASB cases through Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordinating (JATAC) – case study

Due to the high number of calls the police were receiving from different residents about anti social behaviour at a car park in Wantage, JATAC agreed a number of simple actions to address the issue of young people riding cars, scooters/motorbikes, playing loud music and generally causing a disturbance: the police assigned carried out increased patrols of the area, served one Section 59 notice and issued eight warning letters. The district council's car parks team turned off the lights in the car park at an earlier time to discourage young people from congregating there.

Following these actions, the police saw a significant decrease in the number of complaints and the district council did not receive any complaints from residents regarding the lights in the car park being switched off at an earlier time.

Anti social behaviour also occurs in the form of 'enviro-crimes' which the CSP monitor in terms of the levels of fly tipping, graffiti and street cleanliness. The table below provides data about the number of fly tips in each district by type and the levels of enforcement action taken.

Number of fly tips by type	South 2010/11	South 2011/12	Vale 2010/11	Vale 2011/12
Single black bag	33	43	47	20
Single item	80	113	69	32
Car boot load or less	125	275	111	97
Small van load	210	262	178	106
Transit lorry load	78	46	33	12
Tipper lorry load	15	32	2	4
Significant multiple loads	1	6	0	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>542</i>	<i>777</i>	<i>440</i>	<i>271</i>
Enforcement action taken				
Investigation	558	777	451	271
Warning letter	10	16	2	57
Statutory notice	0	0	0	39
Fixed penalty notice	2	7	40	28
Duty of care inspection	1	2	67	52
Stop and search	0	4	0	0
Vehicle seizure	0	0	0	0
Formal caution	7	3	13	9
Prosecution	3	8	5	14
Injunction	0	0	0	0

In 2011/12, the district councils' shared waste team carried out 300 surveys every four months to monitor levels of street cleanliness and graffiti. The surveys are divided across ten different types of land use and are only carried out on land that South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Districts Councils are responsible for cleaning (e.g. adopted footpaths and roads). Each survey covers a 'snap shot' of 50 meters width. The figures in the table below show the percentage of surveyed areas which fell 'below standard'.

Street cleanliness and graffiti	South 2010/11	South 2011/12	Vale 2010/11	Vale 2011/12
Litter	5%	3.6%	4%	6.9%
Detritus	13%	21.8%	15%	37.3%
Graffiti	0%	0%	0%	0%
Fly posting	0%	0%	0%	0%

Levels of criminal damage are also a useful indicator for measuring levels of anti social behaviour in South and Vale. The table below provides the annual figures for the number of incidents reported to the police and shows a significant reduction in both districts between April 2011 and March 2012.

Criminal damage reported to the police	Finally Recorded			Crimes per 1,000 population/ household	
	2009	2010	2011	2009	2011
South	1,509	1,269	945	11.61	7.21
Vale	1,062	939	819	8.99	6.84
South & Vale	2,571	2,208	1,764	10.36	7.03
Thames Valley	30,290	25,983	22,009	13.76	9.77
				% change	
				-25.5%	
				-12.8%	
				-20.1%	
				-15.3%	

Extending the Joint Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (JATAC) group to include South and Vale

JATAC is the 'operational, action focused' arm of the CSP and covers both South and Vale to mirror the joint CSP and the South and Vale Local Police Area. Members of JATAC reflect the CSP, with regular attendance from Thames Valley Police, South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue and Soha. Other agencies also attend, including the Community Mental Health Team, Environment Agency and Young Addaction.

Partners meet on a monthly basis to discuss and address short term priority issues that cannot be resolved locally and are likely to need support from a number of agencies. The priorities are updated before each meeting and any partner can ask for a priority to be added to the agenda with background evidence of the problem. At each meeting, agencies also receive an update on repeat victims/callers relating to anti-social behaviour and an update on priority people (prolific and priority offenders, young offenders).

The Shared ASB Co-ordinator, based in the district councils' shared community safety team, co-ordinates the meetings which are chaired by Oxfordshire County Council's representative on the CSP.

During 2011/12, the JATAC group took action on twelve different priorities: six relating to serious acquisitive crime, six relating to complex ASB cases and two which related to enviro-crimes.

Example of a JATAC priority from 2011/12 - burglaries across Henley

Partnership work between Thames Valley Police TVP, Soha and Sovereign Vale and South Oxfordshire District Council has been ongoing to raise awareness amongst Henley residents about the need to properly secure their properties. The actions taken by the agencies included:

- Distributing leaflets with safety advice regarding locking UPVC doors and windows to tenants.
- Organising a community event to promote the home security measures people could take. Residents could get advice about burglar alarms and locks.
- Providing 100 new neighbourhood watch signs that have been distributed to the schemes to act as a deterrent (these signs were funded by South and Vale Community Safety Partnership).

This awareness raising campaign, in parallel with a successful police investigation which led to the incarceration of a suspect, has resulted in a significant reduction in burglaries in the area.

Delivering alcohol awareness campaigns and tackling premises that contribute to alcohol related crime and disorder

South and Vale Nightsafe is a sub group of the CSP which provides a multi-agency programme of communication, education and partnership working to reduce incidents of alcohol related crime in the districts. At monthly meetings, the Nightsafe group reviews intelligence and incident reports to focus on:

- Priority locations
- Premises of concerns
- Crime and Incident series
- Subjects
- And other risk issues, for example Henley Regatta, Abingdon fair

This allows the group to prioritise and resource appropriately.

Partners involved in Nightsafe include the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' licensing and community safety teams, Thames Valley Police and Pubwatch.

In 2011/12, there was a positive reduction in the levels of violent assault across South and Vale and the work of Nightsafe will have had a positive impact on this outcome.

Level of violent assault	Finally Recorded			Crimes per 1,000 population/ household			
	2009	2010	2011	% change	2009	2010	2011
Total violence with injury							
South	1,281	1,187	935	-21.2%	9.86	9.09	7.14
Vale	1,138	1,093	951	-13.0%	9.63	9.21	7.94
South & Vale	2,419	2,280	1,886	-17.3%	9.75	9.15	7.52
Thames Valley	39,959	36,910	27,324	-23.9%	18.15	16.13	12.13

The CSP relaunched Nightsafe in Wantage and Abingdon and introduced the scheme in Henley to help pubs promote responsible drinking and behaviour, generating lots of positive press coverage. Nightsafe also ran two campaigns to promote responsible drinking messages. One is detailed below.

'HOW ARE YOU GETTING HOME THIS CHRISTMAS?'

Launched in December 2011, Nightsafe ran a campaign to help people avoid the risks of drink driving, get home safely and pre book a licensed taxi. The CSP funded specially designed beer mats which were provided to all Pubwatch members in Wantage, Abingdon and Henley that were signed up to Nightsafe.

The mat posed the question "How are you getting home this Christmas?" and featured a "QR code" on the back which could be scanned by anyone with a smart phone. By scanning the code they were directed to a web page containing top tips to help them enjoy a safer Christmas.

The campaign featured in the Henley Standard and the Wantage Herald. 167 people viewed the web page between 3 December 2011 and 2 January 2012 and Pubwatch members commented that the beer mats were an excellent way to promote community safety messages and felt that the QR code was a good idea.

Improving community cohesion and reducing tensions

In 2011/12, the CSP supported the South and Vale Independent Advisory Group. Run by Thames Valley Police, this group receives updates and consultations from the LPA Commander about crime and policing issues which may affect minority groups in the districts. Thames Valley Police Authority and the district councils' community safety team are also members of this Group. Community tensions in their broader sense were also brought to the attention of the police and partner agencies through the Neighbourhood Action Groups which operate across South and Vale.

The CSP monitored residents' fear of crime by surveying both councils' citizen panels in autumn 2011. The results were supplied according to equality group, to enable the Partnership to see if certain groups in the community were more or less likely to feel safe (an indicator for community tensions). According to the survey, the only minority group feeling less safe in their local community was disabled people in South Oxfordshire: disabled people in South Oxfordshire were more likely to feel unsafe during the day (four per cent compared to one per cent without a disability).

Developing a communications plan to ensure that we promote timely and relevant community safety messages

On behalf of the CSP, the district councils' shared community safety team manages a comprehensive communications plan, utilising a wide range of communication channels to keep residents informed about community safety campaigns, projects and issues.

Providing advice and support for community groups to help reduce crime and the fear of crime

STREET PASTOR SCHEMES

In 2011/12, the CSP supported street pastors in Wallingford, Abingdon, Thame and Wantage and Grove by providing them with advice cards to hand out to people on a night out who are vulnerable and in need of help.

"The cards provide a great comfort for street pastors to have for reference. Those young people, especially girls, have been pleased to receive them and impressed that someone is caring for them" (a Street Pastor from Wallingford)

We also gave funding to schemes to buy uniforms and run training for their volunteers so they can help local people enjoy their evening in a safe and responsible way.

NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUPS

The CSP provided support for Neighbourhood Action Groups throughout the year by inviting NAG chairs to attend the quarterly Local Area Policing Board meetings (attended by the police, Thames Valley Police Authority and a representative from the district councils' shared community safety team) and sending them regular community safety bulletins from the district councils.

In 2011/12, the West Wantage Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) asked the CSP for help in addressing concerns from residents about lighting and fear of crime around Betjeman Park and Mill Passage in Wantage. Using funding from the CSP, the NAG worked with Oxfordshire County Council, the police Crime Reduction Adviser and Wantage Mill to install a new light in the area. Since the light was installed, there has been a significant reduction in anti-social behaviour reports in the Betjeman Park and Letcombe Brook areas (both are served by Mill Passage). The NAG felt the project achieved a very positive outcome both in terms of ASB reduction and in respect of making the community feel safer.

FARINGDON COMMUNITY MURAL PROJECT

In 2009, following feedback from a group of residents in Faringdon about graffiti and anti social behaviour, the Community Safety Partnership co-ordinated a three year project aimed at making the neighbourhood a safer place for everyone. A task and finish group was established and a three year project emerged. In 2010/11 (the first year of the project), the CSP helped to arrange for the graffiti on the underpass to be replaced with a community art mural involving students from Faringdon Community College. In 2011/12, the CSP brought together a number of agencies and residents to extend the mural in response to residents' feedback:

- Oxfordshire County Council Highways prepared the wall for painting and sealed the wall on completion with anti-graffiti paint
- students and art teachers from Faringdon Community College painted the design on the wall during the summer holiday
- the district council's arts development team and the CSP helped to fund the materials needed for this project

Once the extension to the mural had been completed, the CSP carried out a survey of local residents to find out what they thought about the work. Although the number of respondents was small (12), the vast majority felt that the mural has improved the appearance of the area and over half felt safer using the underpass as a result of the changes.

Comments from residents about the extended mural:

“Children enjoy the mural and we have lots of other children coming to into The Lees to play, even my grandchildren enjoy the wall when looking out the windows.”

“The kids really enjoyed helping and are proud of their work, it is less likely to get graffiti.”

“I think it is brilliant my children love it.”

CSP PROJECTS THAT SUPPORTED VICTIMS OR PREVENTED PEOPLE FROM BECOMING A VICTIM OF CRIME OR ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Providing additional support for victims and children affected by domestic abuse

As part of a countywide approach, the CSP encourages early intervention and support in cases of domestic abuse. By encouraging people to report incidents at an early stage, it is easier for services to work with victims to improve their situation before issues escalate. To understand if cases are being addressed as early as possible, the partnership monitors the number of domestic abuse reports to the police (both recordable and non recordable) and also the number of high risk cases being managed by the Independent Domestic Violence Adviser Service.

Levels of domestic abuse reported to the police	Finally Recorded			Crimes per 1,000 population/ household			
	2009	2010	2011	% change	2009	2010	2011
Recorded domestic abuse incidents							
South	446	386	329	-14.8%	3.43	2.96	2.51
Vale	372	324	287	-11.4%	3.15	2.73	2.40
South & Vale	818	710	616	-13.2%	3	3	2
Thames Valley	12,505	11,174	9,548	-14.6%	5.68	5.02	4.24
Non- recordable domestic abuse							
South	676	742	855	15.2%	5.20	5.68	6.53
Vale	740	849	891	4.9%	6.26	7.15	7.44
South & Vale	1,416	1,591	1,746	9.7%	6	6	7
Thames Valley	18,393	21,029	23,183	10.2%	8.35	9.45	10.29

Number of high risk domestic abuse cases dealt with by IDVA the	2010/11			2011/12			
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total	
New clients	55	14	15	8	12	49	
Cases closed	82	14	3	7	Data not available	24	

In 2011/12, the CSP funded the South and Vale dedicated outreach service to support victims and children affected by domestic abuse. The type of confidential support the service provides can include safety information through to offering refuge accommodation for victims. Between April 2011 and March 2012, the outreach workers supported 48 victims and their families across both districts.

Number of cases referred to South and Vale domestic abuse outreach service	2011/12					
	2010/11	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
South new clients	33	9	7	7	7	30
Vale new clients	28	2	6	6	4	18
Total new clients	61	11	13	13	11	48
South cases closed	Not recorded	3	6	4	3	16
Vale cases closed	Not recorded	1	3	1	7	12
Total cases closed	Not recorded	4	9	5	10	28

Domestic abuse outreach service – case study

Jane* had only been living in South Oxfordshire for a week when her partner physically assaulted her. Following the assault he left the property and returned to another part of the country. Jane had no contacts in the local area, did not want to involve the police and did not know what to do. The day after the assault she went to her local Children’s Centre for advice. The A2Dominion outreach worker was already at the centre, running the Freedom Programme (a structured support programme for groups of victims of domestic abuse). She immediately took Jane on as a client and Jane agreed to join the Freedom Programme.

Jane was clear that she wanted to end the relationship with her partner. She needed advice about benefits so the outreach worker signposted her to her local Citizen’s Advice Bureau and arranged for a local charity to provide food parcels for her and her four children until her benefits were in place. Her housing association changed the locks immediately at her property. Although her partner did not come to the property he continued to bombard Jane with abusive and threatening texts. The outreach worker accompanied Jane to a solicitor and they were able to go to court to secure a non-molestation order.

By attending the Freedom Programme, Jane learned about the dynamics of abuse and recognised that her partner was emotionally, financially, sexually and physically abusing her and that her children were at risk of abuse themselves. Jane described the support she has received as “life changing” and said that her children “are now able to play like normal children without being shouted at all the time”.

* not her real name

To offer reassurance to victims of domestic abuse, the CSP also provided funding in 2011/12 for personal attack alarms that have been dispatched to victims in South and Vale via the police Domestic Abuse Unit and the police Crime Reduction Advisers.

Tackling hate crime

1 April– 31 March 2012	Finally Recorded			Crimes per 1,000 population/ household			
	2009	2010	2011	% change	2009	2010	2011
Hate crime reported to TVP							
South				11.0%	0.00	0.56	0.62
Vale				N/A	0.62	0.00	0.00
South & Vale	73	73	82	11.0%	0.29	0.29	0.32
Thames Valley	1,917	1,717	1,436	-16.4%	0.87	0.77	0.64

In addition to taking a zero tolerance approach to hate crime in South and Vale during 2011/12, the CSP provided funding to help Oxfordshire Homophobia Awareness Liaison Team (HALT) encourage people to report incidents of homophobic or transphobic hate crime. The Team used the funding to hire a stall at the Oxford Pride event in June 2011 where they spoke to attendees about the need to report these kinds of hate crimes and conducted a survey to capture the concerns (including community safety issues) of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people living in the county. Around 3,500 people came to the event.

Tackling serious acquisitive crime and rogue traders

Levels of domestic burglary, car crime and robbery	Finally Recorded			Crimes per 1,000 population/ household			
	2009	2010	2011	% change	2009	2010	2011
Serious acquisitive crime							
South	1,125	986	796	-19.3%	8.66	7.55	6.08
Vale	556	494	376	-23.9%	4.71	4.16	3.14
South & Vale	1,681	1,480	1,172	-20.8%	6.77	5.94	4.67
Thames Valley	33,838	28,414	24,709	-13.0%	15.37	12.77	10.96

Levels of serious acquisitive crime in both South and Vale dropped significantly in 2011/12, as the figures in the table above show. During the year, the CSP supported a number of initiatives which will have had a positive impact on this reduction:

PREVENTING CAR CRIME

- The CSP funded trap vehicles in South and Vale (in South, deployed on 19 occasions and secured two arrests, in Vale deployed on 14 occasions and secured six arrests)
- Through JATAC, the partnership funded tri-signs for the police to put on lampposts in Lewknor, reminding people leaving their cars at this location not to leave valuables in their vehicles. In addition, the partnership funded trap car signs, chains and padlocks to act as deterrents. The district councils’ shared car parks team also agreed a process with Crime Reduction Advisers for recording and submitting information on vulnerable vehicles to the police.
- To help prevent theft of tools from vans in 2011/12, the partnership helped the police by funding ‘no tools left in van’ stickers. Victims of theft from vans were sent advice and stickers and neighbourhood police teams also visited several small and large business parks to give crime prevention advice and stickers. The crime reduction adviser confirmed that the use of the stickers had a positive impact on reducing the number of thefts in the districts: incidents fell from 53 between June 2010 and May 2011 to 41 between June 2011 and May 2012 (during which time the stickers were issued).

PROVIDING PRACTICAL SUPPORT TO VICTIMS OF DISTRACTION BURGLARY AND ROGUE TRADERS

To help prevent repeat incidents of domestic burglary and domestic abuse, the partnership funds a small repairs scheme for elderly and vulnerable residents. Over one hundred referrals were made to this service between April 2011 and March 2012, ranging from door chains to safe rooms.

Number of properties secured by the small repairs scheme	2010/11		2011/12	
	Total		Total	
Number of repairs	207		83	
Number of domestic abuse repairs	21		20	
Total spend	£17233		£6812	
Average domestic abuse cost	£164		£90	
Average repair cost	£74		£65	

The reduction in the number of repairs carried out by the service in 2011/12 when compared to the previous year is likely to be a result of two factors:

- a reduction in the number of police crime reduction advisers working in South and Vale (these advisers are responsible for the majority of referrals to the small repairs scheme)
- registered social landlords have been taking a more pro-active role in managing repairs for their tenants

DETERRING METAL THIEVES

Through JATAC in 2011/12, the partnership

- Helped to fund UV lanterns for police to use when carrying out spot checks at scrap metal yards and when stopping suspicious vehicles.
- Brought about the sharing of information between the police, Oxfordshire County Council and others about how to spot bogus roadworks.
- Supported a metal theft prevention initiative in January 2012 which included Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue marking lead on a church with Smartwater. Following the initiative, metal thefts from churches fell significantly (between January and December 2011, there were 14 lead thefts from churches in South and Vale but in the nine months following the initiative, this fell to six).

Also, following a spate of drain cover thefts, JATAC brought agencies together to get confirmation from Highways that they were reporting thefts directly and immediately to the police and asking parish councils to report any suspicious activities they witnessed to the police. The police and Highways worked together to identify a suitable replacement for stolen drain covers that were more difficult to remove.

HELPING TO PREVENT BURGLARIES

Managed through the CSP, South Oxfordshire District Council joined forces with Thames Valley Crimestoppers to launch a month-long campaign in November 2011 aimed at reducing the number of burglaries in the area.

Postcards providing burglary prevention advice were distributed by Neighbourhood Policing teams to areas in South Oxfordshire where houses were in darkness and could therefore be a potential target for burglary.

The initiative provided the public with clear and simple messages on how to help deter burglars, as well as informing them about a safe and anonymous means of passing on information about who is breaking into local homes.

To help measure the impact of the campaign, the CSP invited residents to participate in a competition to win one of 15 light packs containing timer switches and timers for bulbs. 200 people entered the competition.

WORKING WITH SCHOOLS TO HELP IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In 2011/12, Oxfordshire County Council's road safety team worked with schools in South and Vale to adopt road safety statements and at the year end, at least two had these in place in the form of home-school contracts with parents.

CSP PROJECTS THAT TACKLED OFFENDERS OR THOSE WHO ARE AT RISK OF COMMITTING CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Working in partnership to support local diversionary activities for vulnerable young people

To help prevent young people from committing or becoming involved in crime or ASB, the CSP gave funding to Didcot TRAIN in 2011/12 to provide outreach support and activities for vulnerable young people in the town. Over 300 young people used the service including 50 who were not in employment, education or training.

A 2011/12 case study from Didcot TRAIN

TRAIN worked with a girl called Carla who was close to being excluded at school. She had been struggled to engage properly in education but by getting support from TRAIN, she made some really positive progress and found people who she could talk to. Carla said "Karen (TRAIN worker) is always there for me; whenever I need to talk or chat she is always there. She has helped me to prepare a CV so that when I leave school I can apply to some jobs".

Reducing underage sales of alcohol and underage drinking

In 2011/12, the CSP funded two test purchase operations which were co-ordinated through Nightsafe. Based on intelligence reports received by the police and the councils' licensing teams, Nightsafe co-ordinated two test purchase operations in 2011/12. With financial support from the CSP, Thames Valley Police Officers managed the operations where young volunteers under 18 years old entered licensed premises to seek to purchase alcohol.

The results of the two operations are detailed in the table below:

Town	Date	Outcome
Abingdon area	9 December 2011	10 premises were visited and two sold to the underage volunteers: Cost Cutter (Sutton Courtenay) and One Stop Shop (Wootton Road). Both premises received a fixed penalty notice (FPN) at point of sale. Warning letters were issued and recommendations complied with.
Abingdon	10 March 2012	Seven premises were visited and one sold to the underage volunteers: Tesco (Oxford Road). An FPN issued at point of sale and a warning letter was issued.

Supporting a safer Henley Regatta

For the 2011 Henley Regatta, the CSP:

- introduced a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) to give police the power to deal with alcohol related anti social behaviour in public areas
- ran a 'we serve drinks not drunks' Nightsafe campaign with Henley licensees to encourage people to drink responsibly during the Regatta
- worked with Henley Town Council and others to fund extra bus services to help people get home safely and speedily.
- provided advice to 210 young people, through Young Addaction, to prevent alcohol and drug misuse during the event

There were fewer recorded incidents of criminal damage and disorder compared with the previous year (11 incidents in 2011, compared to 16 in 2010 which represents a 31 per cent reduction). Local licensees and the police inspector felt that the DPPO had a positive impact on reducing alcohol related disorder during the regatta.

