

Audit and Standards Committee

Tuesday 13 December 2022

10:00

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

The meeting will be webcast live which can be viewed at any time here:

<https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
5 December 2022

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 1 November 2022** (Pages 1 - 4)
4. **Annual Governance Statement 2021/22** (Pages 5 - 70)
5. **Statement of Accounts - Training**
6. **2021/22 Statement of Accounts** (Pages 71 - 226)
7. **External Audit Plan 2021/22 - Update Report Attached (Ernst Young, External Auditors)** (Pages 227 - 230)
8. **Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 - Update** (Pages 231 - 244)
9. **Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee 2022/23** (Pages 245 - 252)
10. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:-

"That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1

of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated below”.

PART TWO
(reports in this section are exempt)

NIL

| Membership | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Carolyn Trowbridge (Vice-Chair) | Bernard Peters |
| Ross Ward | James Salisbury |
| Bernard Williams | Janice Silvester-Hall |
| Ann Edgeller | Ian Wilkes |
| Richard Ford | Mike Worthington (Chair) |
| Philippa Haden | Arshad Afsar |
| Phil Hewitt | Keith Flunder |
| Graham Hutton | |

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

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Minutes of the Audit and Standards Committee Meeting held on 1 November 2022

Present: Mike Worthington (Chair)

Attendance

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Carolyn Trowbridge (Vice-Chair) | Philippa Haden |
| Bernard Williams | Phil Hewitt |
| Richard Ford | Janice Silvester-Hall |

Also in attendance:

Debbie Harris – for all items
Rebecca Lee - for item no. 31
Halit Halusi - for item no. 35

Apologies: Ann Edgeller, Graham Hutton, Bernard Peters, Ian Wilkes, Arshad Afsar and Keith Flunder

PART ONE

28. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

29. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 September 2022

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

30. National Fraud Initiative – Update

Committee members were presented with a report from the County Treasurer relating to the Cabinet Office National Fraud Initiative (NFI) 2022. The report informed members of the biennial National Fraud Initiative data matching exercise which is aimed at preventing and detecting fraud. The initiative allowed data to be matched across both private and public sector organisations, with 1200 participating organisations. The notification process informing employees and pensioners about the data matching exercise would be taking place and how data would be handled started in April 2022.

Committee members heard that the data submission process had already started. Data had been extracted from payroll, pensions, trade creditors,

transport passes (including Blue Badges) and had been shared via secure database, directly with the Cabinet Office. The first deadline to submit the dataset was the 21st October 2022, although data could continue to be submitted until mid-November. Any potential data-matches would be returned by the third week of January 2023. An update would be brought to the July Audit and Standards Committee as part of the counter fraud outturn report.

One dataset that could not be matched was the direct payments to residential care homes as this information was now considered "patient data" which fell under different legislation. The same issue was experienced in the 2020 review but remained unresolved. Members were reminded that, as a result of this issue, the council's Counter Fraud Manager undertook an exercise in 2021 using data from the "Tell us Once" service which identified over £124,000 of payments that had been made to residential care homes for the care of individuals that had passed away. The council intended to undertake this exercise again.

In response to a question relating to the future inclusion of the residential care home dataset in the NFI, it was confirmed that it was hoped that this would be included in the future once the necessary legislative changes had been implemented.

Resolved: That the report on the requirements of the Cabinet Office's National Fraud Initiative (NFI) 2022, be received.

31. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance Annual Report 2021/22

The Committee received a report from the Head of Health, Safety & Wellbeing which provided an overview on the health, safety, and wellbeing performance of the council during 2021/2022. This included the key achievements and significant findings during this period along with performance data and outcomes. The report also outlined the 2022/2023 work programme and key priorities.

Members queried why not all schools had purchased the health and safety service during 2021/2022 and it was confirmed that they had access to competent advisors through other channels.

In relation to the increase in staff absence, it was noted that there were a significant amount of preventative measures in place. Members queried if this was due to the age profile of the organisation and it was confirmed that Staffordshire County Council (SCC) did have an ageing workforce and this had been considered as part of the wider "People Strategy" agenda to understand how staff absence levels can be improved. It was explained that there is a good well-being offering available to officers.

