

Scrutiny Committee report



27 October 2011

Report no. 35/11

Report of Head of Finance

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To: Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 27 October 2011

Performance review of CAPITA for the period 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011

RECOMMENDATION

That the committee considers Capita's performance in delivering the six elements of the financial services contract for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 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 2010 to 31 March 2011.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2. **Strategic Objective - “*managing our business effectively*”:** 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,

- optimising access to our services.

BACKGROUND

- The financial services contract commenced on 31 July 2006 and is a joint contract between Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC), South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), 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.
- 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.
- 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)			✓
Collection of car park excess charges ***	✓		
Cashier services	✓		
Administration of assisted travel scheme			✓ (July 09)
Customer contact services	✓		

** The payroll service is managed by South Oxfordshire District Council on behalf of the council

*** Excess charges administration transferred to in-house provision from 1 November 2010

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

PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF CAPITA

- 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 five parts:
 - revenues
 - benefits
 - exchequer (accounts payable, accounts receivable)
 - financial management system
 - 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 **98.68 per cent** (2009/10 98.63 per cent) for council tax collection against a target of 98.6 per cent. This was the best in-year collection rate recorded and considering the ongoing economic downturn, it was a tremendous 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 99.08 per cent of last year's council tax debt has been collected.
 - Capita achieved an in-year collection rate of **99.07 per cent** (2009/10 98.94 per cent) 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 and was an improvement upon 2009/10.
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

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 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 2010 the council and Capita undertook a business rates satisfaction survey which produced the following results:
- Satisfaction with the service was very positive overall (73 per cent) and specifically in terms of accuracy of the bill (75 per cent); additional information that accompanied the bill (65 per cent); and, methods of payment available (88 per cent). However, three per cent said they encountered problems paying their bills (these were cheque payers); 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 very positive about the way their calls were handled (79 per cent) i.e. calls were answered quickly (83 per cent); queries were dealt with swiftly (75 per cent). However, 21 per cent felt it was difficult trying to get to speak to the right member of staff
 - Satisfaction with staff was 80 per cent, with staff being perceived as friendly; they treated respondents with respect; and, explained things in a way they could understand. However, 28 per cent did not always feel confident that what staff said was correct.
17. The council received 30 official (revenues) complaints during 2010/11. The majority of these complaints were dealt with promptly and although three council tax complaints were justified, all but one were resolved at stage one of the complaints procedure with the other 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 in excess of 78 per cent. This is the highest achieved by Capita at any of its clients and is higher than most other councils. In addition, for the first time ever, 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 2010/11 following on from a successful assessment carried out in 2007/08. EIA assessments help to achieve racial, disability and gender equality. It reviewed recent improvements in the service including the introduction of the PayPoint facility; the introduction of the second direct debit date; various articles that had appeared in the Unvaled publication; the use of visiting officers meeting disabled residents; and, the improvement in web forms. A further action plan was agreed which included looking at increasing awareness of council tax discounts/reliefs available for older people, people on low incomes and people with disabilities; increasing staff knowledge of the Human Rights Act; and, consideration of undertaking a satisfaction survey of the collection service. The action plan will be monitored during 2011/12.
20. Quarterly meetings with the Citizens Advice Bureaux did raise a few concerns with the bailiff service, which tends to be inevitable due to the nature of the work, but a presentation from Capita's bailiff company Equita, was very well received by bureaux staff.
21. Capita handled **34,581** council tax telephone calls at its Coventry contact centre during the year. It managed to answer **86** per cent of these calls within 20 seconds (the target being 80 per cent). In the first full year of the remote cashier facility it also managed to take £400,000 of payments over the phone. Unfortunately 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. The council received three official complaints during 2010/11. These complaints were dealt with promptly and although one call contact complaint was justified all three were resolved at stage one of the complaints procedure.
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

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 **4.42** 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

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

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 7**.