Providing early intervention support and treatment services for people misusing drugs and alcohol

The CSP monitors the take-up of drug and alcohol support services through the work of the Oxfordshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT). Between April and December 2011, over 700 people in South Oxfordshire accessed drug and alcohol treatment services and for the Vale, the figure was over 500. The number of drug users accessing needle exchange services in pharmacies in South and Vale in 2011/12 was 1032 (an increase of 30 per cent on the previous year).

Supporting and developing projects that utilise the services of the Thames Valley Probation 'Community Payback' (unpaid work) scheme

In 2011/12, the CSP co-ordinated two projects in South Oxfordshire that involved Thames Valley Probation's Community Payback scheme.

GRAFFITI REMOVAL AT COW LANE UNDERPASS, DIDCOT

The graffiti on the walls of Cow Lane bridge had led to several complaints from members of the public. In November 2011, the community safety team arranged for five people, supervised by Thames Valley Probation as part of their community orders, to paint

over the graffiti. This was a way for them to 'pay back' the community for crimes they had committed. The work took two days and the materials were provided by the CSP.

A quick straw poll of passers by revealed that more than half felt safer after the work had been carried out and over 80 per cent felt the work had improved the appearance of the area.

FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENTS IN HENLEY

The community safety team supported the councils' leisure and facilities teams to improve the appearance of a footpath that links a residential area to Henley leisure centre so people would feel safer using it.

Through the Community Payback scheme, a group of people serving community orders cut down unwanted vegetation along the path to improve visibility and access, using tools and a skip that were funded by the CSP. The leisure team provided facilities for Thames Valley Probation to have scheduled breaks and the facilities team arranged for the delivery and collection of tools and skip hire.

Targeting speeding, dangerous driving and inconsiderate parking

The CSP recognises that NAGs, community groups and neighbourhood policing teams all play an important role in helping to improve road safety in South and Vale. Schools also have a responsibility to help educate pupils and parents about road safety, particularly around the school gates and the partnership monitored this by looking at the number of schools that were engaged with Oxfordshire County Council in developing parking programmes. At the end of 2011/12, 10 schools in South Oxfordshire were developing programmes and 18 schools were doing the same in the Vale. Many others were involved in other road safety initiatives like cycle training.

South & Vale CSP 2011/12 final spend

South & Vale CSP Community Safety Fund 2011/12

	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Total	Capital	Revenue	Actual Spend	Committed Expenditure	Uncommitted Expenditure	
Income 2011/12	180666		180666				
Carried forward from 2010/11	19671		19671				
Home Office - Alcohol funding	12650		12650				
LAA reward revenue	48224		48224				
LAA reward capital	48224	48224					
LAA1 reward from OCC revenue	30000		30000				
Total income	339435	48224	291211				
Expenditure							
Projects 2011/12							
Shared Community Safety Officer	25000		25000	25000	25000	0	
Shared Community Safety Partnership Officer	17000		17000	16731	16731	269	
Shared Community Safety Project Officer	35000		35000	34049	34049	951	
Shared Community Safety ASB Co-ordinator	17000		17000	10460	10460	6540	
Shared ASB assistant (TVP)	15300		15300	15300	15300	0	
Shared Crime Reduction Adviser (TVP)	33600		33600	33600	33600	0	
Domestic Abuse co-ordinator (OCC)	14500		14500	14500	14500	0	
Domestic abuse outreach	15000		15000	14104	14104	896	
TRAIN	6500		6500	6500	6500	0	
Asset recovery	7848	7848	0	7848	7848	0	
Target hardening	10000	10000	0	10000	10000	0	
Nightsafe	2100		2100	1903	1903	197	
Community payback	2000		2000	806	806	1194	
JATAC	5000	2500	2500	1549	3035	1965	
Project funding	23437		23437	3476	4981	18456	
Alcohol funding	4050		4050	2161	2281	1769	
Allocation LAA reward revenue	48224		48224	0	0	48224	
Allocation of LAA reward capital	27876	27876	0	995	995	26881	
Allocation of LAA1 reward	30000		30000	0	0	30000	
Total SOCSP 2011/12	339435	48224	291211	198983	202094	137341	
Income	339435	48224	291211	198983	202094	137341	
Expenditure	339435	48224	291211	198983	202094	137341	

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Scrutiny Committee Report



Report of Head of Finance

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To: Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 30 October 2012

AGENDA ITEM
6

Performance review of CAPITA for the period 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee considers Capita's performance in delivering the ten elements of the financial services contract for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 and makes any recommendations to the Cabinet member for finance.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to review the performance of Capita in providing financial services during the review period of 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2. **Strategic Objective - “effective management of resources”**: The financial services contract contains a number of key performance indicators and a payment and performance mechanism that details a system of bonuses and penalties relating to these indicators. The majority of services provided are also key front line services. The contract with Capita is therefore particularly significant in helping to achieve the corporate priorities of:
 - providing value for money services that meet the needs of our residents and service users; and,
 - providing equality of access to our services.

BACKGROUND

3. The financial services contract commenced on 31 July 2006 and is a joint contract between South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC) and Capita. It was a ground breaking contract that included the creation of a shared services model created by VWHDC and SODC to modernise and achieve economies of scale in the provision of financial services. The partnership has enabled processes and procedures to be harmonised and efficiency savings to be made as a consequence.
4. The contract duration was for an initial term of seven years (ending on 30 July 2013) but an option to extend it for a further three years to 30 July 2016 was taken up in April 2011.
5. The specification for the financial services contract comprises the following elements:

Service	SODC only	VWHDC only	Joint
Council tax and non-domestic rates collection			✓
Benefits administration			✓
Accounts receivable (debtors) administration			✓
Accounts payable (creditors) administration			✓
Payroll system and system administration			✓
Integrated financial management information system and system administration (general ledger, accounts payable & receivable, payroll)			✓
Cashier services	✓		
* Administration of assisted travel scheme			✓ (July 09)
Customer contact services	✓		

* Assisted travel became a county council function from 1 April 2012

6. Although the contract is a joint one with VWHDC, this report only concentrates on performance in respect of SODC.

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF CAPITA

7. A system for the performance review of contractors has been devised which requires the following measures to be included in the evaluation:
 - measured performance against key performance targets (KPT's)
 - customer satisfaction with the total service experience, and
 - council satisfaction as client
8. For the purpose of this review the contract with Capita has been scored in seven parts:
 - revenues and cash office
 - benefits
 - exchequer (accounts payable, accounts receivable)

- financial management system
- payroll
- customer contact
- concessionary fares (assisted travel)

9. The Cabinet member for Finance will make the assessments of Capita's performance after consideration by the committee. The detailed officer assessments (based on the measures of excellent; good; fair; weak; poor) are as follows:

REVENUES

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

10. Performance against performance targets is given in **Appendix 1** with the indicators that are key performance targets for the contractual payment and performance mechanism in bold.

11. The main points to note when assessing performance for the review period include:

- Capita achieved an in-year collection rate of **98.64 per cent** (98.65 per cent 2010/2011) for council tax collection against a target of 98.6 per cent. This was the second best in-year collection rate recorded and considering the ongoing economic downturn, it was an excellent achievement. It should also be noted that arrears continue to be collected after the end of the financial year. At the time of writing this report **99.1 per cent** of last year's council tax debt has been collected.
- Capita achieved an in-year collection rate of **98.55 per cent** (98.75 per cent 2010/2011) for business rate collection against a target of 99.4 per cent (this target relates to the final year of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) in 2007/08). Performance was once again affected by the economic downturn but it was still a considerable achievement.
- The cash office has continued to run smoothly. Capita acts as a remote cashier within its Coventry contact centre and during the year collected almost £660,000

12. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for revenues and the cash office as follows:

KPT judgement	Excellent
Previous KPT judgement for comparison	Excellent

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

13. Customer satisfaction with council services is of high importance. Though the council is ultimately responsible for delivering customer satisfaction, the operational duty of providing customer service is delegated to the contractor.

Taking customer satisfaction into account when evaluating performance ensures that Capita is focused on the outcome of performance for customers.

14. In accordance with the model for reviewing the performance of contractors, measurement of customer satisfaction should be undertaken through:

- ongoing measurement by the contractor as part of the service
- independent surveys and gap analyses commissioned by the council as part of its consultation process.

15. To meet the council's requirements, satisfaction is measured on a scale of 1-5 which is convenient and replicates the Audit Commission's previous BVPI measurements:

- 5 – very satisfied
- 4 – satisfied
- 3 – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 2 – dissatisfied
- 1 – very dissatisfied

16. Due to its significant impact upon our more vulnerable customers, it is the benefits service (evaluated below) that is heavily scrutinised as far as the financial services contract is concerned. The revenues collection function rarely gets compliments due to the nature of the service, and although the council demands high collection rates it requires processes to be efficient and perceived as fair by the customer. However, during 2011 the council and Capita undertook a business rates satisfaction survey. Unfortunately the number of respondents was very low. The survey produced the following results:

- Satisfaction with the service was 64 per cent and specifically in terms of accuracy of the bill 59 per cent; additional information that accompanied the bill 49 per cent; and, methods of payment available 67 per cent. 11 per cent said they encountered problems paying their bills and eight per cent of those who contacted the council claimed that their query was not resolved on first contact
- Respondents who contacted the service by telephone were positive about the way their calls were handled (70 per cent) i.e. calls were answered quickly (80 per cent); queries were dealt with swiftly (70 per cent). However, 15 per cent felt it was difficult trying to get to speak to the right member of staff
- Satisfaction with staff was 65 per cent, with staff being perceived as friendly; they treated respondents with respect; and, explained things in a way they could understand. However, 35 per cent did not always feel confident that what staff said was correct.

17. The council received 48 official (revenues) complaints during 2011/2012 (33 in 2010/2011). The majority of these complaints were dealt with promptly and although nine were justified (10 in 2010/2012) and resulted costs being written off totalling £95, all but two were resolved at stage one of the complaints procedure with two being resolved at stage 2.

18. The annual billing process was once again carried out efficiently and the continuation of paperless direct debits offers a convenient facility for taxpayers to set up direct debits over the phone. By the end of the year the council was at its all time highest direct debit take-up of 77 per cent. This is the second highest achieved by Capita at any of its clients and is higher than most other councils. In addition, benefit notifications were posted in the same envelope as council tax bills.
19. Capita undertook an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of the council tax service in 2011/2012 following on from a successful assessment carried out in 2010/2011. EIA assessments help to achieve racial, disability and gender equality. It reviewed recent improvements in the service during the 2011 financial year, including the introduction of e-billing, which allows wider choice and convenience about how residents receive their bills; visiting officers/Inspectors helping raise awareness about council tax discounts/reliefs; the improvement and redesign of various council tax discount application forms; and, the second direct debit date which was implemented during 2010 has continued to be heavily promoted during 2011 which has proved to be very successful. In addition, all Capita staff have spent time reading and gaining a better understanding of the Human Rights Act. Capita also demonstrated its compliance with the Equality Act and the equality elements of the contract, through the completion of a quarterly monitoring form.
20. Quarterly meetings with the Citizens Advice Bureaux were once again well received and did not raise any concerns.
21. Capita received **31,466** council tax telephone calls at its Coventry contact centre during the year (almost 3,000 less than in 2010/11). It managed to answer **86** per cent of these calls within 20 seconds (the target being 80 per cent). The council does receive some complaints about the service from time to time (usually when there have been unavoidable bulk mailings), but generally the service is good during calmer periods. No official complaints were received during 2011/12.
22. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction for revenues and the cash office as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement	Good
Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison	Good

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

23. Whilst customer satisfaction is an important priority, a further important dimension is the satisfaction expressed by the council as the client on whether the contractor is meeting its needs and expectations. These needs and expectations have been measured using the model for reviewing performance of contractors and are attached as **Appendix 2**.
24. This produced a score of **4.58** out of a maximum score of **5.0**. Based on this performance, the Head of Finance made the following judgement on Capita's delivery of council satisfaction.

Council satisfaction judgement

Excellent

Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison

Excellent

Overall assessment – Revenues

25. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPTs, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment

Excellent

Previous Overall assessment for comparison

Excellent

Strengths and areas for improvement

26. **Appendix 2** records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of Capita during the review period. Where performance is lower than that expected the contract manager will agree an improvement plan with Capita. This has not been required for this element of the contract.

Contractor’s feedback

27. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to the council processes. This is included in **Appendix 9**.

BENEFITS

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPT’s)

28. Performance against performance targets is given in **Appendix 1** with the indicators that are key performance targets for the contractual payment and performance mechanism in bold.

29. The main points to note when assessing performance for the review period include:

- The figure for speed of processing new claims (the old BVPI 78a measure) came in at **17.84 days**, inside the **19 day target**, compared to 20.13 days in 2010/2011. This was the best in-year performance since the inception of the contract. Changes in circumstances (the old BVPI 78b measure) came in at **8.63 days** against a very challenging target of **9.5 days**, compared to 11.79 days in 2010/2011. Again, this was the best in-year performance since the inception of the contract **NI 181** (combined new claims and changes processing) came in at a very pleasing **9.86 days** and under the **13 day target**, compared to 12.81 days in 2010/2011. Again, the best in-year performance since this measure began

- Capita’s promised focus on getting benefit assessments “right first time” continued during 2011/12. The financial accuracy performance rate for 2011/2012 was an outstanding **96.03 per cent** (based on the council’s statutory checks) and an impressive 1.89 per cent improvement upon the 94.14 per cent recorded in 2010/2011. It was by far the best performance since the inception of the contract (and compared very favourably with our MKOB (Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire) benchmarking group)
- During 2011/12 the Audit Commission qualified the council’s 2010/11 benefit subsidy grant claim for some minor technicalities only, which were accepted, and confirmed that previous recommendations had been carried out. The council did not breach the local authority financial error threshold levels and, as a consequence, was not financially penalised. This was reported to the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 19 January 2012
- Recovery of overpaid benefit, which had been subject to close scrutiny by the council, once again made great strides during 2011/12. During the year old debt reduced by **£447,000** whilst **72 per cent** of all debts raised during 2011/12 were collected, amounting to **£917,550**. Benefit debt, which is predominantly claimant error and fraudulent overpayments, is notoriously difficult to collect and prompt; firm action is required to keep on top of it. Of the year-end arrears, which totalled £1.59m, 59 per cent of the debt (54 per cent of debtors) was subject to arrangements. 2011/12 was the best performance in terms of managing and collecting the debt since the inception of the contract.

30. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for Benefits as follows:

KPT judgement	Excellent
Previous KPT judgement for comparison	Good

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

31. As explained above, due to its significant impact upon our more vulnerable customers, it is the benefits service that is heavily scrutinised as far as the financial services contract is concerned. Capita is contracted to gauge customer satisfaction by conducting surveys (which is important following the previous BVPI surveys being abolished), and a survey carried out during 2011/2012 produced the following results:

- Taking everything into account, 78 per cent of customers were satisfied with the service they received from the benefits office compared to 89 per cent in 2010/2011
- 75 per cent of customers were satisfied with the amount of time it took to tell them whether their claim was successful or not, compared to 85 per cent in 2010/2011
- 19 per cent of customers surveyed felt their benefit had been calculated incorrectly during the year compared to 21 per cent in 2010/2011.

- 76 per cent of customers were satisfied with the ways in which they could contact the benefits office compared to 82 per cent in 2010/2011
- 11 per cent of customers felt they had to wait a long time to see the person they wanted compared to 25 per cent in 2010/2011
- 43 per cent of customers said they were satisfied with their visit to the benefits office compared to 88 per cent in 2010/2011
- 33 per cent of customers were satisfied with the telephone service (compared to 75 per cent in 2010/2011), with 25 per cent feeling their query was dealt with quickly (7 per cent disagreed) and 24 per cent agreeing that their call was answered quickly (11 per cent disagreed). However, 6 per cent felt it was difficult getting through to the right person
- 64 per cent of customers were satisfied with the service from staff (six per cent disagreed) and 62 per cent felt staff were friendly (six per cent disagreed). 66 per cent of customers felt staff treated with them respect (five per cent disagreed) whilst 50 per cent felt things were explained in a way they could understand (8 per cent disagreed)
- 13 per cent of customers felt that staff were in a rush and 15 per cent felt they were not able to ask the questions they wanted to. 24 per cent weren't always sure what staff said was correct
- 64 per cent of customers were satisfied with the claim form compared to 72 per cent in 2010/2011 whilst 33 per cent felt letters sent about their claim were difficult to understand compared to 34 per cent in 2010/2011.
- Generally, the main improvements customers would like to see would be (i) the time taken to tell them whether their claim was successful or not (ii) improvements to the claim form and (iii) improvements to the telephone service (iv) improvements to methods of contact.

32. The financial services contract with Capita is heavily weighted towards achieving good performance and high levels of customer care and satisfaction. It also specifies building up good working relationships with stakeholders – both internal (e.g. the council's Housing Services Team who share approximately **150** mutual customers at any one time) and external (e.g. Registered Providers – who share approximately **3,900** mutual customers at any one time), to promote joint working where appropriate to improve the end customer experience. To this end Capita has:

- Conducted joint visits with both Housing and RSL staff where this has been requested and held surgeries at Registered Provider offices.
- Trained Housing and Registered Provider staff to verify benefit applications (which avoids unnecessary duplication).
- Held regular meetings with Housing staff where required to address working practices to improve efficiency and effectiveness, end customer experience, and, service level agreements

- Held benefit surgeries around the district. This increases customer access to the service and is an alternative to home visits.
33. Generally, positive feedback has been received from Registered Providers and the CABx via regular liaison meetings. This is always a good yardstick as these organisations predominantly represent the most vulnerable of our customers.
34. The “front of house” function (provided by Capita) continues to be able to process benefit claims at the first point of contact. This is a particularly convenient facility for customers
35. Capita received **20,466** benefit telephone calls at its Coventry contact centre during the year (almost 6,000 less than in 2010/11). It managed to answer 83 per cent of these calls within 20 seconds (the target being 80 per cent). Unfortunately the council does receive some complaints about the service from time to time (usually when there have been unavoidable bulk mailings) and where there seems to be a lack of understanding with complex queries, but generally the service is good during calmer periods. Capita undertook an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the benefits service in 2008/09 which was especially well received by the external disability panel. This assessment was reviewed in 2011/12 and new actions determined in order to continue to advance equal opportunities for people protected by the Equality Act. During 2011/2012 tasks included holding surgeries (as mentioned above); publicising legislative changes; and, promoting benefits to minority groups. This should help improve customer satisfaction in certain areas. Capita also demonstrated its compliance with the Equality Act and the equality elements of the contract, through the completion of a quarterly monitoring form.
36. There were 15 official complaints, nine of which were justified (compared to 27 and 12 in 2010/2011). All except one were dealt with at stage one of the complaints procedure with one progressing to stage two. Compensation totalling £4,450 was paid by Capita (this related to one particular complaint).
37. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction for benefits as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement	Good
Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison	Fair

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

38. Whilst customer satisfaction is an important priority, a further important dimension is the satisfaction expressed by the council as the client on whether the contractor is meeting its needs and expectations. These needs and expectations have been measured using the model for reviewing performance of contractors and are attached as **Appendix 3**.
39. This produced a score of **4.53** out of a maximum score of **5.0**. Based on this performance, the Head of Finance made the following judgement on Capita’s delivery of council satisfaction.

Council satisfaction judgement	Excellent
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Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison

Good

Overall assessment – Benefits

40. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPT’s, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment	Excellent
Previous Overall assessment for comparison	Good

Strengths and areas for improvement

41. **Appendix 3** records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of Capita during the review period. Where performance is lower than that expected the council will agree an improvement plan with Capita.

Contractor’s feedback

42. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to the council processes. This is included in **Appendix 9**

EXCHEQUER – ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

43. **Accounts Receivable** – maximising sundry debts was a key theme of the financial services procurement and during 2011/12 the council (its legal representative and cost centre managers), assisted by Capita, finished the end of the year with its lowest ever recorded arrears levels over 30 days – to the sum of £109,000 compared to the previous year’s best ever of £215,000 and, a debt of in excess of £1million at the commencement of the contract.
44. Capita’s performance in issuing (24,282) invoices within two working days of instructions from cost centres was 100 per cent. Capita also hit 100 per cent performance for the production of (6,732) reminders after 14 days and (536) final notices after 28 days. In addition, important aged debt reports (required for monitoring debt progress) and legal lists (required to determine recovery action) were issued promptly throughout the year and, the write-off of unrecoverable debts were processed promptly.
45. This service area continues to be closely monitored by the council and we are now seeing excellent results with cost centre managers taking more responsibility in recovering the debts that they raise.
46. **Accounts Payable** - Capita continued 2011/12 where it left off at the end of 2010/2011. 100 per cent of (5,917) invoices received were scanned and distributed to service teams within 48 hours and 100 per cent of (15) urgent payment requests (within the same day) were met. In addition, 100 per cent of purchase order requests were met.
47. Payment of invoices within 30 days (the old BVPI8 measure) is not a contractual target upon Capita, but it is greatly influenced by the operation and understanding of the Agresso system and by Capita ensuring that invoices are scanned and distributed in a timely manner. Performance in 2010/11 was **98.67 per cent** compared to 97.83 per cent in 2010/11.
48. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for exchequer as follows:

KPT judgement	Excellent
Previous KPT judgement for comparison	Excellent

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

49. **Accounts payable** – Capita’s excellent performance in the accounts payable process was maintained in 2011/12. Capita worked closely with the on-site council staff (especially through the Agresso Superuser group during the year) to discuss any problems that arose and make service improvements.
50. Capita has processes in place to provide the council with weekly and monthly reports of invoices waiting to be paid or those that were paid late, which have contributed to the significant improvement in payment of invoice performance.

51. **Accounts receivable** – As explained above, due to its significant impact upon our more vulnerable customers, it is the benefits service that is heavily scrutinised as far as the financial services contract is concerned. However, complaints are monitored through the council’s complaints procedure and during the year no complaints were received.