Members queried who was responsible for asbestos in school buildings following the transition to academisation. It was confirmed that, although the Council remained the landlord of the property, this was fundamentally the responsibility of the Academies. It was further clarified that most organisations had accessed Entrust's Asbestos Management Service.

It was noted that there had been an increase in figures of occupational health referrals despite the large number of interventions. In response to a question relating to what was being done to improve mental health and loneliness issues as a result of working from home, it was explained that the Council had undertaken a number of activities in conjunction with Mental Health Awareness week which included encouraging people to get out for walks in nature. It was also highlighted that more people were returning to the workplace more frequently, and whilst managers were encouraging staff back into the workplace, it was accepted that working from home was considered the "new norm" and many preferred working from home than commuting into the office.

Comment was made on the importance of ensuring that staff homebased working arrangements conformed with H&S requirements relative to the workplace.

Resolved: a. That the findings and management information detailed in the report be noted.

b. That the key actions identified for 2022/2023 be noted.

32. Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee

The County Treasurer submitted the Forward Plan setting out this Committee's meeting schedule and provisional agenda contents for 2022/2023.

Resolved – That with updates resulting from decisions at this meeting, the Forward Plan be approved.

33. Exclusion of the Public

Resolved – That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as indicated.

34. Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 September 2022 (exemption paragraph 3)

35. SEND Accelerated Progress Plan Six Month Review (exemption paragraph 3)

Chairman

Audit and Standards Committee - Tuesday 13 December 2022

Annual Governance Statement

Recommendation

I recommend that:

- a. To approve the Annual Governance Statement (AGS)

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the Director for Corporate Services

Report

Background

1. The attached AGS has been prepared in line with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) issued in 2016 and covers the following headings:
 - a. What are we responsible for
 - b. The aim of the governance framework
 - c. The governance framework
 - d. Review of how effective our governance framework is
 - e. Significant governance issues
2. Following on from the above, Annex 1 reproduces "The Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Governance Framework including the system of internal control – 2021/22." This document has been instrumental in producing the AGS and details appropriate sources of assurance.
3. In recognition of the importance of the AGS, CIPFA /SOLACE guidance provides for it to be signed off by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council following consideration by the Committee.

Equalities Implications

4. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

5. The preparation and publication of the AGS is necessary to meet the statutory requirement set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

6. There are no direct resource implications arising from this report. Significant internal control issues with specific reference to mitigation actions emanating from the Corporate Risk Register will need to be considered against the resources available and the Council's "appetite for risk."

Risk Implications

7. An inadequate Governance Framework can lead to loss of reputation and finance and external censure.

Climate Change Implications

8. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

CIPFA/SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework – 2016 Edition including Guidance Notes
Annual Governance Statement & Annex - 2020/21
Staffordshire County Council Code of Corporate Governance – published 2021

Appendix 1 – Annual Governance Statement – 2021 / 2022

Appendix 2 – Report of the Corporate Governance Working Group

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Rob Salmon, **County Treasurer**

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Annual Governance Statement 2021-22



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1. Scope of Responsibility

We are responsible for carrying out our business in line with the law and proper accounting standards, and for using public money economically, efficiently, and effectively, and accounting for it properly. We also have a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to continually review and improve the way we work, while at the same time offering value for money and an efficient and effective service.

To meet our responsibility, we have put in place proper arrangements for overseeing what we do (this is what we mean by governance). These arrangements are intended to make sure that we do the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in good time, and in a fair, open, honest, and accountable way. We have approved and introduced a Code of Corporate Governance. You can get a copy of the code from our website at [Local Code of Corporate Governance 2022](#).

This statement explains how we have followed the code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, Regulation 6(1) (a) and (b), which requires the Council to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

2. What is Governance

Governance is about how the Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest, and accountable manner. Good governance leads to effective:

- Leadership and management
- Performance and risk management
- Stewardship of public money; and
- Public engagement and outcomes for our citizens and service users.