BENEFITS

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPT's)

28. Performance against performance targets is given in **Appendix 1a** 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 **20.28 days**, just marginally outside the **19 day target**, compared to 24.2 days in 2009/10. Although the target was not achieved, it was the best in-year performance since the inception of the contract. Changes in circumstances (the old BVPI 78b measure) came in at **11.53 days** against a very challenging target of **9.5 days**, compared to 14.73 days in 2009/10. **NI 181** (combined new claims and changes processing) came in at a very pleasing **12.6 days** and under the **13 day target**, compared to 16.38 days in 2009/10
- Capita's promised focus on getting benefit assessments "right first time" materialised during 2010/11. The financial accuracy performance rate for 2010/11 was **92.14 per cent** (based on the council's statutory checks), an impressive 6.68 per cent improvement upon the 85.46 per cent recorded in 2009/10. Although below the very challenging target of 95 per cent, it was by far the best performance since the inception of the contract (and compared favourably with our MKOB benchmarking group) and was what the council (through strict monitoring by the Partnership Board) and Capita have been striving for

- During 2010/11 the Audit Commission qualified the council's 2009/10 benefit subsidy grant claim: criticised the council's benefits arrangements (although it accepted that the improvements in quality and accuracy made during the current year would not be seen until the 2010/11 grant claim) and, initially adjusted the subsidy grant claim meaning the council would be penalised to the sum of £52,998 for breaching the local authority financial error threshold. This penalty was challenged however and was subjected to further audit work. The Department for Work and Pensions is currently considering revoking the penalty. Finally, the Audit Commission made two recommendations; to reduce the general level of benefit errors and, improve the accuracy of benefit classifications for subsidy purposes. Both recommendations were accepted at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting on 9 March 2011 and, as noted above, accuracy levels were on the increase during 2010/11 in any case
- Recovery of overpaid benefit, which was subject to close scrutiny by the Board, really improved during 2010/11. This was an area of performance which the council hoped would take off under Capita following the introduction of an incentive scheme and during the year saw old debt reduce by **£353,849** whilst **65 per cent** of all debts raised during 2010/11 were collected, amounting to **£886,615**. 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 £1.338m, 50 per cent of the debt (45 per cent of debtors) was subject to arrangements. 2010/11 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

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 2010/11 produced the following results:

- Taking everything into account, 89 per cent of customers were satisfied with the service they received from the benefits office compared to 80 per cent in 2007
- 85 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 65 per cent in 2007
- 16 per cent of customers surveyed felt their benefit had been calculated incorrectly during the year
- 83 per cent of customers were satisfied with the ways in which they could contact the benefits office

- 71 per cent of customers were satisfied with the telephone service, with 68 per cent feeling their query was dealt with quickly (17 per cent disagreed) and 67 per cent agreeing that their call was answered quickly (18 per cent disagreed). However, 31 per cent felt it was difficult getting through to the right person
- 69 per cent of customers were satisfied with the claim form, but 32 per cent felt letters sent about their claim were difficult to understand
- 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, and (ii) improvements to the claim form.

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 **200** mutual customers at any one time) and external (e.g. Registered Social Landlords – RSLs – who share approximately **3,150** 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 RSL offices
- Trained Housing and RSL 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 RSL's and the CABx via regular liaison meetings. This is always a good yardstick as these organisations predominantly represent the most vulnerable of our customers. However, the RSLs in particular (who represent over 60 per cent of the benefit customer caseload) have voiced concerns about the quality and accuracy of benefit notifications.

34. Capita handled 17,850 benefit telephone calls at its Coventry contact centre during the year. It managed to answer 85 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. As explained above, three official complaints were received during 2010/11. These complaints were dealt with promptly and although one contact centre complaint was justified all three were resolved at stage one of the complaints procedure. Capita undertook an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of the benefits service in 2008/09 which was especially well received by the external disability panel. EIA assessments help to achieve racial, disability and gender equality. Although there

were no major issues some recommendations were carried forward to 2010/2011 and most were implemented, such as increasing the number of surgeries; publicising legislative changes; and promoting benefits to minority groups. This should help improve customer satisfaction in certain areas.

35. There were 43 official complaints, 24 of which were justified (compared to 24 and seven in 2009/10). All except three were dealt with at stage one of the complaints procedure with one progressing to stage three. Compensation totalling £640.34 was paid by Capita.

36. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction for benefits as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement

Fair

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

37. 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**.

38. This produced a score of **3.95** 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

Good

Overall assessment – Benefits

39. 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

Good

Strengths and areas for improvement

40. **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. This was already in force following the 2009/10 report and was being monitored through the governance processes during 2010/11. However, it was signed off as completed in June 2011.