52. Training and access issues for internal customers (cost centre managers) to enquire on the status of debts raised and income collected were good with Capita becoming more proactive generally. The exchequer manager continued to attend meetings with the legal representatives and the client manager and was generally more accessible for staff.

53. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on council satisfaction for exchequer as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement	Excellent
Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison	Good

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

54. Whilst customer satisfaction is an important priority, a further important dimension is the satisfaction expressed by the council as the client on whether the contractor is meeting its needs and expectations.

55. The council’s needs and expectations have been measured using the model for reviewing performance of contractors and are attached as **Appendix 4**.

56. This produced a score of **4.5** out of a maximum score of **5.0**. Based on this performance, the Head of Finance made the following judgement on Capita’s delivery of council satisfaction:

Council satisfaction judgement	Excellent
Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison	Excellent

Overall assessment

57. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPT’s, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment	Excellent
Previous Overall assessment for comparison	Excellent

Strengths and areas for improvement

58. **Appendix 4** records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of Capita during the review period. Where performance is lower than that expected the contract manager will agree an improvement plan with Capita.

Contractor’s feedback

A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to the council processes. This is included in **Appendix 9**.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

59. System availability. The availability of the Agresso system has remained satisfactory throughout the period; there have been no major unannounced periods of system non-availability that have inconvenienced users.
60. System administration. The service to upload to the system, setting up new codes and new users/removing users, has proved responsive and there are no issues with this part of the contractor’s performance. The contractor has continued to be of assistance in supporting the council’s internal transfer of responsibilities to the finance team.
61. Upgrade of Agresso. The upgrade to Agresso version 5.5.3 has proved to be reliable with no noticeable teething troubles.
62. Reconciliations. Most reconciliations that are the responsibility of the contractor are completed in a timely manner. However, there were problems experienced in producing one reconciliation, due primarily to responsibility for the task in question changing hands on the contractor’s side. Both sides are working together to try and improve this situation, and we are grateful to the client manager for investing his time in looking into this for us.
63. Although no KPTs are laid down for the FMS part of the contract, the estimated assessment of this dimension is “good”.

KPT judgement	Good
Previous KPT judgement for comparison	Good

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

The council is the customer for the financial management system. Service departments only use the web based version of Agresso. There has been no

negative feedback from the service departments and they remain satisfied with the general service provided, system availability and response to queries.

64. Accountancy services are the principal users of the “back-office” live system. Routine use of the financial management system causes no issues.

65. Taking the whole year’s performance into account, the performance is considered good.

Customer satisfaction judgement

Good

Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison

Good

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

66. Whilst customer satisfaction is an important priority, a further important dimension is the satisfaction expressed by the council as the client on whether the contractor is meeting its needs and expectations. These needs and expectations have been measured using the model for reviewing performance of contractors and are attached as **Appendix 5**.

67. This produced a score of **3.90** (last year was **3.90**) out of a maximum score of **5.0.**, no change to previous year.

Council satisfaction judgement

Good

Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison

Good

Overall assessment

68. In overall terms the service provided by the contractor is good. In terms of routine systems operation and maintenance the client accountancy team consider the staff and support from the contractor’s team in Mendip to be helpful, polite and efficient in dealing with issues, problems and queries raised by the client team. We are pleased to note that the efforts made last year around the Agresso upgrade have continued to reap benefits for both the client and the contractor.

69. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPT’s, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the Head of Finance has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment

Good

Previous Overall assessment for comparison

Good

Strengths and areas for improvement

70. **Appendix 5** records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of Capita during the review period. Where performance is lower than that expected the contract manager will agree an improvement plan with Capita.

Contractor's feedback

71. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to the council processes. This is included in **Appendix 9**.

PAYROLL

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

72. Capita has been providing a payroll system and its administration since January, 2007. Up until February 2012 the council fulfilled the payroll inputting function. Since February 2012 Capita has provided the whole service.
73. There is one KPT for the payroll part of the contract. This requires a timely and accurate payment to all staff and councillors. In other words 100 per cent accuracy of payments by the due date. Up until February 2012 there were only a few minor errors that were due to Capita. In February and March 2012 the number of errors made increased as Capita took over full responsibility for the end to end payroll service. However, the number of errors made was less than those made on average by the previous experienced in-house team. Nine months into the new arrangements errors rates are very low.
74. Given the significant changes in processes required for Capita to fulfil its additional role from Carlisle the actual error rate in February and March was pleasingly low. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for payroll as follows:

KPT judgement	Excellent
Previous KPT judgement for comparison	Excellent

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

75. Satisfaction is covering the period April 2011 to March 2012. Customers in this context are staff and councillors. Monthly payments have been made into customers' accounts by the due date, with gross to net calculations accurate.
76. Up until February 2012 there were no instances of customer dissatisfaction as a consequence of the performance of the element of the payroll service provided by Capita. In February and March there were only minor cases of dissatisfaction.
77. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction for payroll as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement	Excellent
Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison	Excellent

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

78. Council satisfaction is measured by the client based on the contractor’s performance against the council’s needs and expectations. These needs and expectations have been measured using the model for reviewing performance of contractors.

79. There have been no areas of concern during 2011/12. Capita has handled the handover of payroll inputting responsibilities in a professional and orderly manner. Working relationships are very good which in itself is very pleasing considering the service is delivered from Carlisle. Special thanks should go to Julie Graham of Capita who manages the contract in Carlisle. Julie has been instrumental in ensuring the council’s needs are fully understood and met thereby creating an excellent partnership relationship that seeks to go the extra mile.

80. This (**Appendix 6**) produced a score of 4.68 out of a maximum score of 5.0. Based on this performance, the Head of Finance made the following judgement on Capita’s delivery of council satisfaction:

Council satisfaction judgement	Excellent
Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison	Good

Overall assessment

81. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPTs, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment	Excellent
Previous Overall assessment for comparison	Excellent

Contractor’s feedback

82. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to the council processes. This is included in **Appendix 9**.

CUSTOMER CONTACT

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

This element of the contract is managed by Geoff Bushell, shared performance, projects and customer services manager.

83. Capita took on the management of South's reception and switchboard services on 16 April 2007, and the measurement of performance against targets began on 31 July 2007.
84. Performance of the switchboard team against the key performance targets has remained steady for the past year. Abandoned calls have averaged 3.8 per cent, which is within the Service Level Agreement (SLA) of five per cent. The percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds (an industry standard benchmark) remained above the 80 per cent SLA throughout 2011/2012. The number of calls that are not answered within 50 seconds has not met the SA since the start of the contract.
85. In 2011/2012, Capita processed 32,531 visitors to Crowmarsh reception.
86. The front of house team has performed strongly, and monthly reports show that visitors are seen promptly with performance exceeding SLA for visitors seen within two minutes.
87. Since the SLA was first agreed in 2007, the character of customer service provision has changed in two respects:
- the KPT of answering 99 per cent of phone calls within 50 seconds has never proved attainable, however, with hindsight this is an unrealistic target and Capita has indicated that it would not be able to meet it with current resources. A more realistic target within current contract costs would be 95 per cent, a negligible reduction in customer services;
 - the KPT's for first contact resolution are no longer appropriate because Capita is contracted to forward certain calls and visitors to the relevant departments and is therefore not required to resolve 100 per cent of telephone and visitor enquiries.
88. For the above reasons, the contract monitoring officer sought to negotiate with Capita to agree a revision to the SLA. However, at that time (March 2012), Capita was not prepared to consider a contract variation.
89. The table below shows performance against the SLA for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012. The three SLAs which are now less relevant are indicated by italics and shading, and have been accorded a zero weighting in calculating the overall average KPT performance rating score. Individual KPT rating is calculated according to the guidance accompanying the contractor review process.

KPT ref	Description of KPT	Target	Performance 2011/12	Previous performance 2010/11 for comparison	Trend	Individual KPT rating (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor)	KPT rating score (excellent = 5, good = 4, fair = 3, weak = 2, poor = 1)
KPT 1	Abandoned call rate	5%	3.8%	4.3%	Better	Excellent	5
KPT 2	Calls answered within 20 seconds	80%	85.4%	84.7%	About the same	Excellent	5
<i>KPT 3</i>	<i>Calls answered within 50 seconds</i>	<i>99%</i>	<i>90.8%</i>	<i>91.0%</i>	<i>About the same</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>KPT 4 etc</i>	<i>First contact resolution</i>	<i>80%</i>	<i>No longer relevant to measure</i>	-	-	-	-
KPT 5	Personal callers seen within 2 minutes of arrival	80%	99.8%	99.7%	Better	Excellent	5
KPT 6	Personal callers seen within 5 minutes of arrival	100%	99.9%	99.9%	Same	Good	4
<i>KPT 7</i>	<i>First contact resolution</i>	<i>80%</i>	<i>No longer relevant to measure</i>	-	-	-	-
Overall "average" KPT performance rating score (allowing for zero weighting of shaded italic KPTs)							4.75
Overall "average" KPT performance (excellent, good, fair, weak or poor)							Excellent

90. Based on this performance, and excluding the three KPTs which are no longer relevant (which had been included the previous year) the Head of HR, IT and Customer Services has made a judgement on KPT performance as follows:

KPT judgement

Excellent

Previous KPT judgement for comparison

Good

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

91. We use a range of methods to measure customer satisfaction with the service. This includes direct feedback questionnaires collected from customers immediately after their visit and analysis of complaints. A postal and online survey of citizens' panel members was last carried out in December 2010 and is scheduled to be repeated in Autumn 2012, so no data is available for the 2011-12 year under review.
92. Satisfaction with customer service is also measured through a face to face survey of residents held every two years. However, this provides feedback about customer satisfaction with the council overall, and cannot distinguish between satisfaction with staff and with the contractor; hence it cannot be used for this contractor review.
93. Customer feedback forms are displayed in the reception area, and staff are asked to encourage customers to provide feedback before leaving. Between April 2011 and March 2012, 720 feedback forms were completed. A good mixture of men and women, and people of different age groups and ethnicities took part as well as customers with disabilities.
94. Customers were asked 'Overall, how satisfied were you with the way in which your enquiry was handled at reception?'. Of those who took part, 96 per cent were satisfied and 3 per cent were dissatisfied overall as shown below.

Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
85%	11%	1%	1%	2%

(Base: 720 completed customer feedback forms)

95. Other feedback collected also suggests high levels of satisfaction with the following aspects of service provision; 'being polite', 'being welcoming', 'being professional', 'being helpful', 'greeting you with a smile', 'having a good attitude'. Of the 720 responses received, only 15 rated one or more of these aspects as poor or very poor. Similarly just nine people said their needs were not met in a positive manner at reception. Satisfaction with waiting times was high. The majority who took part said they were seen by reception staff straight away with just 28 people saying they had to wait more than five minutes. Ninety-seven per cent were satisfied with the length of time they had to wait before reception staff dealt with their enquiry whilst one per cent were dissatisfied. By industry standards, these results collectively represent extremely high customer satisfaction.
96. Using the calculation formula in the guidance accompanying this process the overall customer satisfaction score is 4.76 out of 5.
97. We hold monthly contract meetings specifically to discuss customer service, and any issues arising are dealt with through these meetings if they have not already been resolved informally.
98. During the year, no complaints were received about the switchboard or front of house service.

99. This year’s customer satisfaction results are higher than previous years probably because this year there were no Citizens’ Panel or relevant resident survey data to include, and these latter data usually produce lower customer satisfaction results. Based on the contractor’s performance of 4.76, the the Head of HR, IT and Customer Services has made a judgement on customer satisfaction as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement

Excellent

Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison

Fair

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

100. An analysis of council satisfaction performance appears in appendix 7, as judged by the customer service contract manager in consultation with relevant colleagues.

101. This produced a score of **4.2** out of a maximum score of **5.0**. Based on this performance, the Head of HR, IT and Customer Services made the following judgement on Capita’s delivery of council satisfaction:

Council satisfaction judgement

Good

Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison

Good

Overall assessment

102. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPTs, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the the Head of HR, IT and Customer Services has made an overall judgement as follows. Recognising the high importance of customer satisfaction, this dimension is accorded greater weight in the judgement.

Overall assessment

Excellent

Previous Overall assessment for comparison

Good

Strengths and areas for improvement

103. **Appendix 7** records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of Capita during the review period. Where performance is lower than that expected the contract manager will agree an improvement plan with Capita. This has not been required for this element of the contract.

Contractor's feedback

104. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to council processes. This is included in for the contract as a whole in **Appendix 9**.

CONCESSIONARY FARES

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

105. Capita administered the national bus pass scheme on behalf of the council. Generally, the national scheme is administered from the contact centre in Coventry, whilst the arrangements for lost bus passes are administered in the council offices.
106. As far as the national bus pass scheme is concerned, Capita is required to (i) order new passes within three working days of a completed application being received;(ii) update the customer database records within three working days of changes being received; (iii) request replacement bus passes within three days of a request being made. Against all these KPT's Capita generally achieved full compliance during 2011/12.
107. Capita handled 3,498 telephone calls at its Coventry contact centre during the year. It managed to answer 83 per cent of these calls within 20 seconds (the target being 80 per cent).
108. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for concessionary fares as follows:

KPT judgement	Excellent
Previous KPT judgement for comparison	Excellent

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

109. No customer satisfaction survey was undertaken during the year so it was not possible to gauge satisfaction levels on service administration.
110. However, no customer complaints were received in respect of the assisted travel service during the course of the year.
111. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction for concessionary fares as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement	Excellent
Previous Customer satisfaction judgement for comparison	Good

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

112. Whilst customer satisfaction is an important priority, a further important dimension is the satisfaction expressed by the council as the client on whether the contractor is meeting its needs and expectations. These needs and expectations have been measured using the model for reviewing performance of contractors and are attached as **Appendix 8**.

113. This produced a score of **4.36** out of a maximum score of **5.0**. Based on this performance, the Head of Finance made the following judgement on Capita's delivery of council satisfaction:

Council satisfaction judgement

Excellent

Previous Council satisfaction judgement for comparison

Excellent

Overall assessment

114. Taking into account the performance of Capita against KPT's, customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows.

Overall assessment

Excellent

Previous Overall assessment for comparison

Excellent

Strengths and areas for improvement

115. **Appendix 8** records strengths and areas for improvement relating to the performance of Capita during the review period. Where performance is lower than that expected the contract manager will agree an improvement plan with Capita. This has not been required for this element of the contract.

Contractor's feedback

116. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to the council processes. This is included in **Appendix 9**.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

117. The contract with Capita incorporates a payment and performance mechanism. Issues around the exact application of the mechanism and the changes going forward are the responsibility of the Operational Board.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

118. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

CONCLUSION

119. The Head of Finance has assessed Capita's performance as follows for its delivery of the financial services contract:

- Revenues – **excellent** (10/11 – excellent)
- Benefits – **excellent** (10/11 – good)
- Exchequer (accounts payable, accounts receivable, excess charges collection) – **excellent** (10/11 – excellent)
- Financial management system – **good** (10/11 good)
- Payroll – **excellent** (10/11 – excellent)
- Customer Contact – **excellent** (10/11 – good)
- Concessionary fares (assisted travel) – **excellent** (10/11 excellent)

120. There has once again been an improvement in the quality of the financial services provided by Capita during 2011/12 – it has definitely been the best year since the inception of the contract and Capita should be congratulated. Benefits especially saw a marked improvement with all speed of processing targets being met for the first time and financial accuracy improving once again. The governance process will continue to vigorously monitor the contract, and this, along with the commitment pledged by Capita management should help maintain and improve service provision in the future.

Performance Targets	2010/11 Target	2010/11 Achieved	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Achieved
Percentage of Council Tax collected	98.60%	98.65%	98.60%	98.64%
Percentage of NDR collected	99.40%	98.75%	99.40%	98.55%
Average time (days) for processing new benefit claims.	19	20.13	19	17.84
Average time (days) for processing benefit changes in circumstances	9.5	11.79	9.5	8.63
N181 Average time (days) for processing new claims and changes in circumstances	13	12.81	13	9.86
Financial accuracy of benefit assessments	95%	94.14%	95%	96.03%

Council satisfaction – Revenues

This assessment allows the council (as a client) to record its own satisfaction with aspects of a contractor's performance which lie outside Key Performance Targets and customer satisfaction. Each officer with direct knowledge and who frequently interacts with the contractor should complete this form. Questions can be left blank if not relevant to a contract or contractor.

Contractor / supplier / partner name | Capita

From (date) | 1 April 2011 | To | 31 March 2012

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs	✓				
2 Response time	✓				
3 Delivers to time		✓			
4 Delivers to budget	✓				
5 Efficiency of invoicing		✓			
6 Approach to health & safety	✓				
7 Supports the council's plans for joint working	✓				
8 *					

* These spaces are deliberately left blank for the addition of any performance criteria which are specific to this particular contract / service.

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with	✓				
10 Communications / keeping the client informed		✓			
11 Quality of written documentation	✓				
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity		✓			
13 Listening	✓				
14 Quality of relationship	✓				

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work		✓			
16 Degree of innovation		✓			
17 Goes the extra mile		✓			
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives		✓			
19 Supports the Council's equality objectives	✓				
20 Degree of partnership working	✓				

KEY DOCUMENTS

If required, has the contractor provided the Council with annual updates of the following documents?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Annual Corporate Governance Assurance Statement? (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Updated risk register (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Annual business plan (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Updated business continuity plan (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths	Revenues management and support to the manager
	Knowledge and commitment of staff
Areas for improvement	Responses to FOI requests

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	11	8	0	0	0	19

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	11	X 5	55
Satisfied	4.3	8	X 4	32
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	0	X 3	3
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total		19		87
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Calculation: $87 \div 19 = 4.58$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Council satisfaction –Benefits

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs	✓				
2 Response time		✓			
3 Delivers to time		✓			
4 Delivers to budget	✓				
5 Efficiency of invoicing	✓				
6 Approach to health & safety	✓				
7 Supports the council's plans for joint working	✓				
8 *					

* These spaces are deliberately left blank for the addition of any performance criteria which are specific to this particular contract / service.

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with	✓				
10 Communications / keeping the client informed		✓			
11 Quality of written documentation		✓			
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity		✓			
13 Listening	✓				
14 Quality of relationship	✓				

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work		✓			
16 Degree of innovation		✓			
17 Goes the extra mile		✓			
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives		✓			

19 Supports the Council's equality objectives	✓				
20 Degree of partnership working	✓				

KEY DOCUMENTS

If required, has the contractor provided the Council with annual updates of the following documents?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Annual Corporate Governance Assurance Statement? (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Updated risk register (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Annual business plan (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Updated business continuity plan (Yes / No) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths	Equality awareness
	Surgeries/home visiting
	Keenness of off-site team
	Liaison with housing

Areas for improvement	Keeping call centre up to date with benefits changes

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	10	9	0	0	0	19

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	10	X 5	50
Satisfied	4.3	9	X 4	36
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	0	X 3	0
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total	19		86
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Calculation: $86 \div 19 = 4.53$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Council satisfaction – Exchequer

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs	✓				
2 Response time		✓			
3 Delivers to time		✓			
4 Delivers to budget	✓				
5 Efficiency of invoicing	✓				
6 Approach to health & safety	✓				
7 Supports the Council's plans for joint working	✓				
8 Contingency plans		✓			

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with	✓				
10 Communications / keeping the client informed		✓			
11 Quality of written documentation		✓			
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity		✓			
13 Listening		✓			
14 Quality of relationship	✓				

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work		✓			
16 Degree of innovation		✓			
17 Goes the extra mile		✓			
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives	✓				

19 Supports the Council's equality objectives	✓				
20 Degree of partnership working	✓				

KEY DOCUMENTS

If required, has the contractor provided the Council with annual updates of the following documents?

1. Annual Corporate Governance Assurance Statement? (Yes / No)
2. Updated risk register (Yes / No)
3. Annual business plan (Yes / No)
4. Updated business continuity plan (Yes / No)

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths	Processing of standard basic functions for AP and AR
	Keeness of staff
Areas for improvement	

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	10	10	0	0	0	20

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	10	X 5	50
Satisfied	4.3	10	X 4	40
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	0	X 3	0
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total	20		90
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Calculation: $90 \div 20 = 4.5$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Council satisfaction – FMS

This assessment allows the Council (as a client) to record its own satisfaction with aspects of a contractor's performance which lie outside Key Performance Targets and customer satisfaction. Each officer with direct knowledge and who frequently interacts with the contractor should complete this form. Questions can be left blank if not relevant to a contract or contractor.

Contractor / supplier / partner name | Capita

From (date) | 1 April 2011 | To | 31 March 2012

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs		√			
2 Response time		√			
3 Delivers to time		√			
4 Delivers to budget		√			
5 Efficiency of invoicing		√			
6 Approach to health & safety		√			
7 Supports the Council's plans for joint working		√			
8 *Contingency plans		√			

* These spaces are deliberately left blank for the addition of any performance criteria which are specific to this particular contract / service.

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with		√			
10 Communications / keeping the client informed		√			
11 Quality of written documentation		√			
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity			√		
13 Listening		√			
14 Quality of relationship		√			

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work			√		
16 Degree of innovation		√			
17 Goes the extra mile		√			
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives		√			
19 Supports the Council's equality objectives		√			
20 Degree of partnership working		√			

KEY DOCUMENTS

If required, has the contractor provided the Council with annual updates of the following documents?

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Annual Corporate Governance Assurance Statement? (Yes / No) | |
| 2. Updated risk register (Yes / No) | |
| 3. Annual business plan (Yes / No) | |
| 4. Updated business continuity plan (Yes / No) | Yes |

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths	Good relationships with system administration team at Mendip,
	Generally helpful, pleasant staff – this is not to be underrated as a strength.
	Upgrade to v 5.5.3 in May 2011 has produced improvements – especially for web clients
Areas for improvement	Working with the client and understanding the client's needs.
	Proactive development of FMS
	Resilience in the event of handover of responsibilities

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	0	18	2	0	0	20

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	0	X 5	0
Satisfied	4.3	18	X 4	72
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	2	X 3	6
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total		20		78
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Calculation: $78 \div 20 = 3.90$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Review of Performance of Payroll

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs	√				
2 Response time	√				
3 Delivers to time	√				
4 Delivers to budget	✓				
5 Efficiency of invoicing	✓				
6 Approach to health & safety	✓				
7 Supports the Council's plans for joint working	✓				
8 *					

* These spaces are deliberately left blank for the addition of any performance criteria which are specific to this particular contract / service.

