

Audit Fraud Investigation Unit
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Contacts

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The Audit Fraud Investigation Unit is part of AVDC's Financial Services Division, it exists to;

- To deter others from fraud and corruption
- Promote AVDC's Anti-fraud and Corruption Strategy and Prosecution Policy
- Support the Key Aims of the Council - delivering valued services excellently for all our customers'
- Support the administration of Housing & Council Tax Benefit to the 'right people at the right time'

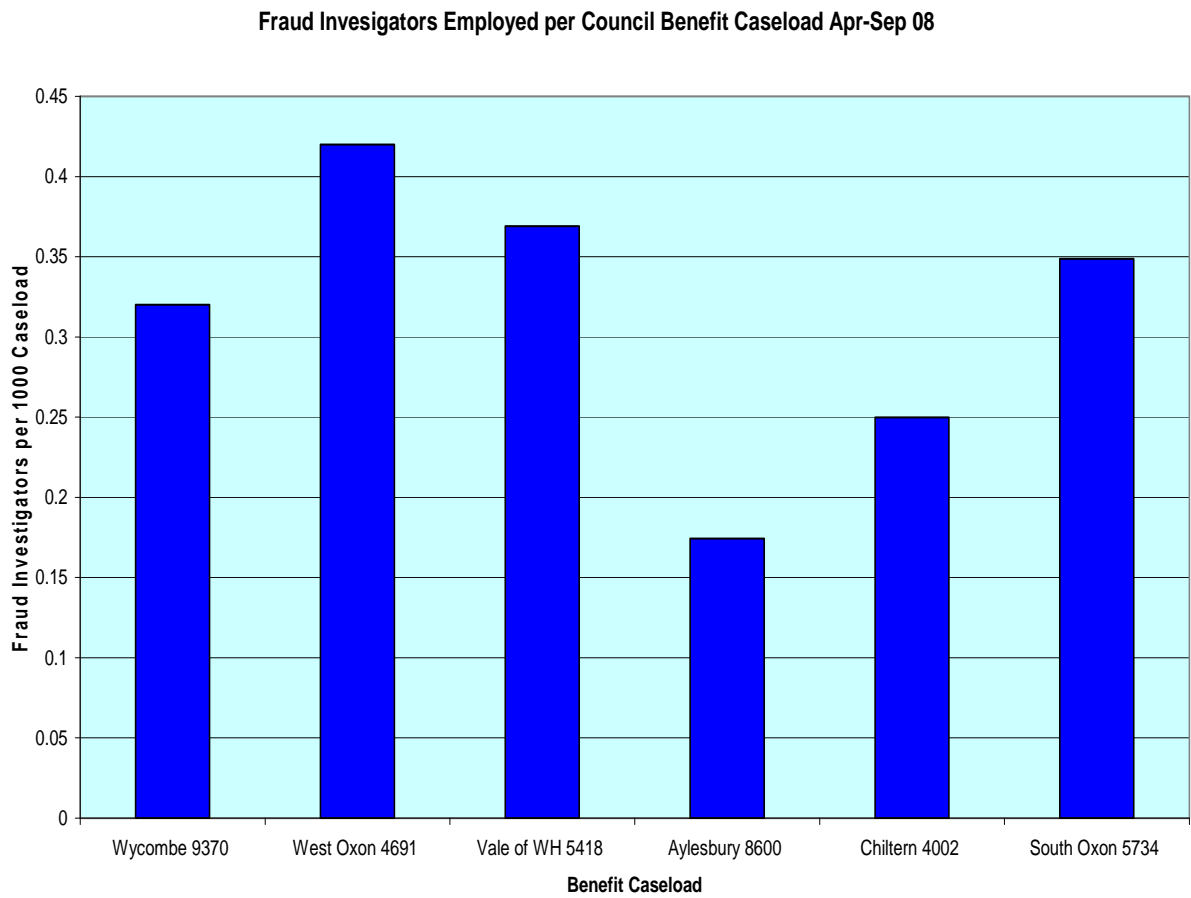
Benchmarking

The AFIU 'benchmarks' with 6 other local District Councils, and they have been carefully chosen to reflect similar size housing and council tax benefit caseloads. They are, Wycombe, Chiltern, West Oxon, South Oxon, South Bucks and The Vale of the White Horse. Benchmarking with these Councils has been undertaken for the last 6 years.