Contractor's feedback

41. 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 7**

EXCHEQUER – ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

- 42. In August 2009 Capita decided to move the majority of Exchequer functions to its Mendip site, so 2010/11 was the first full year of operations from the remote site. The problems encountered following the transfer which were eradicated by the end of 2009/10 did not return during 2010/11 and the service provided continued to improve.
- 43. **Accounts Receivable** – maximising sundry debts was a key theme of the financial services procurement and during 2010/11 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 £186k compared to the previous year’s best ever of £290k. If it wasn’t for the problematic brown bin debt which totalled £85k, the year-end position would have been even better.
- 44. Capita’s performance in issuing (18,873) invoices within 2 working days of instructions from cost centres was 100 per cent apart from January when it was 99.9 per cent. Capita also hit 100 per cent performance for the production of (5,293) reminders after 14 days and (785) 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 write-off’s of unrecoverable debts were processed promptly.
- 45. As with other issues, this service area continues to be closely monitored by the Board and we are now seeing real progress, with cost centre managers taking more responsibility in recovering the debts that they raise.
- 46. **Accounts Payable** - Capita continued 2010/11 where it left off at the end of 2009/2010. 99 per cent of (6,169) invoices received were scanned and distributed to service teams within 48 hours and 100 per cent of (258) 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 an all time best of **97.31 per cent** compared to 94.46 per cent in 2009/10.
- 48. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for exchequer as follows:

KPT judgement

Excellent

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

- 49. **Accounts payable** – Capita’s performance in the accounts payable process was much improved in 2010/11. 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 now 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 two complaints were received with one justified. Both were dealt with at stage 1 of the process.
- 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 **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 **4.35** 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**

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**

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

59. 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 7**.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (FMS)

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

- 60. 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. Printing problems from the FMS are better than previous with only isolated printing issues for some users.
- 61. Systems 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 been of assistance in supporting the council’s internal transfer of responsibilities to the finance team, and in providing help and guidance to the team member who has taken on this role.
- 62. Training for report writing. The level and depth of training given to assist the team in writing system reports has not really improved. Notes are yet to be supplied to complement the training. The contractor’s attitude still seems to be that as council officers were trained when the system was initially set up, there is no further requirement to provide support from Capita in trying to get reports written – this unfortunately is a flawed premise – staff turnover means that there are now some newer team members who have had no formal training on the systems. That said, the ability to use Excelerator has allowed the accountancy staff to work more efficiently, however the contractor has not provided any training on this facility.
- 63. Upgrade of Agresso. The upgrade to Agresso version 5.5.3 has seen a marked improvement in the level of support and functionality available to the council’s accountancy service. There was an impressive level of work undertaken by the contractor’s team to ensure that this upgrade was initiated, pursued and installed with the minimum of disruption to services. This dedication and commitment to the upgrade was not unnoticed and shows what can be achieved when working proactively and as one with the client.
- 64. Although no KPTs are laid down for the FMS part of the contract, the estimated assessment of this dimension is “good”, and represents a vast improvement on the previous years.

KPT judgement

Good

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

- 65. 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.
- 66. Accountancy services are the principal users of the “back-office” live system. Routine use of the financial management system causes no issues. The previously identified printing problems have reduced throughout the year. With the reconciliations, clarification over the timetables and reporting terminology has

improved the statistics and there has been a marked improvement in the reconciliation response times.

67. Taking the whole year's performance into account, the performance is "good". Again, as with dimension one above, the direction of travel is one of continued improving performance.

Customer satisfaction judgement

Good

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

68. 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**.

69. This produced a score of **3.90** (last year was **2.55**) out of a maximum score of **5.0**. To put this into some context, last year the assessment was "poor". This year the contractor is on the cusp of the "fair" and "good". Based on this performance, and in recognition of the effort made in the upgrade to version 5.5.3, the Head of Finance made the following judgement on Capita's delivery of council satisfaction:

Council satisfaction judgement

Good

Overall assessment

70. Performance is improving. The level of commitment and proactive working to ensure the upgrade to Agresso 5.5.3 was achieved with the minimum of disruption. The prompt identification of issues and more importantly, the development of solutions and willingness to put in the extra effort to deliver the project to the specified deadlines was an example of what can be achieved. Whilst it is acknowledged that the upgrade was a team effort, special mention must go to the project manager, Craig Richmond; without his sterling efforts and dedication the project may well have floundered.
71. It is extremely encouraging that this year has seen a quantum leap in the contractor's performance and consequently the satisfaction rating has increased accordingly. The management of the upgrade played a significant part in the improved score. It is hoped that this level of performance is sustained and is maintained for the remaining life of the contract (to July 2016) – a standard has been set and needs to be maintained – possibly by extra effort on the training of staff and the report writing element of the FMS.
72. As previously stated, the client accountancy team consider the staff and support from the contractor's team in Mendip to be helpful, polite and efficient (when in their control) in dealing with issues, problems and queries raised by the client

team. The client accountancy team would once again like to pass on their thanks to the contractor's staff at Mendip.