3. What is the purpose of a Governance Framework?

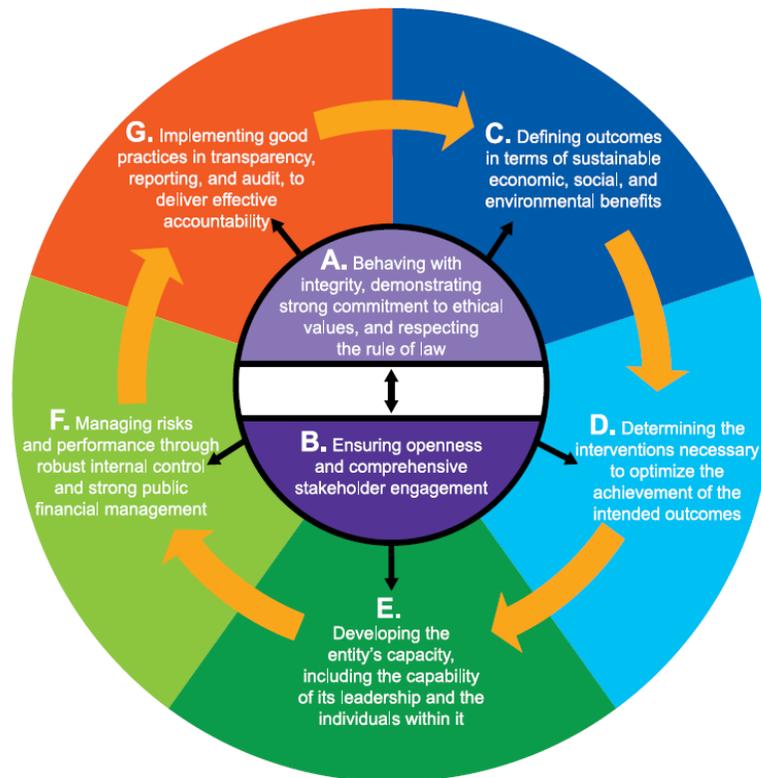
The governance framework comprises the culture, values, systems, and processes by which an organisation is directed and controlled. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money. The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It assures that in conducting its business, the Council:

- Operates in a lawful, open, inclusive, and honest manner
- Makes sure that public money and assets are safeguarded from inappropriate use, or from loss and fraud, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently, and effectively
- Has effective arrangements for the management of risk
- Secures continuous improvement in the way that it operates
- Enables human, financial, environmental, and other resources to be managed efficiently and effectively
- Properly maintains records and information
- Ensures its values and ethical standards are met.

4. What are the key elements of SCC's Governance Framework?

The Council aims to achieve good standards by adhering to the seven code principles below, which form the basis of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance which can be reviewed at [Local Code of Corporate Governance 2022](#) and [Single Sheet Framework](#)

**Achieving the Intended Outcomes
While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times**



The following page provides a summary of actions and behaviours undertaken by the Council in relation to each of the seven core principles and associated sub principles.

