

**Vale of White Horse District Council  
June 2008 Summary**

**Highlights:**

Council tax direct debit take-up has continued to increase and is currently **74.99%**, which is **0.01%** higher than last month (74.98%). The correspondence figures remain good at 545 items outstanding as at the end of June.

Council tax collection rates for 2007/08 and 2006/07 currently stand at **98.88%** and **99.34%** respectively which again confirms the commitment to vigorously pursue arrears.

**General Comments:**

Benefits performance of new claims during June was outside top quartile, with the average time for processing a new claim being **30.56** days. This is an improvement upon May's figure of 31.91 days. The lower than top quartile performance can be attributed to the ongoing effects of seasonal variances at the end of the financial year, causing an increase in workload. We will continue to ensure that the effect of the increased quarter 1 figures are minimised against ongoing year-to-date performance, by ensuring that performance in subsequent months continues to improve. In essence, Capita is confident that the annual performance should be within the top quartile target of 24 days.

Monthly aged debts reports are now being produced on a monthly basis and progress is now being made in addressing older debts as well as current debt. Cases passed to the legal team since December 2007 have gleaned in excess of £160k to date.

"Getting it right first time" is vital to improving front line services and customer satisfaction and reducing the number of complaints (which in turn take up valuable resources). Capita has confirmed it will be giving accuracy and quality top priority in the coming year and will be working with key stakeholders to improve performance.

**Council Tax:**

**BVPI 9** – In year collection to date is **30.45%** against a target to date of **30.50%**. This target is based on the new overall end of year collection rate of **98.55%**. This is **0.07%** down on last year (30.52% for June 2007). The collection rates for 2007/08 and 2006/07 currently stand at **98.88%** and **99.34%** respectively.

Cash guarantee and Schedule 18 arrears collection targets are still in the process of being finalised. Capita and the council are in discussions.

Direct Debit take-up currently stands at **74.99%**, compared to **74.98%** last month.

Outstanding correspondence figures stand at **545**.

There were no issues to report following the June 2008/09 recovery run.

A letter has been drafted and will be issued to all remaining empty properties affected by the flooding. The exemption for these cases is due to expire next month. This relates to approximately 50 accounts.

### **Business Rates:**

**BVPI 10** – In year collection to date is currently **32.78%**, against a target to date of **33.00%**. This target is based on the new overall end of year collection rate of **99.36%**.

The June 2008 collection figure is **0.20%** lower than the percentage collected at this time last year (June 2007). As reported last month, the recent change in government legislation for rates on empty properties may be the likely cause for this slight decrease, however, it is still very early in the financial year and the true impact of this change (if any) will become more evident at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, i.e. September onwards.

There were no issues to report following the June 2008/09 recovery run

### **Benefits:**

**BVPI 78a** (new claims) – Monthly performance was **30.56** days. This was an improvement compared to May's BVPI of **31.91** days, although still outside the top quartile annual target of **24** days. The year-to-date figure now stands at **29.88** days. By continuing to improve the monthly new claim figure following the seasonal quarter 1 drop in performance, the 24 day target should be met

**BVPI 78b** (changes in circumstances) – From April 2008 the method of reporting changes in circumstances has changed. The software that enables the monitoring of this old indicator has not been fully tested and approved. For this reason Capita is unable to report current performance.

**BVPI 79b (i)** (% overpayments outstanding recovered in year) – The monthly performance is **58.24%** which represents an improvement in performance on the May figure of **52.38%**. The year-to-date figure now stands at **63.71%** against the annual target of **87.71%**. Further improvements in processes used by the central overpayment recovery section in Mendip and ongoing communication with major landlords concerning outstanding debts will improve overpayment collection rates to the point that the annual target should be met.

### **Exchequer Services:**

**Creditors (Accounts Payable) BVPI 8** (Payment of invoices within 30 days) – Monthly performance for June was **85.14%** (provisional figure). This reported June provisional figure remains outside the annual target of **95.94%**. Capita is currently working with the council to identify any disputed commercial invoices paid outside 30 days to help improve the current year to date figure of **83.51%**.

Capita target – (100% of invoices paid within 5 working days of receipt of correctly authorised payment). Monthly performance was 98.83%. There were 6 invoices which were processed outside of the 5 day target, these invoices were identified and included on the following payment run.

**Accounts Receivable- (Invoices created within 3 working days) - 100%** performance achieved in June. Monthly aged debts reports are now being produced on a monthly basis and progress is now being made in addressing older debts as well as current debt. Cases passed to the legal team since December 2007 have gleaned in excess of £160k to date.

**Debtors (Accounts Receivable) (outstanding debt over 46 days)** – Capita has submitted a report to the council detailing how it believes the methodology for calculating these figures across the two councils should work. Once the methodology is agreed the figures will be included with the monthly performance report.

**Financial Management System (FMS)** (99% system availability during supported hours)  
– System availability was at 100% during June.

**Payroll** – End of year reconciliations are ongoing. Payroll was processed on time.

**South Oxfordshire District Council  
June 2008 Summary**

**Highlights:**

The council tax collection rate for June 2008 was once again very good and was **0.19%** higher than June 2007.