As with all kinds of 'benchmarking it is essential the data compared is collected using the same set criteria. So over the years considerable time, effort and adjustments have been made to try and ensure the information we are using is the same., We use the same definitions in order to give an accurate and robust measure of comparative data.

The graph below at ***figure 1** compares the numbers of Council employees in the various Council's fraud departments. Using the benefit caseload as a set level it makes a comparison and identifies Aylesbury Vale, with a benefit caseload of 8600 and 1.5 investigators, has the lowest ratio of staff to benefit caseload in the group.

**figure 1*



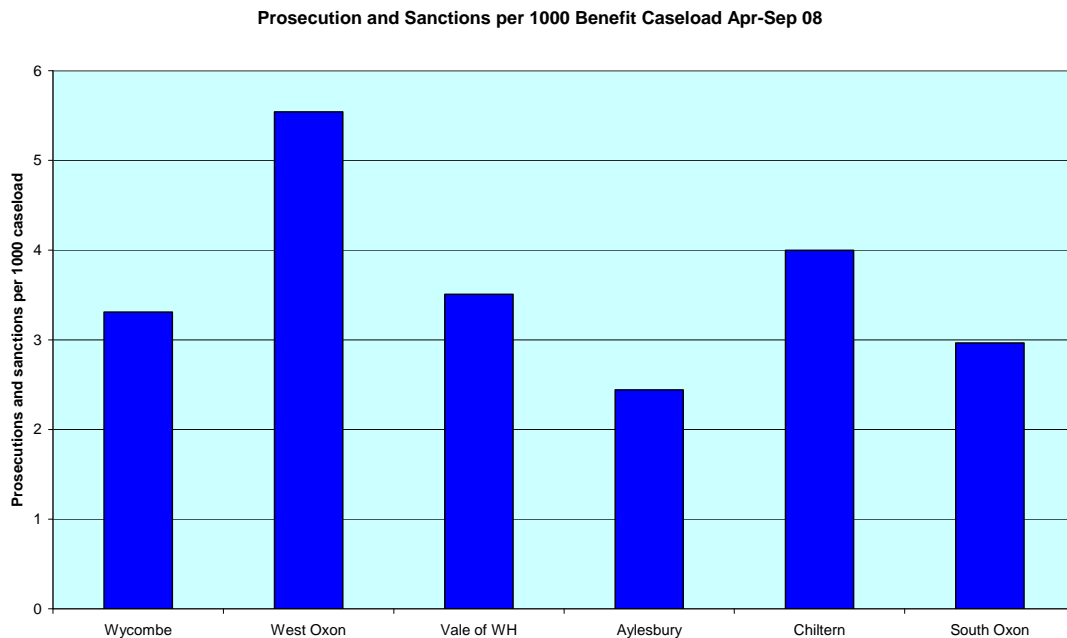
Prosecutions and Sanctions

*figure 2**

This graph depicts the number of criminal prosecutions, cautions and administrative penalties done by the AFIU in the first 2 quarters of this year. It relates the number of sanctions to the benefit caseload. It appears, with one exception, the results reflect the higher number of investigators the more sanctions and prosecutions achieved. This would seem a logical conclusion; however some caution should be exercised in the comparison as a measure of achievement because results can be influence by a number of factors. For example, the quality of the potential fraud referrals received or the type of data sets matched for comparison.

There may be a time lag in the recording of the results of the investigation because of the time taken to bring it to a criminal prosecution standard, to go through the court process and record the results. This time scale can vary enormously and the results can skew the figures in a particular period.

