

Notes

OF AN INFORMAL MEETING OF THE

Five Councils Partnership Corporate Services Joint Committee

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER 2021 AT 2.00 PM
VIRTUAL MEETING

This meeting was hosted by Vale of White Horse District Council. It was broadcasted live. Watch the recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP2g0-PxJfw>

Present:

Councillors:

Neil Fawcett, Vale of White Horse District Council
Debby Hallett, Vale of White Horse District Council
David Rouane, South Oxfordshire District Council
Sue Cooper, South Oxfordshire District Council
Ken Crookes, Hart District Council
James Radley, Hart District Council
Lulu Bowerman, Havant District Council
Ros Wyke, Mendip District Council
Liz Leyshon, Mendip District Council

Officers:

Andrew Down, Commercial Director, 5CP
Matt Goodwin, 5Cs Client Relationship Director & Senior Client Executive (Operations)
Candida Mckelvey, Democratic Services Officer, South and Vale.

9. Opening announcements

A brief run through housekeeping matters.

10. Nomination of the Chair

Councillor Wyke nominated Councillor Fawcett to chair this meeting. This was seconded and agreed.

11. Nomination of the Vice Chair

Councillor Fawcett nominated Councillor Cooper to act as vice chair for this meeting. This was seconded and agreed.

12. Chair's announcements and urgent business

None.

13. Apologies for absence

Councillor Barker gave his apologies, and Councillor Rouane attended the meeting as a substitute member.

It was also noted that Councillor Rennie sent apologies.

14. Declarations of interest

None.

15. Notes of the last meeting

Councillor Radley noted that he was not listed as having given apologies at the last meeting, so requested that the apologies be amended to reflect that.

Another amend was the job title for Andrew Down, which should read 5CP Commercial Director, not for South and Vale.

Committee reviewed the notes of the previous informal meeting and noted them to be a correct record.

16. Capita performance report

Capita representatives present introduced themselves. They were Dale Wood, Regional Partnership Director for Capita, Emma Hall, Partnership Director for 5CP, Joanne Leith, Operations Director, who is handing over to Emma Hall, Gareth Stemp, who is Head of Customer Services for Capita, and Daniel Robson, Head of Service for Revenue and Benefits for 5CP.

The report provided KPIs for the contract, and outstanding rectification plans.

Matt Goodwin, Client Relationship Director, introduced his report ahead of the Capita presentations.

In summary, land charges was performing satisfactorily. Rev and Bens were annual measures with nothing new to report. No failures to report for IT. Customer services had some continuing issues as referenced, and Gareth Stemp would speak to these. Waste service calls were creating a higher volume of calls, affecting the KPIs. There had been continuing communications improvements with Havant and Norse and the developing of technical solutions. These had created a material improvement. Driver shortages nationally had created household waste build up that led to extra calls.

On the Revenues and Benefits lines, there was a failure experienced, the main reason being the reopening of activities on recovery. This was creating calls from customers due to the summons and letters being issued.

Matt Goodwin included trend graphs for the committee, which was appreciated by members.

For rectification plans, committee were informed that one of three was resolved. Two were awaiting consideration from authorities.

Committee asked questions of clarification to the 5Cs Client Relationship Director & Senior Client Executive (Operations), regarding the contents of the report.

It was clarified that South and Vale had an automated switchboard, Netcall, resulting in better performance indicator results. Councillors asked whether lessons could be learned for other councils – can an automated service work better for other councils.

It was added by Cllr Rouane that South and Vale experienced call handling issues around the waste collection issues experienced nationally. However, the measures shown are for Capita services and not in house services.

17. Capita Presentations and Discussion

Gareth Stemp, Head of Customer Services for Capita, gave a presentation to the committee.

Gareth explained that Capita handled South and Vale's switchboard only, and that's why the figures differ from Mendip.

Gareth talked about how quality was measured, with effort going into making this as good as it can be. This included recruiting the right people and training and mentoring them. There was a quality assurance team who look for improvements. Real time support was in place virtually.

The call structure, which had been tried and tested, was shown to the committee on the presentation. Future plans included involvement of local authority officers to mark calls. Also looking into having an end-to-end customer satisfaction measure.

Forecasting workload and capacity needs was conducted 12 months in advance by the Resource planning team. This plan fuelled recruitment, with the aim of satisfying the performance measures. Resource planning team will hand over to the real time team, who manage day to day demand and can move resources if they need to.

5CP specific staff needed 3 months to be trained on the specific systems. Gareth informed the committee that they do not have spare resources for this but there was resilience, mainly due to multiskilling and measures to move workload priorities.

Committee asked questions of clarification. Discussion was had regarding customer satisfaction. Capita representative added that they could look at complaints as a statistic and it was asked by a committee member whether dropped calls could be a performance measure. Could a profile of call times be given? Matt Goodwin added that further data can be provided by Capita, such as profiles and average handling times. Dropped calls was noted as a potential future measure.

Action: Matt Goodwin to look into a dropped calls measure.

It was clarified that officer involvement in call marking was still a work in progress. The first run of results may be available before Christmas. Mystery shopping was being investigated, but you need to have enough callers to make it a significant statistic, without negatively impacting the service.

Action: Matt Goodwin to follow up on mystery shopping.

On behalf of Havant, Cllr Bowerman thanked the Capita team for their work.

Gareth Stemp spoke in response to the waste collection issue. He explained that regular comms had been improved, and that Capita now received the Havant crew sheets to communicate to the public when asked.

Daniel Robson spoke to the committee regarding the financial measure that had failed – PI001.

The measurement of this PI was a monthly 10% sample check of manually processed benefits decisions selected at random. The calculation was for the number found to be financially accurate. The annual target was 96%.

It was difficult to meet the target, as one adverse month can affect overall good improvement month on month. The checking process was for the more complex human decisions, in an ever-evolving service. Additional checking on officers was conducted and training given. Capita acknowledged there was some inconsistency, but they were working on improvements and had seen improvement in 2021 against previous years. A new sign off sheet had been working well, to check that various stages in the process had been fully completed by officers.

Tom Alderman had been recruited by Capita as a performance manager, who will work on a quality plan and improvements. There will be continuation of sign off sheets and robust 20% checks. The random sampling will be reviewed as part of the overall quality plan.

18. Annual Plan Update

Matt Goodwin introduced the report. The results of the latest review was presented for noting, and it had been through the relevant governance. It would remain a live document.

Capita were thanked for attending before the item was closed.

19. Client team budget

The client team budget was presented to committee and would need formal approving at the meeting on 1 December 2021.

The contract budget, regarding the schedule of charging from Capita, was not available until December. Last year's was tabled for 9 December 2020.

A client team was necessary in order to manage a multi authority contract. It was a smaller contract now, hence Matt Goodwin having a dual role. There was shrinking of costs in line

with a smaller contract, less mileage and legal costs. There was a leaner efficient team, but there was flexibility if changes were needed. Andrew Down was in place as Commercial Director, which was very helpful to keep us horizon scanning and responsive to developments, and whilst Matt Goodwin focussed on commercial and service. Resource had been given to the key area of IT, but flexibility was possible.

Resolved

Committee agreed that the 1 December meeting did not need to be moved and they were happy to approve the budget on that date.

The meeting closed at 3.30pm

Chairman

Date

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