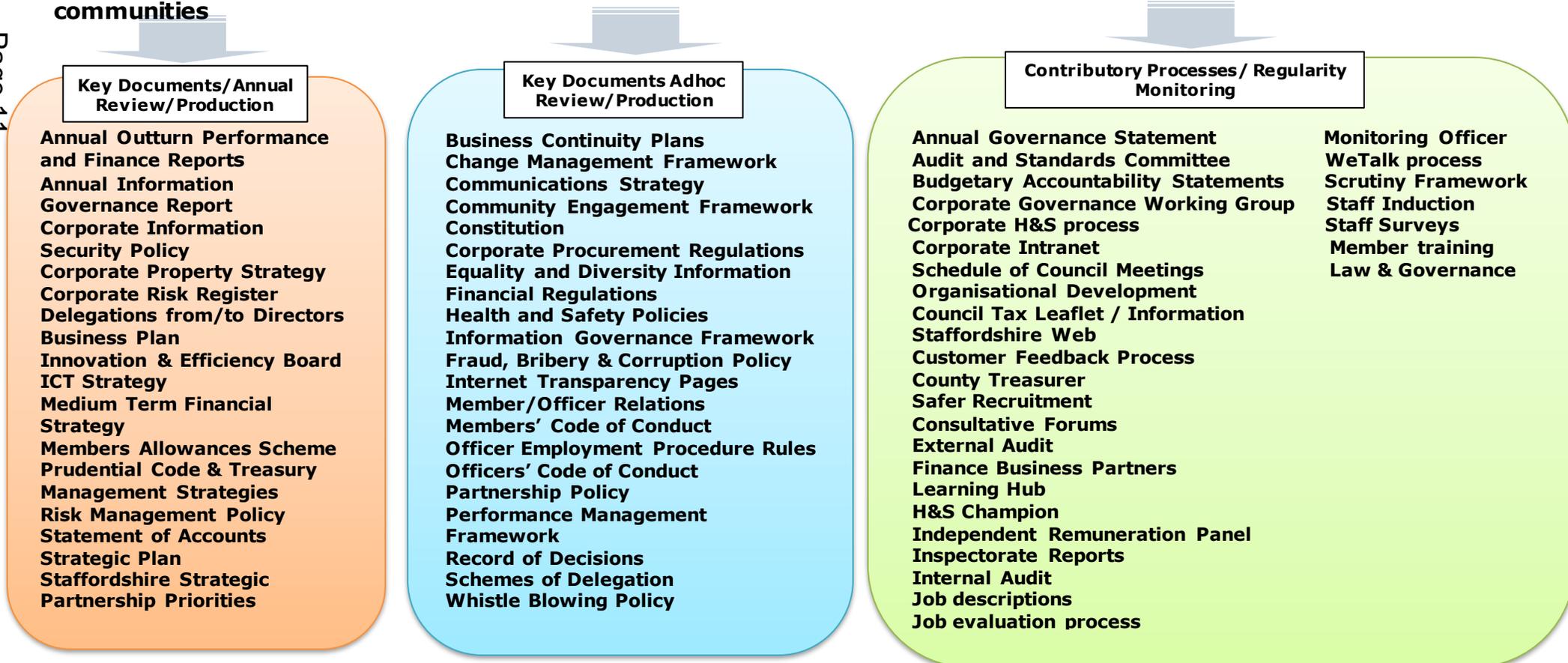
5. Single Sheet Framework

Governance Framework - Principles, Statutory Obligations and Organisational Objectives



Corporate Governance comprises the systems and processes, cultures, and values, by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead their communities

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6. What are the key roles of those responsible for developing and maintaining the Governance Framework?

| | |
|--|--|
| The Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approves the Strategic Plan • Approves the Constitution (including Procurement Regulations and Financial Regulations). • Approves key policies and budgetary framework |
| Cabinet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main decision-making body of the Council • Comprises nine Cabinet Members (including the Leader and Deputy Leader) and two Support Members who have responsibility for particular portfolios. |
| Audit & Standards Committee | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides independent assurance to the Council on the adequacy and effectiveness of the governance arrangements, risk management framework and internal control • Promotes high standards of member conduct • Approves the Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement |
| Overview & Scrutiny Committees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are four Overview & Scrutiny Committees aligned to the Council's corporate priorities • They hold Cabinet and Officers to account and scrutinise performance |
| Chief Executive & SLT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements the policy and budgetary framework set by the Council and provides advice to Cabinet and the Council in the development of future policy and budgetary issues • Oversees the implementation of council policy |
| Chief Financial Officer (Section 151) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability for developing and maintaining the Council's governance, risk and control framework • Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council |
| Monitoring Officer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To report on contraventions or likely contraventions of any enhancement or rule of law. To report on any maladministration or injustice where the Local Government Ombudsman has carried out an investigation. To establish and maintain registers of member interests and gifts and hospitality. To advise Members on the interpretation of the Code of Conduct for Members and Co-opted Members • Overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of the confidential reporting procedure for employees (whistleblowing) and contributes to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council |
| Internal Audit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides independent assurance and annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and control framework • Delivers an annual programme of risk-based audit activity, including counter fraud and investigation activity • Makes recommendations for improvements in the management in risk |
| External Audit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit/review and report on the Council's financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement), providing an opinion on the accounts and concluding in the arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of resources (the value for money conclusion) |
| Managers Employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for developing, maintaining and implementing the Council's governance, risk and control framework • Contribute to the effective corporate management and governance of the Council • Personal Responsibility for their own actions and to ensure compliance with policies and procedures of the Council. |

7. What is the Annual Governance Statement?

The Council is required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to prepare and publish an Annual Governance Statement, to report publicly on the extent to which we comply with our own Local Code of Corporate Governance, including how we have monitored the effectiveness of our arrangements in year and on any planned changes to our governance arrangements in the coming year.