*figure 2**

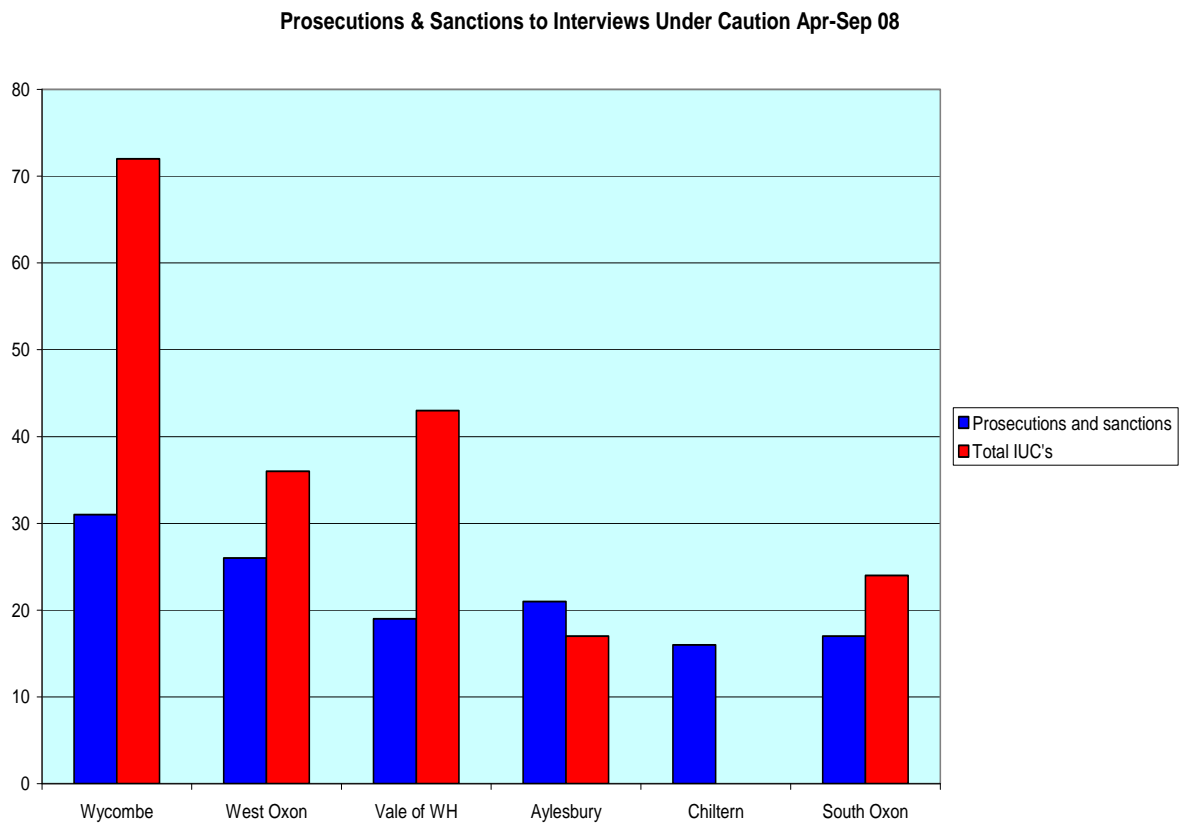


Prosecutions and Sanctions continued

The graph below at *figure 3* we compare and contrast the numbers of customers interviewed 'under caution' with the prosecution and sanctions results. An interview under caution is undertaken in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act which states an investigator must 'caution' a suspect if there is reasonable grounds to suspect a criminal offence has taken place.