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with		√			
10 Communications / keeping the client informed		√			
11 Quality of written documentation		√			
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity		√			
13 Listening	√				
14 Quality of relationship	√				

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work	√				
16 Degree of innovation	√				
17 Goes the extra mile	√				
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives		√			
19 Supports the Council's equality objectives		√			
20 Degree of partnership working	√				

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	13	6	0	0	0	19

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	13	X 5	65
Satisfied	4.3	6	X 4	24
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	0	X 3	0
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total	19			89
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Calculation: $89 \div 19 = 4.68$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Review of Performance of Switchboard and Reception Services

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs	✓				
2 Response time		✓			
3 Delivers to time		✓			
4 Delivers to budget	✓				
5 Efficiency of invoicing	✓				
6 Approach to health & safety		✓			
7 *					
8 *					

* These spaces are deliberately left blank for the addition of any performance criteria which are specific to this particular contract / service.

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with	✓				
10 Communications / keeping the client informed	✓				
11 Quality of written documentation		✓			
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity		✓			
13 Listening		✓			
14 Quality of relationship	✓				

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very	(4)	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-	(1) Very
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Agenda Item 1 Appendix 7

	satisfied	Satisfied	satisfied	dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work			✓	
16 Degree of innovation			✓	
17 Goes the extra mile		✓		
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives			✓	
19 Supports the Council's equality objectives		✓		
20 Degree of partnership working		✓		

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths

The front of house team delivers a good professional service to customers, and has proved to be flexible during the launch of new initiatives. The team leader keeps the customer service contract manager well informed and always demonstrates a desire to offer a high quality service. The feedback from customer feedback forms is excellent

The switchboard service is generally efficient and meets most SLAs. There have been no customer complaints this year

Areas for improvement

The council would like to see a more co-operative and sometimes more timely approach from Capita when it comes to making changes, such as updating the SLA, and responding to our change requests (agreed with the council's wider contract manager) to update switchboard greetings and call-flow.

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	6	9	3	0	0	18

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	6	X 5	30
Satisfied	4.3	9	X 4	36
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	3	X 3	9
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0
Total		18		75

Calculation: $75 \div 18 = 4.2$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Review of Concessionary Fares (Assisted Travel)

SERVICE DELIVERY

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
1 Understanding of the client's needs	✓				
2 Response time	✓				
3 Delivers to time	✓				
4 Delivers to budget	✓				
5 Efficiency of invoicing	✓				
6 Approach to health & safety	✓				
7 Supports the council's plans for joint working	✓				
8 *					

* These spaces are deliberately left blank for the addition of any performance criteria which are specific to this particular contract / service.

COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
9 Easy to deal with	✓				
10 Communications / keeping the client informed	✓				
11 Quality of written documentation		✓			
12 Compliance with Council's corporate identity	✓				
13 Listening			✓		
14 Quality of relationship	✓				

IMPROVEMENT AND INNOVATION

Attribute	(5) Very satisfied	(4) Satisfied	(3) Neither	(2) Dis-satisfied	(1) Very dissatsfd
15 Offers suggestions beyond the scope of work			✓		
16 Degree of innovation			✓		
17 Goes the extra mile		✓			
18 Supports the Council's sustainability objectives		✓			
19 Supports the Council's equality objectives		✓			
20 Degree of partnership working			✓		

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	11	4	4	0	0	19

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	11	X 5	55
Satisfied	4.3	4	X 4	16
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	4	X 3	12
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total	19		83
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Calculation: $83 \div 19 = 4.36$

For reasons of consistency with previous assessments, and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	Fair	Weak	Poor

Contractor 360° feedback

CONTRACTOR'S REACTION / FEEDBACK ON COUNCIL'S ASSESSMENT

Capita is pleased to be given the opportunity to feedback on the findings of this annual report. The contents whilst not always positive are a very valuable tool to:

- Enable key service areas to meet and reflect across a whole year
- Understand, in the context of an overall contract, the positives and negatives
- Identify learning points from both organisations' point of view, to enable the service to be developed and improved as time progresses
- Document, for councillors, a good picture of the overall contract.

Capita is fully committed to this process, and believes it can be one very important tool for improving service to customers.

The Revenues service has again delivered excellent collection rates for the Council despite the continued financial pressures on residents and businesses. This is due to the excellent teamwork and dedication shown by the whole team. Towards the end of 11/12 Capita introduced some more e-media based service offerings which should benefit the customers who utilise those options, early feedback appears to be positive but the coming months will provide more robust evidence of the effects of these innovations. The comments regarding FOI requests were justified for 11/12 but I am happy to report that process changes have led to significant improvements in this area.

The Benefit service made significant progress during 11/12 and that trend has continued into 12/13 due to the many process changes introduced during the year. The hard work of all the staff has put us in a good position to be able to face the many challenges which government policy has laid before the Council.

Despite the good work carried out on a major system upgrade and with one minor exception around the reconciliation issue, I find the FMS review to be disappointing as there appears to be little focus on any positives over the year, in fact the flavour of the feedback seems to say at best 'we couldn't find anything to really complain about'.

I am very pleased with how the transfer of the payroll service has been handled by both sides and there seems to be a very good working relationship. During the coming year we intend to bring in further service improvements to benefit all parties.

Customer services has again performed very well despite the continued pressures brought about by the economic climate.

Concessionary fares had another very good and sadly final year.

Overall Capita is very pleased with the report and we look forward to working closely with the Council to make further improvements in the coming 12 months.

ANY AREAS WHERE CONTRACTOR DISAGREES WITH ASSESSMENT

The issue of reconciliation within the FMS review implies that the problems sat entirely with Capita, this is an unfair reflection as work is also required by the Council as part of this process and there were severe delays in providing this data. I accept that Capita can improve its performance in this area but to totally smooth the process will require improvements on the Council side too. It should also be noted that the team at Mendip have been sitting on a system improvement project for over a year where the delay sits solely with the Council.

The customer service feedback lists as 'an area for improvement' my refusal to agree to a change to the SLAs. The proposed change related to reducing the 99% target to 95% both of which are unachievable and I therefore see no point in making any amendments. I have never queried the removal of redundant KPIs as this is just common sense. I also reserve the right to disagree with proposed changes where they serve no purpose or represent no business improvement. There is also the implication that system changes have been slow but given that Capita have been involved in customer service improvement projects run by the Council which have still not been delivered I feel that this criticism is a little unfair.

WHAT COULD / SHOULD THE COUNCIL DO DIFFERENTLY TO ENABLE THE CONTRACTOR TO DELIVER THE SERVICE MORE EFFICIENTLY / EFFECTIVELY / ECONOMICALLY?

The current working relationship is very healthy and robust

Feedback provided by D Keen

Date 4th October 2012

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Scrutiny Committee Report



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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Cabinet member responsible: Councillor Bill Service

Tel: 01235 510810

E-mail: bill.service@hotmail.co.uk

To: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 30 October 2012

AGENDA ITEM NO

7

Revenue Grants 2013/14 – 2016/17

Recommendation

1. That the scrutiny committee approves the terms of reference for a scrutiny task group (detailed at appendix 1) to consider the revenue grant applications for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and to make comments to Cabinet.
2. That the scrutiny committee appoints members to the task group and agrees to delegate authority to make any subsequent appointments to the task group to the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee in consultation with the Head of Corporate Strategy.

Purpose of Report

1. To approve the terms of reference for a scrutiny task group (detailed at appendix 1) to consider the grant applications for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and to make comments to Cabinet and to approve a delegation to the Head of Corporate Strategy to make appointments to the task group.

Strategic Objectives

2. The revenue grant policy will contribute to the council's strategic objective to offer support for communities.

Background

3. The scrutiny committee considered the draft revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17 at its meeting on 7 June 2012 and made four specific comments about the scheme. These are listed below with a response from the cabinet member with responsibility for grants.

Scrutiny Committee comment	Cabinet member response
Citizens Advice Bureaux should be excluded from the maximum limit on revenue grants.	Agreed, the Citizens Advice Bureaux grant application will be considered separately. The CAB will be asked to apply using the same process and criteria but Cabinet will determine any grant award to them separately.
A condition should be added that audited accounts are required annually.	Agreed in principle, however some small organisations are not required to have their accounts audited. It will be a requirement to submit accounts annually (audited if they are available).
Do not exclude brand new organisations from funding.	Not agreed, organisations can apply if they can provide six months of bank statements. It would be too much of a risk to fund organisations that have been operating for less than six months.
Not to automatically refuse applications from parish councils but to consider the impact of not funding a project proposed or run by a parish council.	Not agreed, parish councils have the opportunity to raise funds via the parish precept.

4. The new revenue grant policy was approved in July and incorporated the above comments from the cabinet member. A copy of the approved policy is attached at appendix 2 of the report. A report regarding the Citizens Advice Bureau will be considered separately by the scrutiny committee on 30 October 2012.
5. The revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17 has been developed in line with the corporate priority to offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering projects and services that support our objectives or those in need. The grant award period has been extended to four years to offer increased financial security to the organisations the council decides to fund.
6. The policy also includes the addition of specific grant priorities towards provision of advice and/or care services or that help to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in the district.
7. The revenue grant scheme opened in July 2012 and closed to applications on 28 September 2012. We received 26 applications requesting more than £1.7m over the four year period. A list of the applications received is attached at appendix 3 of the report.

Matters for consideration

8. The original intention was for the scrutiny committee to consider the revenue grant applications and make comments to inform Cabinet of its views before they are determined in December. Due to the high number of applications officers recommend that a scrutiny task group is created to carry out this work on behalf of the committee. The terms of reference for the scrutiny task group are attached at appendix 1.
9. The Community Investment Fund Panel is unable to consider these revenue grant applications as its remit is only to consider applications for capital grants. However, the scrutiny committee may wish to invite members from the CIF Panel to become a member of the task group as they have experience of reviewing grant applications.

Financial Implications

10. The estimated revenue grant budget in 2013/14 is £444,000 which comprises £20,000 for the council's young achievers scheme and £424,000 for grants to voluntary organisations. This budget includes an allowance for a grant to the Citizens Advice Bureau that is the subject of a separate report.

Legal Implications

11. The council's legal powers for awarding these grants are contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 that provides a general power of competence for local authorities.

Risks

12. The risks associated in offering these grants has been minimised through the evaluation process. Where high risks have been identified these are included in the officer evaluation of each application.

Conclusion

13. The revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17 has been developed in line with the corporate priority to offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering projects and services that support our objectives or those in need.
14. Awarding these grants will support the continued operation of voluntary organisations who support the council's selected grant priorities towards provision of advice and/or care services or that help to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in the district.
15. The committee is asked to approve the terms of reference of the task group as attached at appendix 1 of the report to consider the 26 revenue grant applications for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and make any comments to Cabinet prior to its meeting on 6 December 2012.

Background Papers

- Cabinet member decision on 17 July 2012 to approve the revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17.

Appendix 1

Scrutiny Committee task group to evaluate applications for four-year revenue grants.

The council has received 26 applications for revenue grants of between £5,000 and £25,000 per year for four years starting April 2013 requesting a total of over £1.7m.

The requests for funding by year are:

2013/14 - £430,932
2014/15 - £442,266
2015/16 - £443,741
2016/17 - £400,265

The estimated revenue grant budget in 2013/14 is £258,000¹.

The Scrutiny Committee is invited to set up a task group to meet on the dates shown with terms of reference as set out below to make comments on the applications to form part of the officer's report to the December meeting of Cabinet.

Purpose

To evaluate the 26 applications received for financial support from the local voluntary sector for a period of four financial years commencing in 2013/14 towards ongoing running costs such as staffing, heating, administration or rent costs.

The grant scheme will fund organisations that meet at least one of the following grant priorities:

- Advice services – provision of advice services that will improve the quality of life to those in need in South Oxfordshire
- Care services – provision of care services that will improve the quality of life to those in need in South Oxfordshire
- Prevent anti-social behaviour – provision of services that will help to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in South Oxfordshire

Remit

- to review the officer recommendations for each application and to make comments to Cabinet
- to review the applications against the council's published Revenue Grant Policy and Procedure Rules 2013/14 to 2016/17
- to hear addresses from representatives of the applicants (where appropriate)

¹ Budget £444,000 minus £20,000 young achievers and minus CAB grant allowance of £165,620 = £258,380.

Number and composition of working group

- up to five members of the scrutiny committee or their named substitutes preferably from a variety of political groups
- quorum of three
- members must attend both meetings to be eligible to make comments to Cabinet
- members of the working group must not have connections with or be members of any of the organisations applying for financial support to avoid the perception that there is bias or unfairness in the process

Meeting dates

Cabinet will determine the revenue grants at its meeting on 6 December. The task group needs to provide comments to Cabinet during November so they have time incorporate the comments into their decisions.

The task group will need to meet in early November and will need **two full days** to allow time for speakers from each organisation to be heard. The following dates are available:

Monday 5 November
Wednesday 7 November
Thursday 8 November
Friday 9 November

Officer support

The Shared Grants Team Leader will organise and minute the task group meetings with appropriate support from Democratic Services.

Admission of the public

- organisations who have applied for revenue grants will be invited to send representatives to address the task group, and their representatives will be permitted to observe the whole or part of the task group meetings
- addresses will be for no longer than five minutes per organisation and all addresses will be heard at the start of the first meeting

Process

The task group will receive officer evaluations and recommendations for each application together with copies of the revenue grant policy and any other relevant documents in advance of the first meeting

Meeting 1

The task group will elect a chairman to facilitate the meeting and to have a casting vote in the event of a tied vote.

The Shared Grants Team Leader will brief the task group on the policy, process, and scoring criteria; and on any specific points to consider for each application.

Representatives of organisations may address the task group for up to five minutes. There will be no opportunity for questions or discussion with the organisations except to clarify points raised during the address.

The task group will review the officer recommendation for each application using the agreed scoring criteria and make comment on any changes to scores or recommended awards.

Meeting 2

Will follow the same format as for Meeting 1 and in addition the task group will:

- review and agree the task group comments regarding the officer evaluations of the grant applications
- consider whether there are any other factors which affect the decision whether to make an award on any application
- agree any other comments the task group may wish to make to Cabinet.

After the meetings

The Shared Grants Team Leader will include the comments agreed by the task group in the report to Cabinet in order to inform their decision when determining these grant awards and these will be published as part of the Cabinet report.

Revenue Grant Policy and Procedures Rules 2013/14 - 2016/17



Introduction

The revenue grant scheme is funded on an annual basis from the council's general revenue account. The council allocates approximately £400,000 each year to this scheme. The priorities for the revenue grant scheme are reviewed every four years (normally the year after the corporate plan is approved).

The council's 2012-2016 corporate plan has a priority to offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering services that support our objectives or those in need.

The council seeks to offer financial support to the local voluntary sector for periods of up to four financial years (2013/14 - 2016/17). The scheme will provide funding towards ongoing running costs such as staffing, heating, administration or rent costs. The scheme does not intend to fund short one off types of activities.

Applications for capital funding to fund extensions or to purchase equipment should refer to the council's community investment fund capital grant scheme.

Grant priorities

The council has decided its priorities for the scheme from 2013/14 - 2016/17 will be towards services that provide advice and/or care services or that prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in the district. The scheme will fund those organisations that help people and communities most in need.

The scheme will fund organisations that meet at least one of the following grant priorities:

Advice services – provision of advice services that will improve the quality of life to those in need in South Oxfordshire

Care services – provision of care services that will improve the quality of life to those in need in South Oxfordshire

Prevent anti-social behaviour – provision of services that will help to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in South Oxfordshire

Who can apply to the scheme?

Any constituted local voluntary sector organisation may apply. Businesses, individuals and statutory organisations are not eligible to apply for a grant under this scheme. The scheme will not fund projects that are the responsibility of another public body.

The council is committed to promoting equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community, regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender reassignment, marital status, religion or belief.

What is the minimum and maximum grant award from the scheme?

There is a minimum grant award of £5,000 and a maximum grant award of £25,000. In exceptional circumstances larger grants may be awarded. Please note that under no circumstances will the council fund the whole costs of an organisation. Application forms will need to demonstrate that funding has been sought and/or obtained from a variety of other sources.

Outcomes

All applications must demonstrate how the outcomes of the service will support at least one of the selected grant priorities for 2013/14 - 2016/17 (as detailed above).

Scheme eligibility criteria

Applications will only be considered if the organisation has:

- a valid constitution (not for profit)
- a bank account
- two years accounts (audited if available) (or six months of bank statements for new organisations)
- a business/development plan including financial forecasts and risk analysis
- evidence that the beneficiaries are residents of South Oxfordshire.

Scoring criteria

All applications will be scored using approved scoring criteria shown at appendix 1.

Decision making

The council's cabinet will determine the grant applications in December 2012. These decisions will be subject to approval of the budget by the council in February 2013. Grant awards for subsequent financial years will also be subject to approval by the council on an annual basis.

Standard conditions of all grant awards

- all grants will be subject to a formal grant agreement
- all necessary insurance will be in place
- compliance with all statutory legislation must be in place
- accounts (audited if available) will be submitted annually
- monitoring information regarding the outcomes will be submitted annually
- the organisation will recognise the grant received in any appropriate literature by using the council's logo and display a plaque, supplied by the council, if requested to do so.

Appendix 1 to the policy

Revenue Grant scoring criteria

Assessment methodology for revenue grant applications

All applications will be assessed using the scoring system shown below. We will score all applications and seek to fund the highest scoring applications.

Demand points **up to 60**

Scores of up to 60 points are available dependent on the evidence of local demand. Applications will need to provide evidence of current demand and of any plans to improve or expand current services. Evidence of consultation with the public and/or stakeholders must be provided.

Beneficiaries to 40 points **up**

Scores of up to 40 points are available dependent on who will benefit. Applications will need to detail who will benefit from the community, whether it will be all of the community, or certain groups of the community? Minority groups or communities identified as an area of deprivation will score higher.

Outcomes points **up to 80**

Scores of up to 80 points are available dependent on how well the outcomes support the selected grant priorities for 2013/14 - 2016/17. Evidence of how the outcomes will be measured must also be provided.

Financial appraisal to 60 points **up**

Scores of up to 60 points are available dependent on how financially stable the organisation receiving the grant is. Evidence of other income streams and other secured funding must be provided.

Summary of scoring system

The maximum score is 240 made up as follows:

Assessment factor	Maximum points available
Demand	60
Beneficiaries	40
Outcomes	80
Financial appraisal	60
Total	240

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Revenue Grant - Applications 2013-14

Ref	Organisation	Brief description of organisation	Requested Year 1 (£)	Grant Priority
1	916 UCARE (Urology Cancer Research and Education)	UCARE is a charity committed to improving the treatment and care of urology cancer patients through research and education. This application is for funding towards a community awareness nurse.	£20,000	Advice
2	919 Footsteps Foundation	Footsteps Foundation enables children and young adults with neuro-motor disorders to reach their full physical, cognitive and developmental potential by providing an intensive physiotherapy programme at their centre in Dorchester-on-Thames	£15,000	Care
3	925 Oxfordshire Play Association	OPA is an infrastructure support organisation and training provider that provides support to all individuals and groups involved in working with children and young people and play work in Oxfordshire.	£5,000	Advice
4	928 National Organisation of the Widowed	A charitable organisation with a branch based in Thame that provides support to the bereaved. The aim of the organisation is to reduce loneliness caused through bereavement.	£5,000	Care
5	932 Oxfordshire Association for the Blind	OAB is a charity based in Oxford City that provides advice, information and professional counselling and equipment demonstration, and a variety of other support to visually impaired people and their carers in Oxfordshire.	£5,000	Advice
6	935 Thomley Activity Centre	Thomley is a recreation and informal education facility for children and young people with all kinds of disabilities who visit with their families, friends, schools and respite groups.	£25,000	Care
7	936 Nomad Youth & Community Project	Nomad is a youth and community project in Henley-on-Thames that provide services targeted to children, young people and families who are disadvantaged through economic and/or complex social issues. They provide a wide range of support including mentoring and life skills to name a few.	£25,000	Safety
8	941 TRAIN (Didcot Youth Work Project)	TRAIN provides youth work on the streets (and in other venues) in Didcot and engages with disaffected young people at risk of crime, substance abuse and anti-social behaviour.	£20,700	Safety
9	943 South & Vale Carers' Centre	SVCC is a charity that aims to improve the quality of life for unpaid carers through the provision of quality advice, information and support.	£25,000	Advice
10	944 LIFE Housing (Didcot House)	The Didcot LIFE House provides supported accommodation to young mothers and their babies who have a local connection.	£12,096	Advice

11	945	Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum	ONCF is a conservation charity that encourages partnership working in Oxfordshire for residents to become more aware of and engaged with the local natural environment.	£7,000	Advice
12	947	ENRYCH Oxfordshire	ENRYCH offer provision for social links between a disabled person and a volunteer and/or organised social events. They aim to improve the self-esteem, self confidence and life chances for adults with disabilities.	£25,000	Advice
13	948	Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action	OCVA provides information, advice and training for the voluntary sector in Oxfordshire, as well as acting as advocates and representatives, and building partnerships.	£16,000	Advice
14	953	SAFARI (Self Advocacy for Adults Requiring Independence)	SAFARI is a volunteer group that aims to provide help to those with learning disabilities. It provides a social group with activities decided by group members, information and peer group support.	£21,000	Advice
15	956	Berinsfield Parish Church	Berinsfield PCC plan to employ a full time Church Army Community Worker which are trained to respond to identified problems in socially deprived areas.	£25,000	Advice
16	957	Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association	OPFA provide practical information, advice and support to groups and users of local community-run outdoor recreation spaces.	£5,000	Advice
17	958	Oxfordshire Woodlands Project	The Oxfordshire Woodland Project exists to increase the appreciation and knowledge of woodlands to all-comers.	£21,000	Safety
18	959	Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	ORCC is a community development charity working to promote and support community engagement, involvement and self help with an emphasis on inclusion for everyone and the recognition of minority groups.	£23,000	Advice
19	960	Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre	Support service provider for female survivors of sexual violence across Oxfordshire including a telephone helpline, email support, support group service and training for professionals and youth outreach work.	£15,000	Care
20	961	The Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children and Young Adults	The centre in Henley offers short break services for children/young people with learning and often physically disabilities. Care includes overnights, a wide range of social, play and recreational opportunities, outreach support and life skills training.	£25,000	Care
21	963	Berinsfield Information and Volunteer Centre	BIVC's aim is to promote community and individual well-being through the giving, receiving and sharing of advice and information.	£23,500	Advice
22	965	Age UK Oxfordshire	Age UK Oxfordshire offer older people and carers in Oxfordshire comfort, support and a chance to have an independent life.	£25,000	Care

23	966	Berinsfield Amateur Boxing Club	The boxing club is a charity run by volunteers offering boxing to residents in Berinsfield and South Oxfordshire. The club aims to provide a positive and healthier lifestyle choice for those at risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour.	£10,842	Safety
24	967	RESTORE	RESTORE support people with mental health problems to recover, develop and contribute to the community and get back into work, by providing 1-1 support.	£10,000	Care
25	975	Chiltern Woodlands Project	The Chiltern Woodlands Project promotes and encourages the sustainable management of woodlands in the Chiltern Hills. The Earth Trust, in Little Wittenham, aims to protect the natural environment, to connect people with the natural environment, and to help people live more sustainably. Their project involved engaging offenders and young people in countryside skills.	£5,000	Advice
26	969	Earth Trust		£15,794	Safety
Total:				£430,932	

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Scrutiny Committee Report



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 30 October 2012

AGENDA ITEM NO

8

Revenue Grants 2013/14 – 2016/17 – Citizens Advice Bureaux

Recommendation

1. That the scrutiny committee considers the revenue grant application from Oxfordshire South and Vale of White Horse Citizens Advice Bureau for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and makes comments to Cabinet.