Council tax direct debit take-up has again increased and is 0.14% higher than last month. The outstanding correspondence figure has also improved and is down to **1,360** items (1,556 last month).

Council tax collection rates for 2007/08 and 2006/07 currently stand at **98.82%** and **99.39%** respectively which again confirms the commitment to vigorously pursue arrears.

**General Comments:**

Reception/front of house continues to work well without any issues. The recent mystery shoppers report indicates that the service for Reception/front of house is very good.

Benefits performance of new claims during June was outside top quartile, with the average time for processing a new claim being **32.37** days. The increase in the time taken to assess new claims can be attributed to the ongoing effects of seasonal variances at the end of the financial year, causing an increase in workload. Capita will continue to ensure that the effect of the increased quarter 1 figures are minimised against ongoing year-to-date performance, by ensuring that performance in subsequent months is improved. In essence, Capita is confident that the annual performance should be within the top quartile target of 24 days.

Monthly aged debts reports are now being produced on a monthly basis and progress is now being made in addressing older debts as well as current debt.

“Getting it right first time” is vital to improving front line services and customer satisfaction and reducing the number of complaints (which in turn take up valuable resources). Capita has confirmed it will be giving accuracy and quality top priority in the coming year and will be working with key stakeholders to improve performance.

**Council Tax:**

**BVPI 9** – In year collection to date is currently **30.76%**, against target to date of **30.80%**. This target is based on the new overall end of year collection rate of **98.55%**. This is **0.19%** higher than at this time last year (**30.57%** for June 2007).

The collection rates for 2007/08 and 2006/07 currently stand at **98.82%** and **99.39%** respectively which again confirms the commitment to vigorously pursue arrears.

Direct Debit take-up currently stands at **72.05%**, compared with **71.91%** last month.

Outstanding correspondence figures stand at **1,360**, compared to **1,556** reported last month.

There were no issues to report following the June 2008/09 recovery run.

As reported last month, Auddis (the ability to set up direct debits over the phone without having to complete a written instruction) is scheduled for implementation in August 2008. This should help to improve direct debit take-up & collection rates. Testing is still ongoing and everything is on track for an August go-live.

#### **Business Rates:**

**BVPI 10** – In year collection to date is currently **31.83%**, against target to date of **33.00%**. This target is based on the new overall end of year collection rate of **99.36%**.

The June 2008 collection figure is **1.44%** lower than the percentage collected at this time last year (June 2007). However, the majority of this difference is explained by a couple of large businesses paying slightly late this month. Also, as reported last month, the recent change in government legislation for rates on empty properties may cause a slight decrease in collection, however, it is still very early in the financial year and the true impact of this change (if any) will become more evident at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, i.e. September onwards.

There were no issues to report following the June 2008/09 recovery run.

#### **Benefits:**

**BVPI 78a** (new claims) – Monthly performance was **32.37** days. This was a drop compared to May's BVPI of **29.84** days, and outside the top quartile annual target of **24** days. The year-to-date figure now stands at **29.99** days. By improving the monthly new claim figure, following the seasonal quarter 1 drop in performance, the 24 day target should be met.

**BVPI 78b** (changes in circumstances) – From April 2008 the method of reporting changes in circumstances has changed. The software that enables the monitoring of this old indicator has not been fully tested and approved. For this reason Capita is unable to report current performance.

**BVPI 79b (i)** (% overpayments outstanding recovered in year) – The monthly performance is **58.17%** which represents a slight reduction in performance on the May figure of **58.27%**. The year-to-date figure now stands at **62.41%** against the annual target of **87.71%**. Further improvements in processes used by the central overpayment recovery section in Mendip and ongoing communication with major landlords concerning outstanding debts will improve overpayment collection rates to the point that the annual target should be met.

#### **Cash Office:**

Continues to work well with no issues to report.

## **Exchequer Services:**

### **Creditors (Accounts Payable) - BVPI 8 (Payment of invoices within 30 days)**

Monthly performance for June was **93.10%** (provisional figure) and remains outside the annual target of **99.00%**. Capita is currently working with the council to identify any disputed commercial invoices paid outside the 30 days to help improve the current year to date figure of **93.91%**.

Capita target – (100% of invoices paid within 5 working days of receipt of correctly authorised payment). Monthly performance was 95.32%. Due to a technical issue the automatic update was not completed and a number of payments were processed outside of the 5 day target. These invoices were identified and completed on the following payment run.

**Accounts Receivable- (Invoices created within 3 working days) - 100%**. Monthly performance achieved for June. Monthly aged debts reports are now being produced on a monthly basis and progress is now being made in addressing older debts as well as current debt.

**Debtors (Accounts Receivable) (outstanding debt over 46 days)** – Capita has submitted a report to the council detailing how Capita believe the methodology for calculating these figures across the two councils should work. Once the methodology is agreed the figures will be included with the monthly performance report.

**Financial Management System (FMS)** (99% system availability during supported hours)  
– System availability was at 100% during June.

**Payroll** – End of year reconciliations are ongoing. Payroll was processed on time