The graph depicts Aylesbury's ratio of interview to sanction results as high in comparison to some other Councils. An explanation for this may be careful sifting and risk assessment of the investigations in order to maximise the use of the limited resources of the AFIU.

figure 3

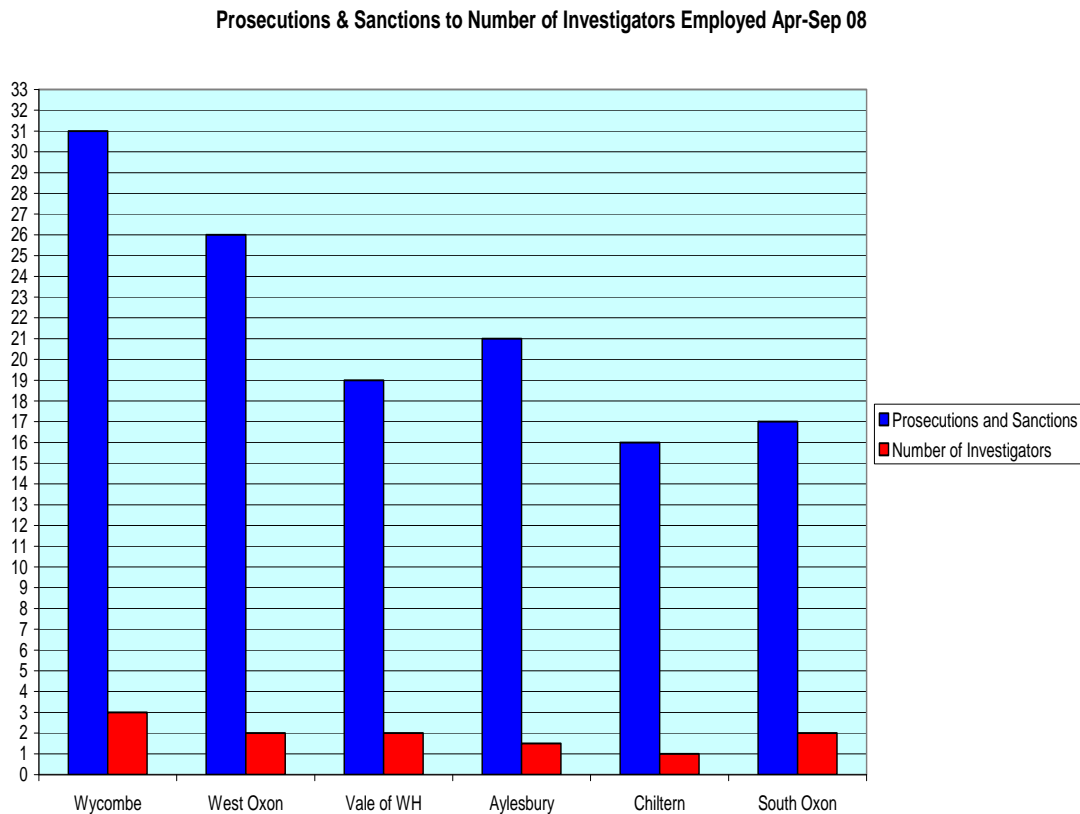


The graph below at **figure 4** compares the number of prosecution and sanctions achieved in each Council with the number of fraud investigators employed.

There is a direct correlation with the results achieved and the number of investigators. It would seem logical, the more investigators, the higher the sanctions and prosecutions.

Aylesbury compares favourable in its results achieved to date with 21 prosecutions and sanctions achieved with only 1.5 investigators.

Figure 4



Referrals

See **figure 5** below. ‘Referrals’ is the term used for allegations of benefit fraud which are received by the AFIU. The first of the two graphs show the sources of these referrals. The total number of potential benefit fraud allegations received and logged in the first two quarters of this year is **238**.

The second graph depicts the ‘type of fraud’. The types of alleged fraud are placed in categories. The graph indicates the two most common allegations are ‘living together’ and ‘working and drawing’. ‘Living together ‘ means some one who is on benefits on the basis that they are single but are actually living with a partner as husband and wife.

‘Working and drawing’ or working and claiming category means receiving a benefit on the basis that you are unemployed or sick, but you are actually working and

receiving a income. This type of allegation may relate to 'cash in hand' type of employment.

Often allegations are received with a combination of 'working' and 'living together' therefore a larger abuse of the benefits system has to be investigated.

Figure 5