Purpose of Report

2. To consider the revenue grant application from Oxfordshire South and Vale of White Horse Citizens Advice Bureau (S&V CAB) for funding in 2013/14 - 2016/17 and to make any comments to Cabinet.

Strategic Objectives

3. The revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17 has been developed in line with the corporate priority to offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering projects and services that support our objectives or those in need. The Citizens Advice Bureaux are one of those organisations.

Background

4. The scrutiny committee considered the draft revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17 at its meeting on 7 June 2012 and made a specific comment about excluding the Citizens Advice Bureaux from the main revenue grant scheme because the amount of the grant exceeds the normal £25,000 limit. This suggestion was agreed by the cabinet member when the new revenue grant policy was approved in July 2012, a copy of the policy is attached at appendix 3 and therefore this report has been prepared separately for consideration by both the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.
5. The committee are reminded that the new policy extends the grant period from three to four years in order to offer increased financial security to the organisations that the council decides to fund.

Citizens Advice Bureaux

6. A citizen's advice service has been provided in South Oxfordshire since 1968 offering free advice on various issues including benefits, money, employment, housing, relationships and legal problems. In recent years a citizens advice service has operated from offices in Henley, Didcot and Thame, each offering basic outreach services to nearby villages.
7. In 2011/12, the bureaux in South Oxfordshire provided free advice to 7,289¹ clients; a more detailed breakdown of the client and community profiles is included in the S&V CAB business and development plan attached at appendix 1 of the report.
8. The CAB currently operating in Henley, Didcot and Thame are trading as registered charities and are also registered companies limited by guarantee. They each have their own trustees and produce their own financial statements each year.
9. In 2012/13 the council gave a total of £165,620 in grants to Henley, Didcot and Thame CAB. The Vale of White Horse District Council gave a grant to Abingdon CAB of £103,713. A total of £269,333 in grant funding towards the CAB in south and vale districts.
10. In April 2013 the CAB intends to merge Henley, Didcot and Thame CAB together with Abingdon CAB into one new organisation called Oxfordshire South and Vale of White Horse Citizens Advice Bureau (S&V CAB).
11. By combining the resources of the four bureaux the CAB believes that it can provide a service for its clients that is better; more resilient and sustainable; and capable of meeting growing demands. A comprehensive business and development plan for 2013/14 to 2016/17 is attached at appendix 1 of this report and gives details of the new governance and management structure and financial details from 2012/13 up to 2016/17.

¹ South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse CAB business and development plan statistic based on actual numbers of advice provided by bureaux staff in South Oxfordshire.

12. The organisational change will focus on management structure and back office procedures. All of the bureaux will continue to provide advice for their respective clients from their current locations. The advice will continue to be delivered by volunteer staff from the local communities.

Matters for consideration

13. The committee is asked to consider the revenue grant application from the S&V CAB for a total of £682,620 over the next four years 2013/14 - 2016/17.

14. The grant request in 2013/14 (year one) is equivalent to the 2012/13 grant of £165,620. A grant request to Vale of White Horse District Council has also been submitted for 2013/14 of £103,713, making a total of £269,333.

15. The table below provides budget estimates from 2013/14 to 2016/17.

			2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
S&V Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17						
Income						
		SODC Grant	165620	168932	172311	175757
		VoWH Grant	103713	105787	107903	110061
		Town and Parish Councils	40195	40495	41045	41856
		Local fundraising	37170	39920	41745	42245
		Other	1500	1500	1500	1500
		Contracts and Fees	40760	52988	68884	82661
Total Income			388958	409623	433388	454081
Expense						
		Total Salaries	259353	279540	299727	314914
		Total Staff & Volunteer costs	21735	22169	22565	23017
		Total Office	39735	38330	39096	39674
		Total Premises costs	58846	59367	59898	60440
		Total Governance costs	4516	4606	4698	4792
		Total other	4901	5449	5549	5651
Total Expense			389086	409462	431535	448489
Operating surplus/deficit			-128	161	1854	5592
		District Council % income	69%	67%	65%	63%
		Local, TC, & PC	20%	20%	19%	19%
		Contracts & Fees	10%	13%	16%	18%

16. The grant requested from this council is higher than the amount requested from the Vale of White Horse District Council, this is for a variety of reasons including there only being one bureau in Abingdon rather than three in South Oxfordshire

and that an Independent Advice Centre operates in Wantage that is funded separately.

17. There are also variations in population across the two districts and this will be reflected in demand for advice services. The 2011 Census estimates the population in South Oxfordshire to be 134,300 and in Vale of White Horse 121,000.
18. The total estimated income by S&V CAB for 2013/14 is £388,958 and the total expenditure is £389,086 making a small deficit of £128. The S&V CAB business and development plan in appendix 1 details financial forecasts for the next three years up to 2016/17 when it is estimated that a small surplus of £5,592 will be made.
19. Officers evaluated this application using the approved scoring criteria as detailed in the revenue grant policy and the evaluation is attached at appendix 2 of the report. The evaluation details how S&V CAB meet the council's grant priorities, the demand for their service and how outcomes will be used to monitor the performance of S&V CAB in the future.
20. The 12,506 enquiries quoted are statistics supplied by the National Citizens Advice Bureau that are provided for each local authority area. There is a difference between this figure and those used in the S&V CAB business and development plan in appendix 1. This is because the national data includes usage of the CAB services at CAB offices outside of South Oxfordshire.
21. The S&V CAB business and development plan also includes evidence of usage by people who live outside of the South Oxfordshire. There is some parity with these figures and is a common occurrence amongst CAB services nationally.
22. The committee is asked to consider the following questions and provide comments to Cabinet:
 - a) **Does the committee agree with the proposed outcomes (performance measures) as detailed in the officer evaluation at appendix 2?**
 - b) **Does the committee support giving the S&V CAB the £682,620 grant over the next four years 2013/14 - 2016/17?**

Financial Implications

23. The estimated revenue grant budget in 2013/14 is £444,140 which comprises £20,000 for the council's young achievers scheme and £424,140 for grants to voluntary organisations.

Legal Implications

24. The Council's legal powers for awarding these grants are contained in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 that provides a general power of competence for local authorities.

Risks

25. There are some risks associated with this grant funding. In order to minimise these risks the grant will be paid in two stages. Half of the annual grant will be

paid in April and the second half of the annual grant will not be paid until officers have held an annual monitoring meeting to be certain that the S&V CAB will achieve the expected outcomes as detailed in the officer evaluation and that they are financially secure and able to continue to operate.

Conclusion

26. The revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17 has been developed in line with the corporate priority to offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering projects and services that support our objectives or those in need. The application from S&V CAB meets this priority by providing advice services on a wide range of subjects to support all residents in South Oxfordshire.
27. Awarding this grant will ensure the continued operation of the new merged S&V CAB to enable it to offer a service for its clients that is better; more resilient and sustainable; and capable of meeting growing demands.
28. The committee is asked to consider the revenue grant application from the Citizens Advice Bureau for funding in 2013/14 - 2016/17 and make any comments to Cabinet.

Background Papers

- Cabinet member decision on 17 July 2012 to approve the revenue grant policy for 2013/14 – 2016/17.

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Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice Bureau

BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2013/14 -2016/17

**This is a draft of the final plan which will be published in
March 2013**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice Bureau (S&V CAB) will be formed early 2013 from the merger of Abingdon, Didcot, Henley and Thame CABs. It will begin “trading” as a charitable company on 1st April 2013, providing an information and advice service to all residents of the areas previously covered by the 4 founding bureaux. A citizens advice service has been provided successfully in Southern Oxfordshire since 1968 and in 2011/12, 10,202 people were helped on a diverse range of topics including welfare benefits, money, employment, housing, relationship and legal problems. The service was delivered free at the point of need by trained volunteers. This Business Plan sets out reasons why the bureaux have decided to merge, details proposals to develop services over the period 2013-2017; and articulates the expenditure and income considerations.

Discussions on structural change were initiated in 2010 and a working group was formed. Its recommendation to merge was approved by the 4 trustee boards in summer 2012. The argument in favour of merging was based on an analysis of existing services and the bureaux' ability to meet demand and standards in future years. Each bureau falls within the lower quartile of CABs in the South East of England in terms of size. A reliance on part time staff and volunteers combined with their small scale makes it difficult to attract financial support from larger funders and also restricts their ability to implement change in response to external events such as government legislation. The imperative to merge has been given further impetus by the poor state of public finances combined with cuts in legal aid budgets and impending changes to the welfare benefits system. The benefits of scale enjoyed by the merged S&V CAB will make it better able to deal with an increased workload, higher public expectations, swiftly changing technology and a highly competitive funding environment.

The scale of the new organisation is still small. Paid staff numbers equate to 10 full time people, all of whom are part-time. This, however, compares favourably with the current situation; Thame CAB for example has 1.5 FTE staff in 2012. The bulk of the organisation's human resource is voluntary (~200 people). The S&V CAB aims to combine its voluntary ethos with a commitment to the highest quality standards. All staff complete a structured national training program and are encouraged to participate in continuous learning. Clients are recognised as individuals and advice is always up to date with current legislation. Every aspect of the bureau's activity is scrutinised by independent auditors.

The financial challenges faced by the service are evidenced by an expected operating deficit in 2012/13 of circa £16K which will be met from reserves. The new structure will reduce management and admin duplication, thus enabling the reallocation of some resource to client facing roles in anticipation of increased demand; and will provide opportunities to find small reductions in back office costs over in 2013/14 and maintain increases at a low level from 2014 onwards. The merged organisation will place emphasis on applying management resource to attracting new funding to augment the generous support it receives from District Councils and other statutory sources. Income from project funding is targeted to grow by 25%, 30%, 30% and 20% p.a. over 4 years. We understand the risk that funding from some locality sources may fall in the short-term as stakeholders react to change but we believe that a re-energised, well supported group of Friends organisations will succeed in growing local goodwill, and financial support.

The outlook is that the merged organisation will break even in 2013/14, following a combined deficit of £16K in 2012, and return a modest surplus in the following 3 years.

2. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The tables below set down the financial projections for the four years 2013/14 to 2016/17, together with the provisional figures for 2012/13.

S&V CONSOLIDATED 2012/13	
Income	
Grants -District etc	269332
Grants -Town Councils	28000
Grants -Other	4000
Bank Interest	1189
Donations -Parish Councils	12695
Local Fundraising	31950
Contracts and Fees	32608
Total Income	379774
Expense	
Total Salaries	261956
Total Staff & Volunteer costs	20798
Total Office	41902
Total Premises costs	59656
Total Governance costs	5822
Total Other	6255
Total Expense	396389
Operating surplus/deficit	-16615

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
S&V Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17					
Income					
SODC Grant		165620	168932	172311	175757
VoWH Grant		103713	105787	107903	110061
Town and Parish Councils		40195	40495	41045	41856
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Other		1500	1500	1500	1500
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Total Premises costs		58846	59367	59898	60440
Total Governance costs		4516	4606	4698	4792
Total other		4901	5449	5549	5651
Total Expense		389086	409462	431535	448489
Operating surplus/deficit		-128	161	1854	5592

3 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice Bureau (S&V CAB) provides information and advice to all members of the community in order to empower them to make informed decisions about matters affecting their lives.

The service aims:

- To be free, independent, confidential and impartial
- To provide the advice people need for the problems they face
- To improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives

S&V CAB seeks to understand the needs of the people of Southern Oxfordshire. It aims to improve access to advice, information and education services for the benefit of all members of the community and will endeavor to achieve this as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible.

We aim to help people resolve their problems and to influence policy makers based on our clients' experiences. Our service is provided to everybody regardless of race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or nationality. S&V CAB recognises the positive values of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination.

4 STRATEGIC AIMS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Bureau's strategic aims and guiding principles for the period covered by the plan are outlined below. Specific actions to be undertaken in support of these aims and objectives are being developed as part of the merger implementation process. These actions will be published in an updated Business Development Plan in March 2013. Minimum levels of service provision for 2013/14 are outlined in section 6.

No	Aim What we hope to achieve is...	Outcomes/Benefits ..because..	Success Measure ..and we know we have done this when
A1	To provide the highest quality service we can with resources we have available.	Our clients want services that meet their need and deliver value for money.	<p>Clients tell us that we provide good quality services and we have reduced the cost of those services to a sustainable level.</p> <p>We have convinced ourselves we have eliminated all waste.</p>
A2	Resolve as many enquiries as possible at the first point of contact.	<p>We are more efficient by removing the need for multiple contacts</p> <p>Clients want requests dealt with quickly.</p>	<p>Number of repeat contacts are reduced.</p> <p>Cost per Client reduces.</p> <p>Client satisfaction increases.</p>

A3	To use the information we have about our clients to help us design better services	Our services should match the needs of our clients.	Client information is a central part of our service planning process.
A4	To use our administration support resources in the most effective way that both supports each bureau and helps drive out cost.	Standardisation of processes and documentation reduces operating cost and increases the opportunity to exercise economies of scale.	Operating costs will reduce. Improve resilience during times of sickness and holiday.
A5	To deliver our services across cost effective access channels whilst remaining socially inclusive.	Make our services accessible to all corners of the community. Recognition that the cost of delivering our services varies across each access channel.	Increased usage by those demographic groups that are traditionally low usage (e.g. the young). Reduction in operating cost.

The following principles will be used to guide decisions on future service configuration for the S&V CAB.

No.	Principle	Why that is the right thing	Impacts this principle will have
P1	To focus resources on contributing to the delivery of strategic objectives and targets of local and national funding organisations (e.g. to prevent homelessness/improve mental well-being/increase social inclusion by increase benefits/reduced debt/improved knowledge of options)	Aligned to local and national strategy.	Requires review of current objectives and possible reprioritisation.
P2	To increase access and improve outcomes for targeted groups (with particular reference to the Equality Act). e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with mental health problems 	Ensures Clients receive the benefits they are entitled to (increase uptake).	Improve relationship with partner organisations (e.g. Local Authorities will be keen to increase Housing & Council Tax Benefit takeup).

No.	Principle	Why that is the right thing	Impacts this principle will have
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carers • People from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities • Frail elderly • Unemployed 		
P3	<p>To increase cost effective points of access which are designed around Client need e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone access • Internet • Opening hours • No of sites (including outreach) • Home visits • outreach in other organizations • skilling up potential referrers 	<p>Deliver a service that is accessible by all but demonstrates value for money.</p>	<p>We will need to review Client demand to help understand and shape the choice of access channels that we will deliver. We will need to understand the end-to-end cost of each access channel.</p>
P4	<p>Information, Advice and Guidance will be provided in a way that encourages Clients to do more for themselves</p> <p>Services will be designed in a way that allows Clients to do more for themselves</p>	<p>Empower Clients - reduce dependency culture. Reduce demand on staff/volunteer time where the Client could obtain the information themselves and free up capacity to focus on those Clients that require specific direct contact.</p>	<p>Training will need to be provided to help staff/volunteers to understand what this means in practice (encourage self service). All info and advice would need to be reviewed and possibly rewritten from the Client perspective. Website would need review with appropriate functionality from the Client's perspective (out of our control/long term strategy?). Realign staff/volunteer levels dealing with direct contact.</p>

No.	Principle	Why that is the right thing	Impacts this principle will have
P5	We will improve service standards and effectiveness.	Improved resolution times will help drive down repeat contact and cost.	Publish service standards. Improve Client satisfaction.
P6	All staff/volunteers will have core customer service/awareness capability as a standard competence.	Ensure consistency of client interaction across the Bureaux. Improve understanding of managing vulnerable customer needs. Reduce complaints regarding staff/volunteer attitude. Supports Equality, Diversity & inclusion strategies.	All staff will need to be trained (if not already). Capability needs to be built into recruitment and induction process.
P7	Common approach to customer interaction across all access channels - web, phone, face-to-face etc.	Consistent service standards. Clients should not be disadvantaged because of the channel choice. Drives clear demand management and prioritisation of work.	Current processes will need to be reviewed. Requires SLA's to manage contact and response times.
P8	Customer insight and analysis will be undertaken both Locally and Nationally.	Builds better local knowledge of customers. Understand community needs and demands better.	Need to be clear about what data/information we want to gather.
P9	Improve perception of service by demonstrating a professional/modern/flexible/local/accessible approach to service.	Raise awareness of CAB activity. Enhances our ability to recruit local volunteers. Strengthens links with local community. Improve access from other agencies.	Some Client/Waiting rooms may need to be brought up to a required standard. May need to review/produce professional publicity – flyers, PR, social media, website.
P10	We will look for opportunities to increase our engagement with partners and further our market development	Government strategy is to develop the Big Society by encouraging more cross-working between the public sector, voluntary, charitable and community groups.	Identify opportunities to expand our market development. Potential increase in client base.

No.	Principle	Why that is the right thing	Impacts this principle will have
P11	<p>Make better use of scarce resources e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Infrastructure (reception/phones etc.) • Systems (including IT) • Payroll/HR • Management time • Paid staff time • Volunteer management 	<p>Flexibility to respond to funding bids. Bidding for new money/resources. Opportunities for co-working both within and outside CABx. Economies of scale. Operational efficiency.</p>	<p>Standardisation required. Culture change. Reduction in operational cost.</p>
P12	<p>Core admin tasks should be delivered from a central location and underpinned by core processes.</p>	<p>Consistent processes. Ensure best practice is followed. Economies of scale. Admin time better managed. Provide cross training and improved resilience.</p>	<p>Admin staff and tasks will be delivered from a single location (centralised). Business processes will have to change.</p>

Specific measurable objectives for 2013/14 are in development and will be included in a later version of this plan.

5 STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

S&V CAB will be a charitable company limited by guarantee, and a member of the Citizens Advice national network. Incorporation is scheduled to complete by January 2012. A transfer of assets from Abingdon, Didcot, Henley and Thame CABs will be complete by 1st April 2013. In due course the existing 4 companies will be wound up or left as shell companies. The new company will be governed by its Articles of Association which are based on a Model Citizens Advice document and recognised by the Charity Commission.

A board of trustees will be created by the end of October and will operate in “shadow form” until the incorporation completes. Members of the existing 4 boards have been invited to submit expressions of interest in becoming members of the new board with the selection process being overseen by Citizens Advice UK. The Articles of Association allow for up to 15 board members. The exact composition of the board will be determined by the board itself and may include an external recruitment exercise to ensure that the desired overall skills profile is met.

Appendix 2 contains a full description of the “Draft Corporate Governance Framework for S&V CAB

The Trustee Board will exercise overall responsibility for strategic direction; organisational policy and planning; and finance. It is expected that the Board will meet approximately 6 times per year; and be attended by the bureau CEO, a staff representative and invited external representatives. There will be an open invitation to a representative of Citizens Advice nationally.

Service delivery will be undertaken using a large team of up to 200 trained volunteers. They will be supported by paid staff (10 FTE but mainly part-time) under the direction of a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) The CEO is responsible to the Trustee Board for the management and development of S&V CAB services, particularly

- to show vision and leadership in the continuing development of CAB services
- to serve and advise the Board in carrying out their responsibilities, maintaining an overview and making appropriate strategic, policy and financial recommendations.

The CEO, together with the Board, is responsible for the overall strategy including forward planning, external relations, ensuring that the Bureau complies with Citizens Advice aims, policies and standards; public accountability and personnel. The CEO will assist the Board on finance, funding and resources issues. All of these duties are to be carried out in compliance with Equal Opportunities practice, policies and legislation.

The final staff structure of the S&V CAB is subject to consultation with staff of the existing for bureaux. The overall objective behind staff deployment is to reduce duplication and enable efficiencies in management and administration functions, thus maximising client facing resources available to meet the expected increase in demand detailed in section 6. In addition to the CEO, some key posts in the new structure are likely to include:

Advice Service Director:

Develop the provision of specialist advice services and maintain common practices to ensure that standards of service delivery are met

Finance and Administration Manager: Establish, maintain and monitor effective administrative systems; and oversee the correct preparation of accounts and financial statements in conjunction with the honorary treasurer.