In this document the Council:

- Acknowledges its responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance
- Summarizes the key elements of the governance framework and the roles of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment.
- Describes how the Council has monitored and evaluated the effectiveness of its governance arrangements in the year, and on any planned changes in the coming period
- Provides details of how the Council has responded to any issue(s) identified in last year's governance statement
- Reports on any key governance matters identified from this review and provides a commitment to addressing them.

The Annual Governance Statement reports on the governance framework that has been in place at Staffordshire County Council for the year ended 31st March

2022 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts. It should be noted, however, that any system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. We have had the governance framework in place from 1 April 2021, and up to the date that we approved the Statement of Accounts.

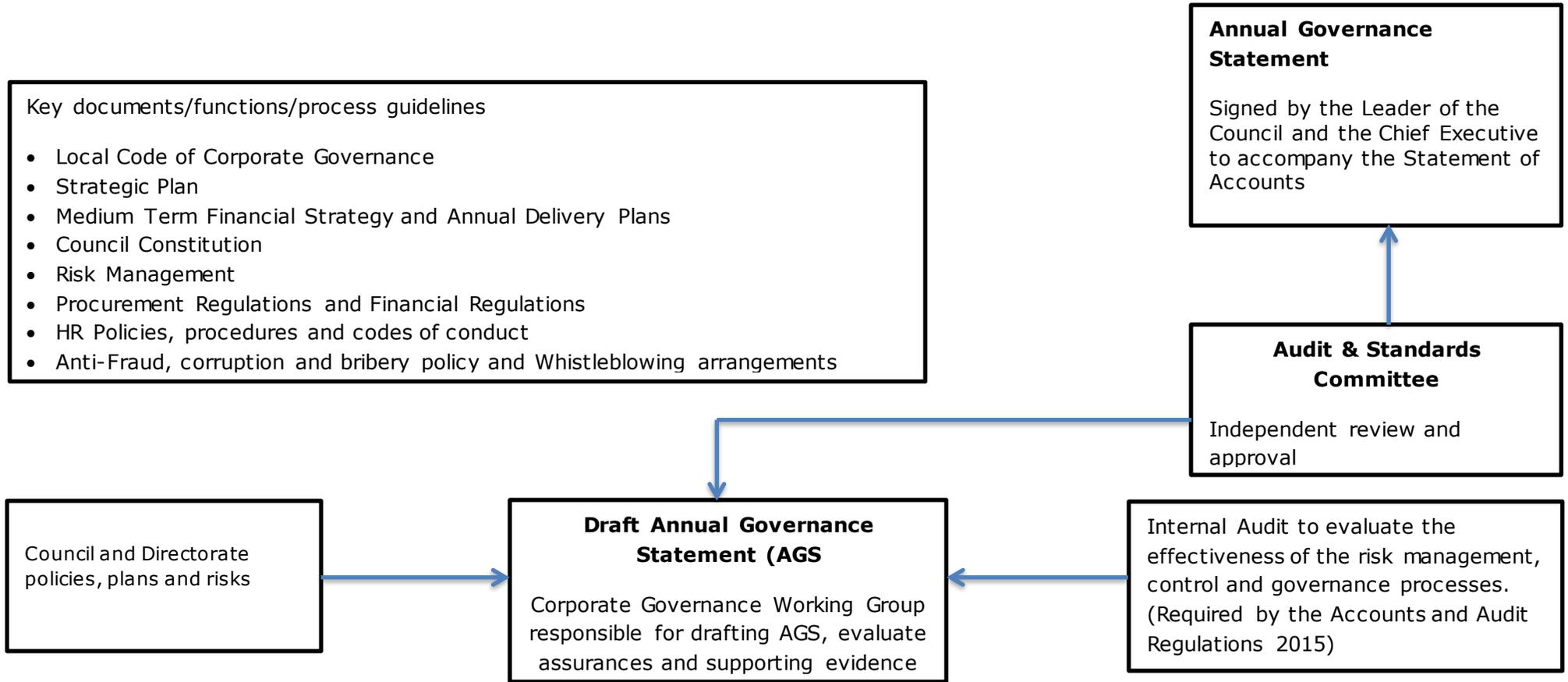
8. What is a Governance Assurance Framework?