73. A concern remains as to whether the contractor has adequate resources attributed to support the FMS and at the right level, particularly in regard to resilience and continuity plans.

74. 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

Strengths and areas for improvement

75. **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

76. 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 7**

CONCESSIONARY FARES (ASSISTED TRAVEL)

Dimension 1 – Key performance targets (KPTs)

77. Capita administers the national bus pass scheme on behalf of the council. It also administers the hospital appointments scheme. Generally, the national scheme is administered from the contact centre in Coventry, whilst the arrangements for lost bus passes and the hospital appointments scheme is administered in the council offices.

78. 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. In relation to the hospital appointments scheme, Capita is required to pass completed documentation to the council within five days of receipt to enable it to reimburse the user. Against all these KPT's Capita generally achieved full compliance during 2010/11.

79. Capita handled 2,621 telephone calls at its Coventry contact centre during the year. It managed to answer 94 per cent of these calls within 20 seconds (the target being 80 per cent).

80. Based on this performance the head of service has made a judgement on KPT performance for concessionary fares as follows:

KPT judgement

Excellent

Dimension 2 – Customer satisfaction

81. No customer satisfaction survey was undertaken during the year so it was not possible to gauge satisfaction levels on service administration.

82. However, no customer complaints were received in respect of the assisted travel service during the course of the year.

83. Based on this performance, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction for concessionary fares as follows:

Customer satisfaction judgement

Good

Dimension 3 – Council satisfaction

84. 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 6**.

85. 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

Overall assessment

86. 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

Strengths and areas for improvement

87. Capita generally provides a good concessionary fares service. The team leader keeps the client team well informed and always demonstrates a desire to offer a high quality service.

Contractor's feedback

88. 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 7**.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

89. 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 Strategic Board.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

CONCLUSION

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

- Revenues – **excellent** (09/10 – good)
- Benefits – **good** (09/10 – weak)
- Exchequer (accounts payable, accounts receivable) – **excellent** (09/10 – fair)
- Financial management system – **good** (09/10 weak)

- Concessionary fares (assisted travel) – **excellent** (09/10 good)

92. There has been a tremendous improvement in the quality of the financial services provided by Capita during 2010/11 – it has definitely been the best year since the inception of the contract and Capita should be congratulated. Benefits is still an area where improvements could be made – especially where customer service is concerned. The governance process will continue to vigorously monitor the contract, and this, along with the commitment pledged by the Capita management should help improve service provision in the future.

Performance Targets	2009/10 Target	2009/10 Achieved	2010/11 Target	2010/11 Achieved
Percentage of Council Tax collected	98.60%	98.63%	98.60%	98.68%
Percentage of NNDR collected	99.40%	98.94%	99.40%	99.07%
Average time (days) for processing new benefit claims.	20.5	24.20	19	20.28
Average time (days) for processing benefit changes in circumstances	-	14.73	9.5	11.53
NI181 Average time (days) for processing new claims and changes in circumstances	-	16.38	13	12.6
Financial accuracy of benefit assessments	95%	85.46%	95%	92.14%

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 2010 | To | 31 March 2011

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		✓			

Appendix 2

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	Innovation – particularly around “on-line” initiatives
	Liaison with the benefits department

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

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

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	9	X 5	45
Satisfied	4.3	9	X 4	36
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	1	X 3	3
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total		19		84
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Calculation: $84 \div 19 = 4.42$

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

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 2010 | To | 31 March 2011

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		✓			

Appendix 3

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
	Keeness of off-site team
	Liaison with housing
Areas for improvement	Off site operations/staff including inter –site communication
	General benefits quality regarding written documentation

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

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

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	4	X 5	20
Satisfied	4.3	10	X 4	40
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	5	X 3	15
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total		19		75
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Calculation: $75 \div 19 = 3.95$

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

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

From (date) To

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
Areas for improvement	Management resilience
	System administration

COUNCIL SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

	Very satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Neither (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very dissatisfied (1)	Votes cast
	8	11	1	0	0	20