Advice Session Manager/Supervisors: Provide technical support and act as consultant to volunteer advisers; monitor the quality of advice given to clients during advice sessions. Coach and support advisers and assessors.

Training Manager: Assist in the formulation and delivery of the bureau's annual training and development plans. Research, design and deliver training programmes, sessions, lesson plans and materials.

IT Manager: Develop and implement the CAB IT Strategy. Manage and deliver IT training to staff and volunteers to improve individual productivity

6 SERVICE PROVISION

Core service provision

The minimum level of service provided in 2013/14 will be at least equal to that provided today by the existing bureaux. This is shown on the table below. In particular:

- Core opening hours will be at least 10.00 – 16.00 Monday - Friday
- Abingdon, Didcot, Henley and Thame will each open for face to face services for at least 4 days per week
- There will always be at least 1 outlet open in the S&V during core hours to provide emergency advice, i.e. homelessness, domestic violence situations
- S&V Adviceline rota will be co-ordinated to ensure maximum resource at busiest times (9.30-11.00, lunch time)

Also. S&V bureau will seek to:

- Extend core opening hours for gateway services, especially telephone
- Equalise the provision of specialist advice services by making more use of existing specialist staff
- Reduce service disruption due to illness, holiday etc through the creation of a single advice team whose members can cover for their colleagues
- Reduce waiting times for those clients from busy areas (i.e. Didcot) by offering appointments with advisers in other outlet (possibly by telephone)

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm	am	pm
Abingdon	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
Didcot	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
RAF Benson				Telephone Adviceline	Telephone Adviceline			Telephone Adviceline	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
Wallingford			Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway					Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
Henley	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway			Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
Watlington							Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway		
Woodcote									Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
Thame	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway
Chinnor							Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway		
Wheatley	Drop-in Gateway	Drop-in Gateway								

Key
Drop-in Gateway
Telephone Adviceline
Generalist & Specialist Advice

Advice challenges

S&V CAB's aim of providing the highest quality service we can with resources we have available is facing a number of known external challenges during the period covered by this plan. Plans for extended opening and new access methods (as outlined above) are being driven by higher client expectations.

Population growth

Demographic changes between 2012 and 2017 will increase the overall population in South Oxfordshire by 5.3% and in Vale of White Horse by 3.8%. These increases are concentrated in a nn of 58 wards in the area. These increases will require S&V CAB to increase/redeploy staff to cover these localities. As demand for face to face advice services increases disproportionately it may be difficult to attract sufficient local volunteers to meet local demand. This will require other localities to provide additional telephone and e-advice resources in order to support demand elsewhere in the districts.

Population growth by ward 2012-2017

Harwell	38.9%
Grove	12.6%
Sutton Courtenay and Appleford	12.6%
North Hinksey and Wytham	10.9%
Faringdon and The Coxwells	10.1%
Appleton and Cumnor	7.5%
Wantage Charlton	5.5%
Didcot All Saints	41.2%
Brightwell	33.9%
Cholsey and Wallingford South	27.8%
Didcot Ladygrove	16.9%
Crowmarsh	16.3%
Didcot Park	14.9%
Hagbourne	10.9%

Legislation changes

April 2013 will mark the start of a series of changes to the benefits system that are widely accepted as being the most wide-ranging since the birth of the modern welfare state. Citizens Advice supports the intent to simplify the system but has a number of reservations about much of the detail www.citizensadvice.org.uk The changes are due to be introduced over a number of years and will have an impact on almost everyone who is in receipt of welfare benefits. It is unlikely that all of these changes will proceed without administrative problems. Some clients will be confused about the changes to their situations. Some people will simply lose money. All in all, it is almost certain that Citizens Advice Offices will see an increase in demand for benefits advice.

Changes to the benefits system are taking place against cuts in legal aid provision which come into effect on 1st April. About 3,500 of the most complex housing, debt and benefits cases will no longer be dealt with through legal aid provision and those affected will seek alternative sources of help. For many this will be their local CAB.

Face to face advice

S&V CAB will offer face to face **gateway** and **advice** services from outlets in Abingdon, Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford. Appointment based outreach services will be continue to be provided in locations such as Huntercombe Prison, Woodcote, Watlington, Wheatley, Chinnor and RAF Benson. Should significant demand be identified in other areas then, subject to finance, further outreaches may be established. Where alternative advice provision exists, for example in Wantage and Berinsfield, then the CAB will co-operate with the local provider to ensure that clients’ needs are being met.

By phone

S&V CAB will participate in the Oxfordshire group of the Citizen Advice “Adviceline Service. This will provide access to **gateway** services via a virtual call centre manned by volunteers from all Oxon bureaux, backed by an overflow service from 3 national call centres.

e-mail and web submission

We will develop a plan based on best practice within the Citizens Advice service nationally in 2013/14. The service will provide portals to gateway services for clients who prefer to access advice via mobile devices and social media. Specific attention will be paid to the needs of housebound people and young people.

Advice Topics

The following will be offered in all outlets:

Topic	Assisted information	Generalist advice	Casework
Welfare benefits	✓	✓	✓
Money advice	✓	✓	✓
Discrimination	✓	✓	
Employment	✓	✓	✓
Consumer	✓	✓	
Immigration	✓	✓	
Family	✓	✓	
Housing	✓	✓	
Taxes	✓	✓	
Health	✓	✓	
Education	✓	✓	

Gateway

Gateway is the first step on a client journey. This is an on-demand service and is available by telephone or in-person at outlets in Abingdon, Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford. The client is seen by a volunteer “Gateway Assessor” who will attempt to provide an immediate answer to their problem by providing information or signposting. About 60% of clients can be helped in this way. The remaining 40% are offered an “Advice” appointment by telephone or in their local bureau/outreach.

Advice interviews

Advice are offered on an appointment basis following a gateway interview. The advisor has access to the notes made by the gateway assessor and is therefore able to conduct any research prior to speaking to the client. Interviews take place in person or by telephone. They normally last for 45-60 minutes and can result in:

- The client carrying out an agreed action plan

Or

- Further work by the adviser on behalf of the client. This can include extended casework and further interviews

7 ACCESS STRATEGY

The purpose of the Bureau Access Strategy is to quantify the advice needs of the community and to identify service improvements that can be made in order to better meet those needs. This will enable S&V CAB to help more people and to ensure that those in greatest need receive the most appropriate service.

This section is under development and will be included in the final version of this plan to be published in March 2013

8 PROMOTION AND AWARENESS GENERATION

Promoting the bureau is an ongoing activity. It has 3 main objectives:

- To ensure that all people within our target area are aware of the service and how to access it.
- To communicate the benefits of the service to influencers, stakeholders, funders and potential funders.
- To encourage volunteers to offer their services.

S&V CAB will benefit from being able to centralise some PR activity thus reducing duplication of effort and enabling local co-ordination. It must be remembered, however, that the most powerful awareness tool for clients is “word of mouth”; and that much stakeholder communication is done in locality by supporters such as Friends. The central administration of web-tools and the production of leaflets, posters, articles and presentations will be carried out in order to support the valuable work of locality based staff and volunteers. A key component of this partnership between central management and community influencers will be the use of a local “customer relationship” database to ensure:

- Regular releases to local press including Parish Newsletters.
- The scheduling of talks to community groups.
- Nurturing of relationships with local government at all levels.
- Participation in civic, voluntary sector and other partnership events.
- Communication with donor organisation i.e. round table
- Active involvement with local partners for signposting and other advice activities
- Engagement with businesses for volunteer, financial and other support

9 PERSONNEL AND RESOURCES

Reliance on volunteer staff is a strength of the Citizens Advice Service. It is a valued element of our culture, ensures strong connections with the communities that we serve and provides a healthy outlet for volunteering activity in the district. Our policy is that we shall use volunteer advisers to assess clients and deliver generalist advice to clients. We will use volunteer support staff to provide administration and other back office functions. Paid staff will support, train and coach volunteers in order to improve their skills; provide a stimulating and safe environment; and encourage them to develop personally and professionally. Where possible, we encourage volunteer staff to be involved in service strategy, governance issues, and other development matters. About 200 volunteers are involved with the existing 4 bureaux and it is hoped that the majority will continue with the merged organisation.

Whilst we appreciate those people who remain in the service for many years we also encourage applications from those who wish to use volunteering as a stepping stone to paid work. It is always gratifying when a young person gets a job because of their CAB experience or a mum returns to work after building up her confidence in the bureau. Our training manager(s) will be key member in the S&V organisation. They will ensure that every new recruit receives a tailored training course based on Citizens Advice materials. Those who provide advice to the public will be in training for 1 year before qualifying and every member of staff is encouraged to continue learning throughout their stay.

S&V paid staff will be recruited from the existing 4 bureaux. Normal TUPE transfers will apply and the process will be managed with the help of HR consultants. There are currently 27 paid staff within the existing 4 bureaux. All are part time, some work 1 day/week or less. Collectively they make a full time equivalent workforce of 10 people.

Paid staff within the S&V create an environment for volunteers to deliver a service. Their roles range from fundraising, training and supervising to facilities management. They ensure that Bureau activity is carried out according to the agreed policies of Citizens Advice and are always on hand should a volunteer adviser need support when dealing with a difficult or upsetting client problem.

9.1 Accommodation Plan

This section is under development and will be included in the final version of this plan to be published in March 2013

9.2 IT and Other Equipment

This section is under development and will be included in the final version of this plan to be published in March 2013

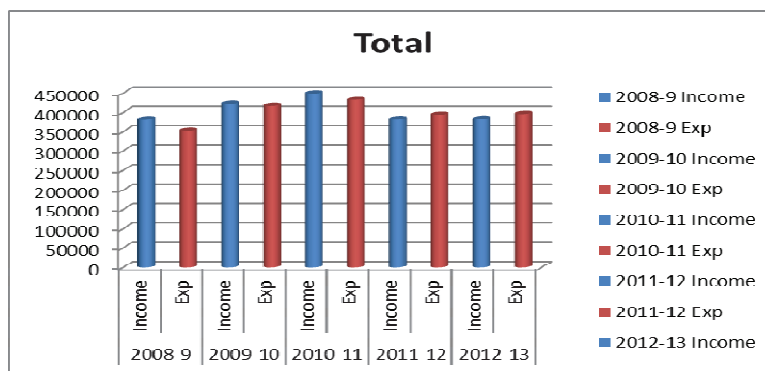
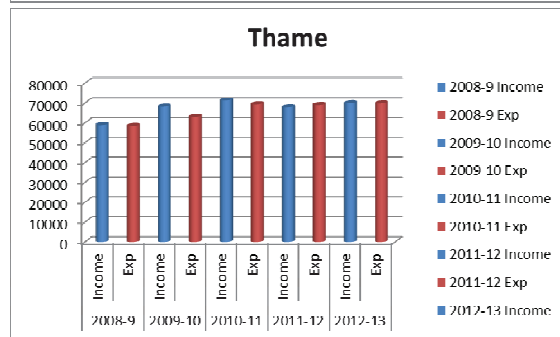
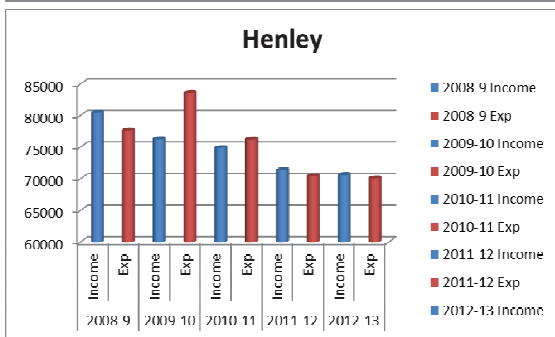
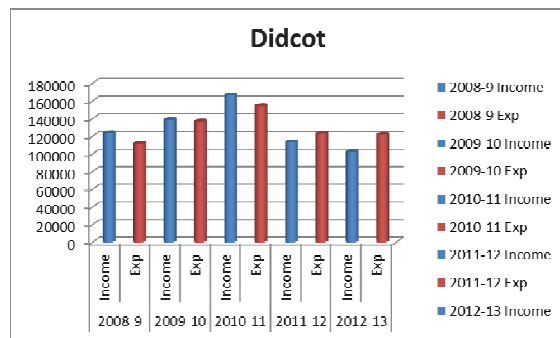
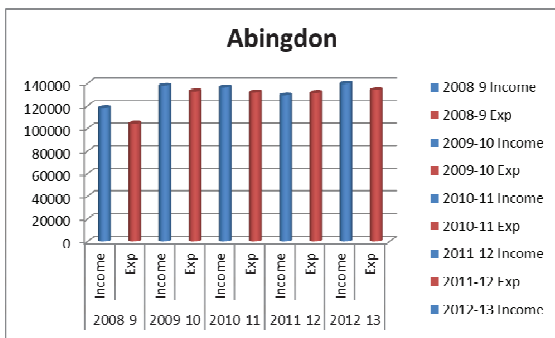
10 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

10.1 Financial Review 2008/9 to 2012/13

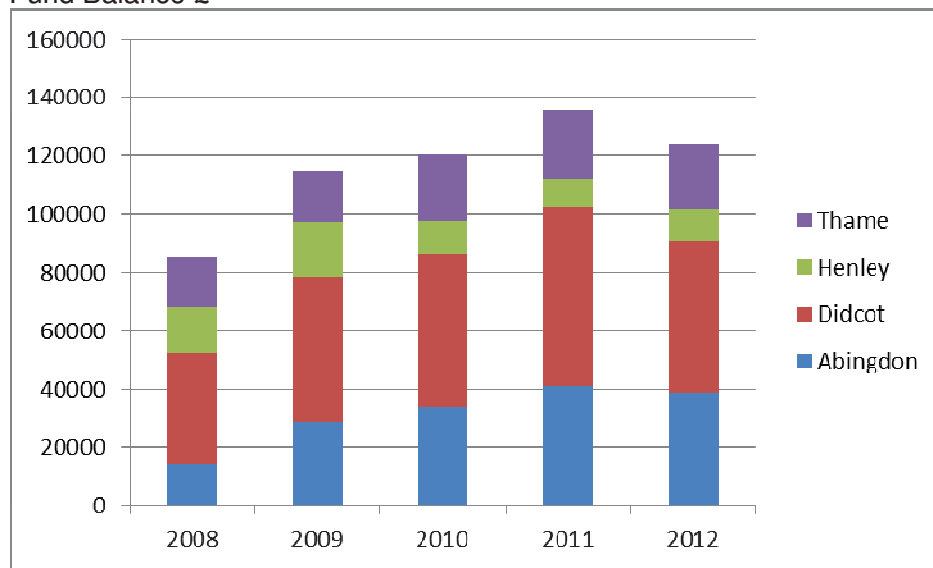
The section provides an overview of the financial performance, over the past 5 years, of the 4 bureaux which will merge to form the S&V CAB. The trend has been 3 years income growth with budget surpluses; followed by 2 years decline with budget deficits. Some, but not the entire recent deficit was caused by refurbishing costs in Didcot following the loss of their Town Council property.

Income rose steadily from £381K in 2008-9 before falling back to £382K in 2012-13. Including inflation, total annual income has fallen by over 10% (£37K) since 2008-9. The combined outlook for 2012/13 shows an income of £379,774, expenditure of £396,389, leaving a balance of £-16,615.

Income & Expenditure 2008-13



Fund Balance £



Reserves are sufficient to meet Charity Commission requirements of one full quarter's normal expenses.

All 4 bureaux have managed to make efficiency savings over the period as evidenced (elsewhere in this document) by the increase in number and complexity of client issues resolved. Given their relatively small size they have little scope for further savings. The short and medium term fiscal outlook is difficult and the bureaux cannot realistically expect to receive additional grant support from traditional sources such as District and Town Councils.

The challenge faced by the bureaux when they decided to merge was not primarily a financial one; rather it was a combination of straightened financial circumstances whilst facing an anticipated increase in workload due to a combination of welfare reforms and a reduction in legal aid provision across the County. The financial arguments in favour of a merger were:

- Some back office efficiencies can be achieved through reduced duplication
- Existing advice resources could be organised more efficiently this providing extra capacity at little or no cost
- Skilled specialists could be deployed throughout the larger area to provide some counterbalance to the reduction in legal aid expertise
- A larger more robust structure will be more resilient in turbulent financial times
- Restructuring will enable more management time to focus on growing a more diversified funding base

The projections for the merged S&V organisation show realistic progress by returning to a balanced budget in 2013/14 then showing a very modest surplus in subsequent years.

10.2 Financial Projections 2012/13 to 2016/17

The tables below set down the financial projections for 2012/13 (as 4 bureaux) then for the four years 2013/14 to 2016/17 as a merged entity.

2012/13

	CONFIDENTIAL	
	S&V CONSOLIDATED 2012/13	
Income		
	Grants -District etc	269332
	Grants -Town Councils	28000
	Grants -Other	4000
	Bank Interest	1189
	Donations -Parish Councils	12695
	Local Fundraising	31950
	Contracts and Fees	32608
Total Income		379774
Expense		
	Total Salaries	261956
	Total Staff & Volunteer costs	20798
	Total Office	41902
	Total Premises costs	59656
	Total Governance costs	5822
	Total Other	6255
Total Expense		396389
Operating surplus/deficit		-16615

2013/13 – 2016/17

CONFIDENTIAL		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
S&V Budget 2013/14 - 2016/17					
Income					
	SODC Grant	165620	168932	172311	175757
	VoWH Grant	103713	105787	107903	110061
	Town and Parish Councils	40195	40495	41045	41856
	Local fundraising	37170	39920	41745	42245
	Other	1500	1500	1500	1500
	Contracts and Fees	40760	52988	68884	82661
	Total Income	388958	409623	433388	454081
Expense					
	Total Salaries	259353	279540	299727	314914
	Total Staff & Volunteer costs	21735	22169	22565	23017
	Total Office	39735	38330	39096	39674
	Total Premises costs	58846	59367	59898	60440
	Total Governance costs	4516	4606	4698	4792
	Total other	4901	5449	5549	5651
	Total Expense	389086	409462	431535	448489
	Surplus/deficit	-128	161	1854	5592
	District Council % income	69%	67%	65%	63%
	Local,TC, & PC	20%	20%	19%	19%
	Contracts & Fees	10%	13%	16%	18%

10.3 Funding Strategy

The funding strategy of S&V CAB is determined by the Board of Trustees. Implementation of the strategy is delegated to the CEO who will ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to deliver funds that support overall bureau objectives and meet the financial targets set out in this Business Plan.

S&V CAB depends heavily on the support of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils. Whilst both Councils are supportive of the work of the CAB, they are under extreme financial pressure due to cuts in their Central Funding. The funding strategy of S&V CAB recognises that it must diversify and increase its funding from other sources in order to:

- Develop a more resilient financial model
- Meet increased demands for advice services
- Expand access routes to advice for under-represented client groups
- Adapt to new technologies
- Expand preventative services such as financial education

Our strategy will focus on the following areas

- Working with SODC and VoWHDC to tailor advice services in order to meet their specific objectives.
- Dedicating resource to seek new funding sources that support our strategic service objectives
- Systematically pursuing support from locality sources

District Council Funding

We will participate in an on-going dialogue with our primary funders to understand how our services can dovetail with the strategic objectives. We will not assume that what we are currently delivering is what people need or want. Subject to our fundamental principles as members of Citizens Advice we will work with Council officers we will focus services to meet agreed outcomes in terms of target groups, advice topics and geographical access. The sum requested from the District Councils is the same as the total amount received by the 4 bureaux in 2012. We will request that this sum be "inflation proofed" for the remainder of the term covered by this plan. Our target is that the overall contribution of district council grant as a proportion of total income will fall by 2% during each year covered by the plan.

New funding sources

We aim to grow funding from new sources by 25% in 2013/14, 30% in 2014/15, 30% in 2015/16, and 20% in 2016/17. Dedicated resource will target project based funding from government, municipal, charitable, commercial and private sources if it supports our strategic objectives. We will work alone, with other Citizens Advice Bureau or with other partners. We will pursue funding which helps us improve access to awareness of the service. Specifically we will pursue any project which improves advice services for:

- Young people or The elderly
- Disabled people
- The housebound
- Carers
- Employed people
- Those in poverty
- The sick or infirm
- The unemployed

We will seek funding to enable us to increase advice provision in those geographical areas which receive a poor face to face service and also those areas where population growth is planned over the coming years.

We will also seek funding which enables us to expand preventative services including

- Financial education aimed at any vulnerable group including, but not restricted to those named above
- Employment training, advice or representation aimed at reducing conflict in the workplace
- Projects that encourage productive volunteering
- Information projects focused on housing, employment, benefits or debt especially when aimed at young people in education
- Services which reduce digital exclusion

Locality Funding

The CABS in the South and Vale benefit from the assistance of locality based individual, corporate, charitable and civic sources. The S&V CAB will provide a support infrastructure for our locality based Friends groups to enable them to expand their activities, generate awareness, foster goodwill, and capitalise on funding opportunities.