Assurance provides confidence, based on sufficient evidence, that internal controls are in place and are operating effectively and that objectives are being achieved. An assurance framework is the structure within which Members and Senior Management identify the principal risks to the Council meeting its key objectives and through which they map out both the key controls to manage them and how they have gained sufficient assurance about the effectiveness of those controls. The assurance framework underpins the statements made within the Annual Governance Statement.

A governance assurance process is in place to provide a framework for the annual assessment of the effectiveness of the governance arrangements operating within the Council. This includes Member overview and oversight and robust challenge by the Council's Statutory Officers i.e. the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

9. What is the Council's Governance Assurance Framework?

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| Provision of ongoing assurance on adequacy and effectiveness of controls over key risks | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Performance Management and Data Quality | External Inspections – e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission) | Financial Control Assurance (Section 151 | Legal and Regulatory Assurance (Monitoring Officer) | Members' Assurance | Internal Audit | External Audit | Risk Management | Assurances by Directors/Risk Owners |

10. How has the Annual Governance Statement been prepared?

In preparing the Annual Governance Statement the Council has:

- Reviewed the Council's existing governance arrangements against the CIPFA/SOLACE 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government framework – 2016 Edition good practice guidance'
- Assessed the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance to reflect this guidance which includes the seven principles of good governance and associated required actions and behaviours taken by the Council that demonstrate robust governance arrangements are in place
- Evaluated the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements against the revised Local Code of Corporate Governance.
- Considered what constitutes a significant governance issue for consideration of inclusion within the statement. Although the CIPFA/SOLACE framework does not prescribe set criteria, best practice in this area has been published. Following approval by the Corporate Governance Working Group the following has been agreed as a guide to inform the completion of the 2021/22 statement:
 - Does it undermine/threaten the achievement of organisational objectives?
 - Is it a significant failure to meet the principles (and sub principles) of good governance?

- Is it an area of significant concern to an inspector, external audit, or regulator?
- Has the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, Head of Internal Audit, or the Audit and Standards Committee recommended that it be included?
- Is it an issue of public or stakeholder concern?
- Is it an issue that cuts across the organisation and requires cooperation to address it?

11. How does the Council monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its governance arrangements?

The Council annually reviews the effectiveness of its governance arrangements including our system of internal control. Our review of how effective our systems and procedures are, is supported by the work of the Corporate Governance Working Group and the Chief Internal Auditor's annual report. The review also includes comments made by the External Auditor and other review agencies and inspectors.

This review found that we had all the necessary parts of the framework in place. The areas that have led to this conclusion are described in more detail below:

- The annual review of the code of corporate governance has been carried out in line with the requirements of the CIPFA / SOLACE document entitled "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016", the Corporate Governance Working Group are confident that current documents and processes represent an effective governance framework.

- The review of actions aimed at improving our arrangements for corporate governance has confirmed that we have made good progress in addressing the key issues raised in the 2020/21 Annual Governance Statement. Where appropriate these have been carried forward into the 2021/22 statement.
- The Chief Internal Auditor's annual report 2021/22 which provides the independent assurance that key risks (financial and non-financial) are being adequately controlled and provides an opinion on the effectiveness of these arrangements. Internal Audit gave an adequate assurance opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's governance, risk, and control framework, i.e the control environment in 2021/22.
- Fewer limited assurance system audit reports were issued during 2021/22 compared to the previous year and related to specifically (climate Change Action Fund; Agency Staffing Contracts including the appointment and payment of consultants and other self-employed individuals, and Infrastructure + Contract - asset data management. However, in contrast a large number of maintained schools, fourteen (1 High & 12 Primary and 1 pupil referral unit) received a limited assurance opinion following their compliance review. This represents a significant increase based on previous years. For those schools being awarded a limited assurance opinion, issues were found relating to number of financial administrative areas as well as school governance and several recommendations have been made to improve the control environment operating within schools for

future years which are tracked until their implementation. The Council's schools' compliance programme continues to be supplemented by a programme of Continuous Controls Monitoring (CCM) that provides assurance over a greater volume of transactions across all Staffordshire Schools and audit findings will continue to feature in our communications with schools to reinforce lessons learnt throughout the year.