Rating	Range	Votes	Weighting	Total weighted
Very satisfied	5.0	8	X 5	40
Satisfied	4.3	11	X 4	44
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3.9	1	X 3	3
Dissatisfied	3.4	0	X 2	0
Very dissatisfied	3.0	0	X 1	0

Total		20		87
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Calculation: $87 \div 20 = 4.35$

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

From (date) To

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		√			

Appendix 5

14	Quality of relationship	√			
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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" value="Yes"/> |

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strengths	<p>Good relationships with System Administration team at Mendip</p> <p>Generally helpful, pleasant staff – this is not to be underrated as a strength. The goodwill generated by the Capita staff, both locally at Vale and also at Mendip is often indispensable to the smooth running of the systems</p> <p>Upgrade to v.5.5.3 in May 2011 has produced improvements – especially for Web clients.</p>
Areas for improvement	<p>To continue to build on the improvement made in year, in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with the client; • proactive development of the FMS;

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: $78 \div 20 = \underline{\underline{3.90}}$

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 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
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Appendix 6

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 the best ever 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. Capita will however continue to look at how it can improve the overall service to its customers and will be working closely with the Council to deliver more electronic service solutions to those residents who are keen to exploit technology for speed of response and the benefit of the environment.

The Benefit service has really moved forward over the last 12 months and with the appointment of a new benefit manager further improvements have already been seen during the current year. The progress on performance indicators is steady and we will continue to do everything we can to drive the numbers as low as possible for the benefit of our customers. Our work on the recovery of overpayments has been complicated and lengthy at times as many of the debts relate to very aged periods of time where the relevant data is held on an old Council system which few people actually even remember how to use! We have however been able to ensure that all debts prior to 2007 have now been actively addressed and the appropriate actions taken, whilst we have also been able to maintain focus on current year debts to keep things in good order. We will continue to move the age profile of these debts nearer and nearer to this year in order to give us the best chance of recovering the monies and thereby maximise the income raised for the Council. As with Council Tax Capita will continue to look at how it can improve the overall service to its customers and will be working closely with the Council to deliver more electronic service solutions to those residents who are keen to exploit technology for speed of response and the benefit of the environment.

It is pleasing that the hard work of the Exchequer team in Mendip has been acknowledged and we will continue to drive service improvements wherever we can. We were surprised by the area of improvement highlighted by the Council but as this review was of the whole year we assume that the views expressed are historic as the management and team concerned have just delivered a successful and seamless

finance system upgrade.

The feedback on the FMS is generally positive but again has comments which Capita do not really understand. The comments around more training have been argued back and forth for years, however, following recent discussions with the Council a way forward has been agreed that satisfies all parties and which will hopefully allow the Council's staff to further develop their report writing skills. The Council's concerns around staffing levels and continuity have absolutely no basis and should not exist. The fact is that the team at Mendip is now twice the size it was when it was run onsite and should there be an unfortunate drop in staffing for reasons of absence we have available resources who can just plug the gaps. The management structure has been improved and overall system knowledge is now better than it has ever been. Capita cannot see how it will ever be able to change the Council perception if the above facts are still deemed as inadequate in some way.

Concessionary fares has had another very good year and continues to provide an excellent service to the residents of the area.

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

For Council Tax, liaison with benefits is listed as an area for improvement, Capita believe that there is a very close working relationship with the benefit team and that joined up working is continually happening, i.e. members of the Havant team do council tax moves, discounts etc. This means both sides are dealt with at the same time and prevents memos and emails flying back and forth between sections. Separate processes are also in place for other situations, such as deceased cases. It is accepted that there have at times been isolated errors but on the whole Capita do not feel that there are any big gaps to fill.

For Benefits, offsite staff and communication has been raised as an area for improvement. Given the major improvements in accuracy and performance all of which are down to the offsite staff and the very regular daily/weekly/monthly service reviews (dependant on subject matter) Capita feel that significant steps have already been taken in this area but would welcome any feedback which may assist us in further improving what we believe is now a robust service.

For FMS, this is only a minor point but your scoring on line 12 'Compliance with Council's Corporate Identity' seems wrong as we cannot understand how it can be anything other than satisfied, since we comply entirely with the above.

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

Capita is very happy with the current relationship which has become much more of a partnership approach to service delivery. We believe the positive approach from both sides can only benefit the local community in the coming year.

Feedback provided by D Keen

Date 9 September 2011