11 MONITORING AND REVIEW

This section in development. Completion due March 2013

11.1 Risk Assessment

	Risk	Actions to mitigate
1	Councils see any potential amalgamation/assumed economies of scale as a reason to cut funds. Should this happen then service cuts may have to be made (even if merger cancelled).	Councils to be approached for views on future service delivery. Some of the trustee boards include council representatives; ensure that reps are fully informed of actual financial situation and objective of merger is to sustain services. Bureaux to use communication plan to co-ordinate message across localities. Create presentation to allow merged model to be presented to avoid funders predisposing any saving can be translated into funding cuts. Use single point of contact for relationship with both District Councils.
2	Uncertainty leading to loss of key staff or lowering of staff morale. Limited information resulting in rumour.	Timely, effective communication with all staff. Involvement of key staff in modelling and planning processes. Key messages for staff. Involve volunteer reps in TB decision process. Develop plan early P3 for covering responsibilities if key staff leave during period leading up to the merger.
3	A larger pool of funding will make it more attractive to competitors and potentially increase the likelihood of competitive commissioning by the Councils/other funders.	Once costed models have been developed, PR strategy for councils and other external stakeholders on the benefits of the model and why CAB represents the best delivery model for advice in the area. Keep alert to possible commissioning and ensure well placed to influence any commissioning process.
4	Town council funders may require a more formal indication that their funding will not be absorbed to benefit other areas.	TC funding up to 10% of total. Approach to be based on a before/after analysis of local client numbers to convince TC that value for money is same or better. N.B. This measure also important for Trustee Board in overseeing that no locality is adversely impacted by merger.
5	Individual Bx project funding is often area specific. Newly negotiated projects need to take into account project aims in context	South already have projects across 3 bureaux where appropriate i.e. SOHA. This to be extended where possible to 4 bureaux. Where project is locality based i.e. children's centre or GP surgery then local outcome measures will be

	of merger plan.	used.
6	TUPE data is currently being reviewed and may require additional funding.	Subject to consultation with staff under direction of trustees. HR consultant cost is included in P3 funding from CitA.
7	The increasing demands on management time as the process develops will require recognition planning and support to minimise the impact on current Bx business and ensure continuity and confidence in Bx	Will require shadow board to monitor impact and adjust project if negative impact on business continuity. Resources in place for P3 project planning, to support this. Identify areas of work that can/should be trustee board led. Must ensure balance of demands across the 4 managers - where possible, managers should work across the 4 - early merger of some activities.
8	Potential for high levels of anxiety and uncertainty for staff, trustees and volunteers.	If boards agree to proceed then early formation of shadow board will provide foundation for management of staff issues and regular communication. A lead trustee(s) to be a point of regular contact/responsible for listening to concerns and finding solutions.
9	Some Friends members may leave because they do not support the new structure.	Early consultation with Friends by local management essential. A merged organisation will value its locality champions and encourage friends to become involved in building strong local structures.
10	Friends may find it difficult to maintain the current level of support in localities.	Arm Friends with the necessary arguments and data to convince supporters that reason for merger is to maintain and improve local services.
11	Process for ring-fencing local funding is not defined	Form work group to determine best approach pre and post-merger.
12	CitA comms infrastructure for multi-site working is poor	Use IT group to seek commercial work-rounds whilst canvassing CitA for improved network solutions.
13	Petra may not be available by merger date	Monitor progress of live trials by pilot bureaux. If no clarity on Petra re-launch date by end December then review CASE use with CitA. Adopt temporary CASE solutions as per existing merged bureaux model or adopt Petra pilot status.
14	There may not be enough trustees from existing boards to form a new board.	Identify potential board members early in P3. Recruit externally if insufficient numbers.
15	Assumptions about future demand may be underestimates.	Model has sufficient ASS.ASM resource to accommodate additional volunteers advisers; recruit and fast track train. Accelerate growth of gateway hub; manage appointment percentage down & assisted information up. Add telephone advice resource as quick call back for selected clients within extended gateway approach.
16	Adverse Press Coverage	Part of communication strategy to deal with press on a regular basis and manage the message. Good content in communication plan but one person to deal with info requests from local/ regional papers or one named person from each bureau and keeping the others in the loop re requests. Consider pro-active programme of scheduled press-releases.
17	Business as usual suffers as time	Will require shadow board to monitor impact and adjust

Agenda Item 1

	and resources focused on this, and/or funding opportunities missed.	project if negative impact on business continuity. Resources in place for P3 project planning, to support this. Identify areas of work that can/should be trustee board led.
18	Many changes won't be implemented till after the merger has taken place, and then not immediately, this can affect staff/trustee/volunteer motivation (all the pain, none of the advantages)	Managing expectations throughout. Development of transition plan (in addition to P3 implementation plan), to show how operational changes will be phased in over a number of months/years, always seeking staff and volunteer input into the changes.
19	Project manager resource may be needed for a short time after March 2013 but there is no funding in place to cover this.	Management structure must be in place in advance of merger but we may also want to consider review work required at some point e.g. November to allow for enough time to find additional funding if we feel PM will be needed to assist with overall handover post March 2013.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Client and community profile
- Appendix 2 Draft Corporate Governance Framework for S&V CAB

Occupation	Abingdon			Adviceline			South			Vale			Total			In Bureau			Total South Total Vale			TOTAL					
	Abingdon	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Thame	Thame	South	Vale	Total	Abingdon	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Thame	Thame	Jureau	Souf	Vale	Total	Abingdon	Didcot		Henley	Thame	Thame	Jureau	Souf
Employed >= 30 hrs p/w	121	48	25	55	128	121	249	403	383	188	130	701	403	1,104	829	524	1,353										
Employed < 30 hrs p/w	45	23	18	24	65	45	110	232	190	106	68	364	232	596	429	277	706										
Student	4	2	2	3	7	4	11	23	11	8	5	24	23	47	31	27	58										
Permanently sick/disabled	6	1	1	0	2	6	8	50	44	25	5	74	50	124	76	56	132										
Looking after home/family	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	3	1	4	3	2	5										
Unemployed	48	22	18	41	81	48	129	340	324	144	104	572	340	912	653	388	1,041										
Retired	32	16	11	19	46	32	78	187	182	135	73	390	187	577	436	219	655										
Self employed	5	2	4	6	12	5	17	54	46	39	17	102	54	156	114	59	173										
Volunteer	2	0	1	0	1	2	3	9	1	3	0	4	9	13	5	11	16										
Looking after home - no dependents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	9	3	1	13	12	25	13	12	25										
On Govt scheme for employment	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	2	0	2										
Carer - children	15	5	1	0	6	15	21	39	41	7	5	53	39	92	59	54	113										
Carer - elderly/disabled	3	0	1	1	2	3	5	5	13	3	0	16	5	21	18	8	26										
Other	2	1	1	0	2	2	4	22	19	12	8	49	22	71	51	24	75										
Not Recorded	778	431	1,173	1,181	2,785	778	3,563	474	360	570	855	1,785	474	2,259	4,570	1,252	5,822										
Total	1,062	551	1,256	1,331	3,138	1,062	4,200	1,851	1,635	1,244	1,272	4,151	1,851	6,002	7,289	2,913	10,202										

Main Nationalities Seen	Abingdon			Adviceline			South			Vale			Total			In Bureau			Total South Total Vale			TOTAL					
	Abingdon	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Thame	Thame	South	Vale	Total	Abingdon	Didcot	Henley	Thame	Thame	Thame	Jureau	Souf	Vale	Total	Abingdon	Didcot		Henley	Thame	Thame	Jureau	Souf
British	198	169	123	209	501	198	699	1,159	1,202	604	442	2,248	1,159	3,407	2,749	1,357	4,106										
Poland	2	6	4	8	18	2	20	18	44	19	6	69	18	87	87	20	107										
Other Asia	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	9	7	0	0	7	9	16	8	9	17										
Other Africa	0	2	0	5	7	0	7	8	0	0	0	0	8	8	7	8	15										
Slovakia	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	12	0	0	12	0	12	14	0	14										
Hungary	0	0	2	1	3	0	3	0	0	8	2	10	0	10	13	0	13										
Ireland (Eire)	0	3	1	0	4	0	4	8	0	0	0	0	8	8	4	8	12										
Spain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	10	0	10	10	0	10										
Philippines	0	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	0	6	0	6	0	6	9	0	9										
Czech Republic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	7	0	7	7	0	7										
Australia and New Zealand	2	2	0	0	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4										
South Africa	3	0	1	0	1	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4										
Germany	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	0	2	4	0	4										
France	0	0	2	2	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4										
Spain	0	0	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	0	2	4	0	4										
Italy	0	0	2	1	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3										
Pakistan	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2										
Not recorded	844	358	1,110	1,096	2,564	844	3,408	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,564	844	3,408										

Agenda Item 8 Appendix 1

Appendix 2 Draft Corporate Governance Framework for S&V CAB

3. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope

This document refers to a new proposed future CAB covering South Oxfordshire and Vale and describes the way in which the CAB would be run, administered, controlled and would be accountable to those with a vested interest; be they funders, volunteers, clients, trustees or wider stakeholders. The purpose is: to ensure transparency, accountability, by being clear about roles and responsibilities of the board, the staff and volunteers, and the recognition of their legal obligations. The Corporate Governance Framework describes a code of conduct for all members of the CAB which promotes ethical and responsible decision making.

Governance is the set of arrangements for decision-making, accountability and control of an organisation. The governance refers to arrangements covering the rights and responsibilities of members, the size, role and membership of the charity's trustee board, the way in which the trustee board operates and its relationship with the executive (paid) management of the charity.

1.2 New Organisation

It is recommended that the newly formed Citizens Advice Bureau will be established as a limited company, either through the dissolution of the existing charities and forming a new company, or through a formal merger. However this is outside the scope of this document and will be agreed at a future date.

The current Citizens Advice membership Agreement states that where a new CAB is set up or the Memorandum and Articles are revised, they must be in the form of the Citizens Advice model ones, (see: http://www.bmis.org.uk/governance/legal_structure/tb007.htm) and these referred to throughout this document.

4. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

As detailed in the **Code of good governance for the voluntary sector** the trustee board will adhere to the principles of good governance set out in the sector wide governance code, these are:

- Understanding their role
 - Ensuring delivery of organisational purpose
 - Being effective as individuals and a team
 - Exercising control
 - Behaving with integrity
 - Being open and accountable
-
- *Corporate responsibility and compliance*
 - *Ownership structure and exercise of control rights*

- *Delegation of powers Delegation of functions to Committees, Officers or other bodies, Emergency powers and urgent decisions, Delegation of Committees Delegation to Officers*
- *Balance of power: The simplest balance of power is very common; require that the President be a different person from the Treasurer.*
- *Corporate Role of the Board*
- *Schedule of Matters Reserved to the Board and Scheme of Delegation*

5. ESTABLISHING A NEW BOARD

3.1 Single Board of Trustees

The proposal is to have a single Trustee Board for South Oxfordshire and Vale. The advantages include:

- One employer directing the management team thus avoiding duplication of reporting lines
- Developing and delivering a single strategic direction, and a consistent and coherent message
- Delivering one point of contact and liaison with senior official funding bodies
- Creating efficiencies of effort on behalf of the Board
- Creating some savings through efficiencies, (though the working group recognise that these may be minimal), including e.g. one set of accounts, one board to be serviced.

The challenges include:

- The need to maintain a local focus and profile, in particular when agencies are currently supported by local fundraising and relationship with District Council
- Understanding local needs and sensitivities and ensuring one area is not disadvantaged by the new structure.

3.2 Transition to New Arrangements

It is proposed that there should be a period of transition of for example 6 months whereby an Interim Board is established comprising of equal numbers of representatives from the existing boards, the Chair being chosen from the existing chairs by a vote by the Interim Board. During this period the Interim Board would manage the transition including recruitment of Trustees to the new Board.

3.3 Recruitment of Trustees

- Trustee Board must have a broad range of the key skills needed for good governance and will aim to represent a balance of different age groups and social backgrounds
- Although the proposal is that Trustees will not represent specific constituencies or geographical areas, the Board will ensure that it is knowledgeable of and fully engaged with a much bigger/wider area through the diversity of the Board membership

- Trustees will hold a three year term of office, renewable once; Trustees cannot be employees or volunteers of the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- The Board will comprise up to 15 trustees recruited on the basis of skills and experience which contains a balance of internal and external and other relevant perspectives.
- Trustees will retain overall responsibility and control of the recruitment process. Although trustees can delegate aspects of the recruitment process to their staff, they will have clear role in overseeing the effective management of an open and efficient process.
- All efforts will be made to recruit Trustees from a wide range of backgrounds and to this end all opportunities will be widely advertised to ensure people with the most appropriate skills and qualities are recruited.
- Trustee role description will be made available
- All new trustees will have access to an Induction to both their role and that of the CAB, including a 'Welcome to the Citizens Advice service' pack.

3.4 The Board of Trustees

- i) Trustee Board will aim to have as broad and diverse range of trustees from a number of backgrounds as can be achieved consistently with the other objectives set out in these standing orders; the aim is that there should be a mix of men and women, of racial and ethnic backgrounds, of sexual orientations, of age, of religion and belief and of disabled people on the trustee board
- ii) Members of the Board will understand their role and responsibilities collectively and individually in relation to:
 - their legal duties
 - membership of Citizens Advice
 - their stewardship of assets
 - the provisions of the governing document
 - the external environment
 - the total structure of the organisationand in terms of
 - setting and safeguarding the vision, values and reputation of the organisation
 - overseeing the work of the organisation
 - managing and supporting staff and volunteers where applicable.
 - understand and uphold their duties under equality and human rights law
- iii) The Board will ensure that the organisation delivers its stated purposes or aims by:
 - Ensuring equality of access and diversity in the way that services and organisational purpose are delivered
 - ensuring organisational purposes remain relevant and valid
 - developing and agreeing a long term strategy
 - agreeing operational plans and budgets
 - monitoring progress and spending against plan and budget

- evaluating results, assessing outcomes and impact
 - reviewing and/or amending the plan and budget as appropriate.
- iv) The Board will have a range of appropriate policies and procedures, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours to enable both individuals and the board to work effectively. These will include:
- recognizing that diversity is the key to providing a successful well functioning board
 - finding and recruiting new Board members to meet the organisation's changing needs in relation to skills, experience and diversity
 - providing suitable induction for new Board members
 - providing all board members with opportunities for training and development according to their needs
 - periodically reviewing their performance both as individuals and as a team.
- v) As the accountable body, the Board will ensure that:
- the organisation understands and complies with all legal and regulatory requirements that apply to it
 - the organisation continues to have good internal financial and management controls
 - the quality of advice and organisational standards meet the requirements of Citizens Advice
- vi) The Board will:
- safeguard and promote the organisation's reputation
 - act according to high ethical standards
 - identify, understand and manage conflicts of interest and loyalty
 - maintain independence of decision making
 - deliver impact that best meets the needs of beneficiaries.
 - Take responsibility and make a commitment to act in a non-discriminatory manner that values diversity and challenges discrimination
- vii) The Board will lead the organisation in being open and accountable, both internally and externally. This will include:
- open communications, informing people about the organisation and its work
 - appropriate consultation on significant changes to the organisation's services or policies
 - listening and responding to the views of supporters, funders, beneficiaries, service users and others with an interest in the organisation's work
 - handling complaints constructively, impartially and effectively
 - considering the organisation's responsibilities to the wider community, for example its environmental impact.
 - To be accountable for the decisions made and how they impact on clients volunteers and staff

3.5 Business planning and consultation

If the Board has a knowledge gap then they ensure that they draw in knowledge and expertise from the relevant area, in an ad hoc way.

3.6 Appointment of Sub Committees

- The Board may from time to time appoint Sub Committees to the Board. These sub committees will work in accordance with the terms of reference approved by the Board and report to the Board at agreed intervals. The Board may delegate certain and clearly defined powers and responsibilities to these committees, but will retain overall responsibility for the actions of these committees.

6. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- The Trustee Board as a whole is responsible for ensuring effective financial management under the Charity's governing document for controlling the management and administration of the charity.
- Trustees will ensure that the Bureau accounts for and monitors its financial position. To achieve this, Trustees must commit to regular attendance of Bureau Trustee Board meetings and be prepared to analyse and challenge financial matters with the support of a Treasurer.
- Trustees could be deemed liable if funds are lost as a result of them neglecting their duty of care but the use of reasonable internal controls will make this unlikely.
- Duties will be segregated so that an individual cannot both record and process a transaction
- Staff and advisers will be appropriately qualified/ experienced to ensure proper execution of financial responsibilities
- Annual budgets will be set and systems implemented for regular monitoring and control of expenditure. Trustees will ensure a regular review of internal control systems.
- **Trustees will ensure proper controls over banking arrangements and property and include** a list of fixed assets, that is checked regularly; appropriate insurance; a record of all bank deposits and regular bank reconciliation; Trustee authorisation of decisions to open and close accounts.
- **The Trustees will ensure that income is spent** solely for purposes set out in the bureau's governing document in accordance with the requirements of funding agreements; and with fairness between those qualified to benefit.
- Trustees will ensure effective control of receipts of income and proper authorisation of purchases and payments.
- The Treasurer will ensure that all the finances and the supporting financial control systems are kept in order, but is not the book-keeper and will not hold or maintain either the financial records or the cheque book. The person maintaining the financial records will not also be the holder of the cheque book.
- The Board will annually appoint external auditors to approve the annual accounts.

- Remuneration review of the compensation arrangements for the paid officers the resources made available to directors in carrying out their duties
- Fraud and Corruption

- Internal control procedures and internal auditors: financial reporting, operating efficiency, and compliance with laws and regulations

- The Bureau will open and maintain a bank account for the management of its financial resources

Security of cash

- The Bureau will prepare annual reports and accounts conforming to the guidance in the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP 2000)
- The Board will justify and where required, establish and implement an appropriate reserves policy. This policy will be reviewed annually according to the guidance The Statement of Recommended Practice 2000 (SORP) on Accounting and Reporting by Charities. This will be declared in the Trustees report and the financial accounts

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- The Statement of Recommended Practice 2000 on Accounting and Reporting by Charities requires charities with a gross income of over £250,000 to include a statement in their Trustees' Report that: "the major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the trustees, have been reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks". It is not sufficient to make this statement without having actually performed a risk assessment. Charities with lower income are encouraged (but not required) to make the same statement.
- The Bureau will have in place have a Risk Management Policy that reflects the level of risk that the trustees will accept and will provide a standard against which different risks can be measured. The policy will define the bureau's major risks and allocate responsibility for them under the headings of: Operational (e.g. fraud); Financial (e.g. reliability of income); External (e.g. change in government policy); Compliance (e.g. legal requirements on health and safety).
- The Bureau will undertake regular risk assessments, regularly manage and monitor risk in order to identify new risks and evaluate existing ones. A risk register will be established and maintained to track "gross risks", the controls to mitigate them and the resulting "net risks"
- The Trustees' Annual Report will include a section on risk management

4. ANNUAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

- The Board will ensure compliance with the "Statement of Recommended Practice" (SORP) issued by the Charity Commission in the production of a Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts.

5 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF STAFF

- The Board will appoint a Personnel sub-committee from amongst the Board to deal with confidential staff matters and disciplinary and grievance investigations
- Paid staff will be employed using the pay scales and terms and conditions used by the Local Authority
- Trustees are the employers of paid staff working in Citizens Advice Bureau and will ensure that best practice is delivered for all matters of recruitment and retention, matters of discipline and grievance and redundancy and according to legal requirements relating to equal opportunities

8. CONTRACTING

- The Board may from time to time enter into contracts (for example leases and employment contracts) and other obligations on behalf of the CAB and they are responsible for its debts and other liabilities. This means their personal assets are at risk if the assets of the CAB (including payments under insurance policies) are not sufficient to cover all the debts and liabilities.

9. INFORMATION

- The Board will ensure that all data is recorded and systems in place for analysis according to the needs of the Board and any Funders; and provide reports as required to justify any expenditure
- The CAB will comply with all requests under Freedom of Information Act according to the national requirements

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Revenue Grants

Officer Evaluation

Appendix 2

968	
Oxfordshire South & Vale Citizens Advice Bureau	
Core running costs of Oxfordshire South & Vale CAB	
Project Details	
Give a brief description of your organisation:	
Oxfordshire South & Vale CAB is a new organisation being created through the merger of four Citizens Advice Bureaux (Abingdon, Didcot, Henley and Thame) to continue to provide high quality accessible advice to those who need it; improve access to advice across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse to ensure a more resilient organisation capable of meeting the growing demands.	
What is the overall aim of your organisation?	
To help people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free, independent and confidential advice, and by influencing policymakers	
Do you charge a fee for the service(s) you provide?	
No, our service is free.	
Does your organisation own the premises or land it uses?	
We lease the land/buildings.	
What type of organisation is applying?	
Registered Charity.	
Meeting our priorities	
C1	Which priority of the scheme does your service(s) support?
	Advice Services.
C2	How will your service(s) meet this priority?
	We will provide information and generalist advice services covering benefits, debt, employment, housing relationship, consumer, education, immigration, legal, tax, utilities, finance, health and travel issues from our main locations in Abingdon, Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford and outreach locations across the area. Clients who contact us receive an initial assessment of their problem, some are given information, others go on to have detailed high level casework (including representation), depending on the complexity of their problem and their ability to take action on their own behalf. We will also increase access for people unable to visit a CAB office by improving our telephone advice service and developing web-based and email advice services. We will identify local community needs and develop specialist advice services to meet these needs.
Demand	
<i>Up to 60 points can be scored in this section</i>	
D1	What demand is there for the service(s) you offer?
	We have seen a 14.5% increase in demand for our service since 2009-10. The impact of the recession has led to related advice enquiries such as benefits, debt, housing, employment and relationship issues. As the only advice agency in the area open to anyone and the very high public awareness of our brand, we are not only the first organisation many people turn to, but in some cases we are the only service that can help. Of the 12,506 enquiries dealt with only 34 involved sign posting or referral to another organisation. Demand is likely to increase:- the planned reduction in legal aid in 2013 (we will be the only available free and independent advice service)- the introduction of Universal Credit from 2013 (significant increase in demand for welfare benefit, housing and budgeting advice). The biggest impact will be on the most vulnerable members of our community - increase in population across the district. Clients need access to information and advice in a way that suits them. Demand for face to face services is still high, especially from more vulnerable clients who find using the telephone or internet difficult. Demand for telephone advice and email/ web-based advice has increased and we can only meet some of the demand in these areas. Our current service is weekday based and we are unable to meet demand for out of hours advice (another area where we aim to make improvements). Demand for financial capability (preventative) work has grown. The need is currently for advice on budgeting, dealing with bills, saving money on fuel bills and managing debt and we are starting to receive requests for sessions on basic employment rights and other key issues. Universal credit will increase this demand as people have to move from managing benefits in a lump sum and in some cases being responsible for

	paying rent and council tax directly for this first time. For more information please see our Community Advice Needs Analysis.		
D2	What evidence do you have to prove there is a demand for your service(s)?		
	<p>We keep detailed statistics on clients and enquiries to help us analyse advice trends and needs and have seen a year on year increase in areas such as homelessness enquiries, rent arrears for RSL tenants and mortgage arrears. We have attached a breakdown of the 12,506 issues raised by South Oxfordshire residents showing the demand for advice across all subjects. Since we launched our Telephone Advice line service in 2011 demand from South Oxfordshire residents has increased. In 2011-12 there were almost 6,500 calls from the district but we were only able to answer about half of these. Demand is high in areas of deprivation across the district. Please see additional information in the attached Community and Advice Needs Analysis. In 2011-12 we ran 30 financial capability sessions in the district reaching 221 people including military personnel, prisoners and families. We also ran 24 sessions in local secondary schools reaching over 570 students. Schools now request sessions on an annual basis and with additional subjects from now on showing that demand is increasing. We work closely with other local organisations and feedback from them demonstrates demand and helps us to plan our services. E.g. the Didcot Early Intervention Hub, Didcot Women's Refuge and Soha Housing contacted us about the advice needs of their clients and we have worked together to develop specialist advice services. SODC's Housing Department also approached us to provide the money advice element of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme. We consult with clients to help us plan our services and our most recent figures show 96% are happy with the service we provide. 96% are satisfied with access, 95% with the advice given and 96% would use the service again. Feedback from clients shows that they would prefer longer opening hours, more alternative methods of contacting us and reduced waiting times and these are all areas we hope to be able to address through our new organisational structure.</p>		
	Officer recommendation: Based on the information supplied the application has achieved the maximum score as there is evidence of an extensive level of demand for the service. In 2011-12 the CAB dealt with 12,506 issues raised by South Oxfordshire residents primarily regarding benefit claims and debt advice.	Score	60
Beneficiaries <i>Up to 40 points can be scored in this section</i>			
E1	Who will benefit from your service(s)?		
	<p>The CAB Service is the only advice service in South Oxfordshire open to everyone. We monitor the profile of our clients and compare this to the local community profile to help us to plan our services and ensure we remain accessible to all sections of the community. Women tend to use our service slightly more than men and 37.6% of clients have one or more dependants. A high percentage of our clients are in the lower income brackets (39% have a monthly income of £600 pcm or less) and 48.6% are in rented accommodation. For those cases where we are able to record an outcome, our records show that we achieve financial gains of approximately £3,000 per client. We reach all age groups with almost 10% below 25 and 14.6% above 65. Our main offices are located in the market towns of Didcot, Henley, Thame and Wallingford but we also provide outreach services in a variety of settings including RAF Benson, Huntercombe prison, Wheatley, Watlington, Chinnor and Woodcote. We are committed to ensuring that those unable to travel to a CAB office can still access our service by developing our telephone Adviceline service and alternative methods of accessing advice such as web-based advice services and email advice. We aim to expand these services over the next four years to ensure better access for all South Oxfordshire residents.</p>		
E2	Will your service(s) benefit any minority groups?		
	<p>We plan our services to ensure that minority groups in particular can access our services. Please note that not all clients provide profile information so of those who did in 2011-12: 14.8% of clients visiting a CAB had a disability 1.4% had a mental health problem or learning difficulty 15% of clients were BME. We also provide services in prison for ex-offenders, members of the traveller's community and to clients in areas of deprivation. For full details of our client profile please see the Community Advice Needs Analysis.</p>		
	Officer recommendation: Based on the information supplied the application has achieved the maximum score as there is evidence of an extensive level of benefit to the service users and those from other minority groups. The CAB has provided detailed statistics showing the profile of its previous users by age, ethnicity, sex, disability, occupation, income and household type. The CAB intends to develop its services to improve access for all residents in South Oxfordshire.	Score	40
Outcomes			

Up to 80 points can be scored in this section				
F1	Hard outcome 1			
	Outcome	Increased income for clients and associated improvement in economic wellbeing		
	Milestone	£750,000		
	How will you measure this outcome?	Income gains for South Oxfordshire clients in excess of £750,000 in 2013-14. Examples of income gains include: benefits gained, tax credits, compensation payments, court or tribunal awards, grants, redundancy payouts and insurance payouts. We measure this using our case management system, where advisers record the amounts, and by surveying clients twelve months after they have received advice, as some benefits are not received until after the advice has been given. By monitoring this over the three years of the grant, we will be able to track the impact of Welfare Reform on the people of South Oxfordshire.		
F2	Hard outcome 2			
	Outcome	2. Increased access to advice by developing alternative methods of contact		
	Milestone	5%		
	How will you measure this outcome?	We can measure this using our case management system, which records all our contacts with clients and their method of contact. This records the client's details, the nature of the enquiry, how they contacted us, and what work we did for them. The system allows us to report to you on all our clients by household income, household status, ethnicity, age, disability and by ward. Vulnerable groups will be a significant majority of the clients seen.		
F3	Soft outcome 1			
	Outcome	1. Improving opportunities for local people through varied and well managed volunteering.		
	Milestone	More volunteers report an increase in confidence, health and well being and employability as a result of volunteering with the CAB.		
	How will you measure this outcome?	We will measure this by an annual survey of our 200 volunteers. The survey covers all aspects of volunteering; how well supported they feel, training provided, satisfaction in the work, personal development and social capital. We also conduct exit interviews for all those volunteers who leave us, and record why they are leaving, for example, to move into paid work.		
F4	Soft outcome 2			
	Outcome	Increase in health and confidence levels in our clients following advice from CAB.		
	Milestone	More clients report an increase in wellbeing and confidence following advice from CAB.		
	How will you measure this outcome?	We will measure this using our client satisfaction and outcomes survey which is sent to a sample of clients. This asks them about the advice they have received, access to our service and about any improvements in their physical and mental health as a result of the advice they have received.		
	Officer recommendation: Based on the information supplied the outcomes have achieved the maximum score as there is evidence of an extensive level of support towards the grant priority of advice to those in need.		Score	80
Financial Appraisal				
Up to 60 points can be scored in this section				
G1	How much are you applying for? (in total over the four years)		£682,620	

G2	Please breakdown the amount of grant requested for each year:	2013/14	£165,620
		2014/15	£168,932
		2015/16	£172,311
		2016/17	£175,757
G3	What is the total anticipated cost of running your service(s) in year one?	£389,086	
G4	What are your reasons for applying for this funding?		
	The CAB service has worked in partnership with SODC since the service began in 1968 and the local authority grant has provided the foundation of funding for Didcot, Thame and Henley CABx. We are applying for funding to continue and develop our services as part of a new organisation to cover the whole of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse. Core funding is essential for our volunteer led services to continue and will enable us to attract additional sources of funding to further develop essential services across the area.		
G5	What do you perceive to be the main risks to your organisation? How do you propose to deal with these risks?		
	Please see risk analysis in the Business & Development Plan.		
G6	Do you anticipate receiving any other funding from the council in the next four years?		
	We currently receive funding from SODC for the money advice element of the Mortgage Rescue Scheme and would be willing to discuss developing any other specialist services according to local need.		
	<p>Officer financial appraisal: Based on the information supplied the application shows potential that it could be financially viable, it has clear financial forecasts, but it is reliant on additional external funding from the Vale of White Horse District Council and parish and town councils across the two districts.</p> <p>If a grant is awarded it is suggested that the grant should be paid in two stages. Half in April and the second half of the annual grant will not be paid until officers have held an annual monitoring meeting to be certain that the S&V CAB will achieve the expected outcomes as detailed above and that they are financially secure and able to continue to operate.</p>	Score	40
*	139 - No award, 140 -189 award considered, 190 or more - funding priority.	Total	220
Comments Section			
Grant Officer Comments:			

In April 2013 the CAB intends to merge Henley, Didcot and Thame CAB together with Abingdon CAB into one new organisation called Oxfordshire South and Vale of White Horse Citizens Advice Bureau (S&V CAB).

By combining the resources of the four bureaux the CAB believes that it can provide a service for its clients that is better; more resilient and sustainable; and capable of meeting growing demands. A comprehensive business and development plan for 2013/14 to 2016/17 is attached at appendix 1 of this report and gives details of the new governance and management structure and financial details from 2012/13 up to 2016/17.

The organisational change will focus on management structure and back office procedures. All of the bureaux will continue to provide advice for their respective clients from their current locations. The advice will continue to be delivered by volunteer staff from the local communities.

Conditions of grant award:

1. All standard conditions as detailed in the approved revenue grants policy.
2. The grant will be paid in two stages. 50 per cent in April and the second 50 per cent of the annual grant will be paid when officers have held an annual monitoring meeting to confirm that S&V CAB will achieve the expected outcomes as detailed above and that S&V CAB are financially secure and able to continue to operate.

As the application scores 220 (maximum score 240) officers recommend that the grant request for funding from 2013/14 to 2016/17 is approved.

*** informal scoring guide used by officers**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Recommended Amount:	£165,620	168,932	172,311	175,757
Approved Award:				
Decision Date				

Revenue Grant Policy and Procedures Rules 2013/14 - 2016/17



Listening Learning Leading

Introduction

The revenue grant scheme is funded on an annual basis from the council's general revenue account. The council allocates approximately £400,000 each year to this scheme. The priorities for the revenue grant scheme are reviewed every four years (normally the year after the corporate plan is approved).

The council's 2012-2016 corporate plan has a priority to offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering services that support our objectives or those in need.

The council seeks to offer financial support to the local voluntary sector for periods of up to four financial years (2013/14 - 2016/17). The scheme will provide funding towards ongoing running costs such as staffing, heating, administration or rent costs. The scheme does not intend to fund short one off types of activities.

Applications for capital funding to fund extensions or to purchase equipment should refer to the council's community investment fund capital grant scheme.

Grant priorities

The council has decided its priorities for the scheme from 2013/14 - 2016/17 will be towards services that provide advice and/or care services or that prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in the district. The scheme will fund those organisations that help people and communities most in need.

The scheme will fund organisations that meet at least one of the following grant priorities:

Advice services – provision of advice services that will improve the quality of life to those in need in South Oxfordshire

Care services – provision of care services that will improve the quality of life to those in need in South Oxfordshire

Prevent anti-social behaviour – provision of services that will help to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour in South Oxfordshire

Who can apply to the scheme?

Any constituted local voluntary sector organisation may apply. Businesses, individuals and statutory organisations are not eligible to apply for a grant under this scheme. The scheme will not fund projects that are the responsibility of another public body.

The council is committed to promoting equality and diversity and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community, regardless of race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender reassignment, marital status, religion or belief.

What is the minimum and maximum grant award from the scheme?

There is a minimum grant award of £5,000 and a maximum grant award of £25,000. In exceptional circumstances larger grants may be awarded. Please note that under no circumstances will the council fund the whole costs of an organisation. Application forms will need to demonstrate that funding has been sought and/or obtained from a variety of other sources.

Outcomes

All applications must demonstrate how the outcomes of the service will support at least one of the selected grant priorities for 2013/14 - 2016/17 (as detailed above).

Scheme eligibility criteria

Applications will only be considered if the organisation has:

- a valid constitution (not for profit)
- a bank account
- two years accounts (audited if available) (or six months of bank statements for new organisations)
- a business/development plan including financial forecasts and risk analysis
- evidence that the beneficiaries are residents of South Oxfordshire.

Scoring criteria

All applications will be scored using approved scoring criteria shown at appendix 1.

Decision making

The council's cabinet will determine the grant applications in December 2012. These decisions will be subject to approval of the budget by the council in February 2013. Grant awards for subsequent financial years will also be subject to approval by the council on an annual basis.

Standard conditions of all grant awards

- all grants will be subject to a formal grant agreement
- all necessary insurance will be in place
- compliance with all statutory legislation must be in place
- accounts (audited if available) will be submitted annually
- monitoring information regarding the outcomes will be submitted annually
- the organisation will recognise the grant received in any appropriate literature by using the council's logo and display a plaque, supplied by the council, if requested to do so.
- .



Appendix 1 to the policy

Revenue Grant scoring criteria

Assessment methodology for revenue grant applications

All applications will be assessed using the scoring system shown below. We will score all applications and seek to fund the highest scoring applications.

Demand up to 60 points

Scores of up to 60 points are available dependent on the evidence of local demand. Applications will need to provide evidence of current demand and of any plans to improve or expand current services. Evidence of consultation with the public and/or stakeholders must be provided.

Beneficiaries up to 40 points

Scores of up to 40 points are available dependent on who will benefit. Applications will need to detail who will benefit from the community, whether it will be all of the community, or certain groups of the community? Minority groups or communities identified as an area of deprivation will score higher.

Outcomes up to 80 points

Scores of up to 80 points are available dependent on how well the outcomes support the selected grant priorities for 2013/14 - 2016/17. Evidence of how the outcomes will be measured must also be provided.

Financial appraisal up to 60 points

Scores of up to 60 points are available dependent on how financially stable the organisation receiving the grant is. Evidence of other income streams and other secured funding must be provided.

Summary of scoring system

The maximum score is 240 made up as follows:

Assessment factor	Maximum points available
Demand	60
Beneficiaries	40
Outcomes	80
Financial appraisal	60
Total	240

Minutes



Listening Learning Leading

OF A MEETING OF THE

Scrutiny Committee

HELD AT 6.00PM ON 30 OCTOBER 2012

AT COUNCIL OFFICES, CROWMARSH GIFFORD

Councillors Present:

Mrs E Hards (Chairman)

Ms J Bland, Mr S Connel, Mrs P Dawe, Mr W Hall, Mr P Harrison, Mr S Harrod, Mrs A Midwinter (as substitute for Mrs C Collett), Mr D Turner

Apologies:

Mrs C Collett, Mr J Cotton, and Ms K Crabbe submitted their apologies.

Officers:

Mr S Bishop, Mrs J Bolton, Mrs K Doherty, Mrs L Hayden, Mr P Howden, Mr W Jacobs, Mrs J Thompson

Also present:

Mrs A Ducker, Leader of the Council

Mr D Dodds, Cabinet member for finance, waste and parks

Mr B Service, Cabinet member for leisure, grants and community safety

Chief Inspector P Murphy, Thames Valley Police, representing the Community Safety Partnership

Mr D Keen, Capita contract manager

12. Minutes, 21 August 2012

RESOLVED: to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 August 2012 as a correct record and agree that the Chairman sign these as such.

13. Dates of next meetings

The committee noted that due to the delayed expected date of the government's financial settlement, there would be a meeting of the committee in January to consider the council's overall budget and the impact of the settlement.

14. Community safety annual plan- 2011/12 review

The committee considered the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services setting out the performance of the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in terms of the delivery of its objectives during 2011/12.

Mrs K Doherty, Mrs L Hayden, Chief Inspector P Murphy (Thames Valley Police), and Mr B Service, Cabinet member, introduced the report and answered questions from the committee as follows:

- On fly tipping, historically Vale of White Horse District Council had more resources than South Oxfordshire District Council. South Oxfordshire District Council had taken on an extra staff member to deal with enforcement against fly-tippers and officers would inform the committee of the current level of resources.
- There were street pastors groups in Thame and Wallingford which are run by volunteers from local churches. The CSP supported the establishment of new groups by encouraging sharing of best practice between groups and providing start-up funding. Street pastors were not controlled by the police, but the police provided some training and the street pastors understood how other agencies worked and were able to visit the CCTV control room to see how this could assist them.
- Nightsafe campaigns were run about twice a year. Recent campaigns included promoting the use of taxis to get home safely and responsible drinking. Some material was available on-line for householders to print off.
- Test purchases for under-age sales were carried out when there was evidence to suggest the premises was making such sales. Officers would supply information to councillors on how to report suspected under-age sales.
- Good practice allowed residents to report incidents of anti-social behaviour via the local authority as well as the police as sometimes people felt uncomfortable contacting the police for a variety of reasons.
- Non-recordable domestic abuse was a category of incident which was not actually a criminal offence but warranted recording as an early indicator of persons or households at risk of violence. Reports of domestic violence were increasing again so it was likely that the drop reported in 2011/12 was only temporary.
- The complete set of hate crime figures for 2011/12 were:

1 April– 31 March 2012	Finally Recorded			
Hate crime reported to TVP	2009	2010	2011	% change
South	0	73	81	10.0%
Vale	73	73	82	11.0%
South and Vale	73	146	163	10.0%
Thames Valley	1,917	1,717	1,436	-16.4%

- The CSP's view was that working with the youth hubs and youth service was positive and that representatives are attending JATAC (the CSP's multi-agency working group), helping to deal with difficult ASB cases.

- Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs) were set up by Thames Valley Police and would continue under the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). NAGs would seek to engage with other groups. Records of types of rural crime were kept by the police and discussed at the NAG meetings.
- After the PCC is elected on 15 November, the CSP would continue for at least a year as funding was in place, in part drawn from the remaining Local Area Agreement reward funding. The CSPs had proved very successful across the county and for this reason the South and Vale partnership is working with the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership to secure its future from 2013/14 onwards.
- Officers agreed to supply written information about the measures of detritus and the impact of the 2012/13 deep clean of the district on detritus levels.

Members of the committee commented that the CSP's work was effective and there was a positive impact, for example in managing the Henley Regatta and in genuinely feeling safer going out at night now than a few years previously. There had been lots of positive comments about the improvement made by removing the graffiti in Cow Lane in Didcot. The council wished the CSP to continue.

The committee noted the priorities, results and activities in the report and asked for written answers to their questions above.

15. Performance review of CAPITA for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012

The committee considered the report of the Head of Finance setting out Capita's performance in delivering the elements of the financial services contract for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012.

Mr P Howden, Revenues Client Manager, Mr W Jacobs, Head of Finance, and Mr D Dodds, Cabinet member, introduced the report and answered questions from the committee. Mr D Keen, Capita contract manager, answered questions from the committee.

The committee commented that:

- it was disappointing that the response to the survey was so low, and that the responses may not be entirely representative of the actual satisfaction levels with the service;
- it welcomed the improvement in performance in delivering the contract over the years;
- it noted that the Agresso upgrade was now in place; that Capita was planning to utilise more electronic communications and to use more of the functionality in the software; and that the use of Agresso would be reviewed to more effectively facilitate the accountancy services;
- the switchboard staff were excellent; and
- it noted that the administration of concessionary fares was now the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council.

The committee asked if officers considered that the lack of survey data from the Citizens' Panel had affected the results of the customer satisfaction survey.

The committee noted the report and congratulated the officers and Capita on the performance in 2011/12.

RESOLVED: to recommend that the Cabinet member for finance assess Capita's performance in each area as:

- Revenues (council tax and non-domestic rates collection and cashier service)– excellent
- Benefits – excellent
- Exchequer (accounts receivable and payable)– excellent
- Financial management system – good
- Payroll – excellent
- Customer contact – excellent
- Concessionary fares (assisted travel) – excellent

16. Revenue Grants 2013/14 – 2016/17

The committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Strategy asking the committee whether to form a scrutiny task group to consider the revenue grant applications for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and make comments to Cabinet, and to approve terms of reference, and delegate authority to the Head of Corporate Strategy to make appointments to the task group.

Mrs J Bolton, Grants Team Leader, Mrs C Kingston, Head of Corporate Strategy, and Mr B Service, Cabinet member, introduced the report.

In answer to a question from Mr Turner, Mr Service explained that the revenue grants policy had excluded parish councils from applying as they had the ability to raise their own funding through the precept and the council had limited funds to distribute.

The committee:

- agreed the terms of reference as set out in the report with an amendment to increase the number of members to six (Mr D Turner abstained from this vote);
- appointed Ms Bland, Mr Cotton, Mrs Dawe, Mr Hall, Mrs Midwinter, and Mr Turner to the task group;
- agreed that the task group would meet on 6 and 9 November; and
- commended the suggestion that the terms of reference of the Community Investment Fund Panel should be amended to allow it to consider revenue grants.

17. Revenue Grants 2013/14 – 2016/17 – Citizens Advice Bureaux

Mrs E Hards declared that as she was a trustee of the Didcot CAB she did not consider that it was appropriate for her to take part in the debate and voting on this item. Accordingly, she left the meeting at the start of this item.

Ms J Bland, the vice-chairman, took the chair for this item.

The committee considered the report of the Head of Corporate Strategy setting out the revenue grant application from Oxfordshire South and Vale of White Horse Citizens Advice Bureau for 2013/14 - 2016/17 and asking for the committee's comments to Cabinet.

Mrs J Bolton, Grants Team Leader, Mrs C Kingston, Head of Corporate Strategy, and Mr B Service, Cabinet member, introduced the report and answered questions from the committee.

Mr T Fox, manager of the Thame CAB, and Mr J Morrow, trustee of the Henley CAB, addressed the committee. They explained the reasons for the decision to merge the four Bureaux into one, which included increasing the resilience and reducing duplication between the Bureaux and making best use of specialist expertise across the wider area.

In answer to questions from the committee, Mr Fox and Mr Morrow said there was no intention to reduce the number of offices or the service offered. The CAB would also discuss revenue funding with town and parish councils, and for the purposes of their business plan had assumed increased funding in line with inflation. Cost and income projections assumed no significant changes to core funding, two per cent annual inflation, and success in attracting funding for specific projects. The grant awarded by each district council was different partly because of the different number of bureaux and the different caseloads at each, and partly for historical reasons. Abingdon CAB measured individual client numbers; the CABs in South Oxfordshire measured enquiries so the figures are not easy to compare.

Officers commented that it was difficult to gather accurate statistics on the use of the CAB service as a whole by district residents. Some residents would visit CABs outside their immediate area. The central telephone number always directed callers to their nearest CAB.

The committee commented that:

- There were questions as to whether the salary increases over the years realistically reflected the anticipated reduction in costs and increased project funding.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau was needed more than ever and the committee appreciated its work.

The committee agreed to make the following comments to Cabinet:

1. the committee agreed with the proposed outcomes (performance measures) detailed in the officer evaluation at appendix 2:
 - increased income for clients and associated improvement in economic wellbeing with a target income gain of £750,000;
 - increased access to advice by developing alternative methods of contact with a target increase of five per cent;
 - improving opportunities for local people through varied and well managed volunteering;

- increase in health and confidence levels in our clients following advice from CAB.
- 2. the committee supported giving the South and Vale Citizens Advice Bureau a £682,620 grant over the next four years 2013/14 - 2016/17; and
- 3. the committee suggested that the cabinets of both South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of white Horse District Council consider an equitable funding arrangement to take account of the different levels of service and caseload in each district.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm

Chairman

Date