- It was reported to the Audit and Standards Committee as part of the 2021/22 Annual Outturn report that there is an effective system of internal audit in place, as measured against set conditions, which include:
 - How well the new Public Sector Internal Audit Standards together with the Local Government Application Note are complied with.
 - Results of the latest available External Quality Assessment performed by a representative of CIPFA which concluded Full Compliance with the Standards.
 - The main key performance results (i.e % completion of the audit plan and the results of the client satisfaction questionnaire).
 - Feedback from the County Treasurer (& s151 Officer).
- An unqualified opinion from the External Auditor has been drafted on the financial statements for 2020/21 as well as for the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness pending some final audit work together with CIPFA guidance on fixed asset accounting. It should be noted, however, that at

the time of writing this statement, the External Auditor opinion is in draft form and has not been finalised.

- During 2021/22 the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer did not have to use their official powers.
- We have effective scrutiny processes in place through the Overview & Scrutiny Committee arrangements, the responsibilities of which are focused on the key priorities contained in the Strategic Plan.
- Arrangements to strengthen the arrangements for the production and updating of the Corporate Risk Register are progressing which has involved the implementation of an integrated audit and risk management system during 2021.
- The recommendations made within internal audit reports are implemented as agreed to strengthen the control environment. The process is overseen and monitored by the Audit & Standards Committee for high level recommendations.
- Two further Ofsted inspections have taken place since our Children's Services 'Good' rating back in February 2019 namely:

(a) Local Area SEND Inspection - In January 2022, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) revisited the area of Staffordshire to decide whether sufficient progress had been made in addressing each of the areas of significant weakness detailed in the initial SEND inspection report letter published on 8 January 2019. The joint inspection concluded that sufficient progress had been made in addressing six of the eight significant weaknesses identified at the initial inspection. However, further improvement was

required relating to (i) improving co-production, particularly with parents; and (ii) improving the quality of EHC Plans. Consequently, an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) has been developed to demonstrate capability and capacity to deliver the required improvements. Delivery of the APP is overseen by the SEND and Inclusion Partnership Group and is subject of 6 monthly monitoring and review meetings accompanied by ongoing challenge and support from the national SEND and NHS England Advisers; and

(b) Children's Services Focused Visit - In May 2022, a focused visit was undertaken of Staffordshire's Children's Services which looked at our arrangements for children subject to child in need and child protection planning. The inspection confirmed that assessments and plans were mostly effective in improving outcomes for children and that Leaders have led the workforce effectively through a structural transformation of services, with a focus on consistent relationships between social workers and children. Four areas for improvement were, however, identified relating to (i) the quality of case supervision records; (ii) timely recording; (iii) the effectiveness of the audit process, to improve outcomes for children; and (iv) the need to ensure that accurate performance data is used effectively, to improve social work practice.

- During 2021/22 a number of reports from Internal Audit (both 20/21 & 21/22 audits) have been reviewed by the Audit & Standards Committee in relation to the SEND service. In order to obtain assurance that the recommendations have been fully implemented Members have received regular updates regarding the progress of their implementation from the Assistant Director for Education Strategy and Improvement. Remaining actions outstanding have been incorporated into the APP which will be reported to the Audit & Standards Committee in due course.
- No governance related matters have been identified from work undertaken, in respect of the operation of the LEP.
- During 2021/22, the Audit and Standards Committee received a limited assurance report on cyber security governance and culture (2020/21 audit) which highlighted that several improvements could be made to the Council's cyber security arrangements including clearer designation of responsibility and accountability, better reporting on cyber security issues to senior management as well as improved recording and reporting on cyber risks. Subsequently, a further progress report on the implementation of audit recommendations was received by the Committee in February 2022 where it was confirmed that all but one recommendation had been implemented. The remaining recommendation relating to a new cyber security strategy and action plan has subsequently been implemented in September 2022 and the new Cyber Security Strategy 2022-2025 published.
- A limited assurance report (2020/21) was also presented to the Audit & Standards Committee in October 2021

which highlighted several improvements to the Council's Partnership governance and management arrangements which has since led to the development and implementation of a partnership toolkit and guidance which has been communicated council-wide.

- The Audit and Standards Committee received and considered the Annual Report on the management of elected member related complaints in July 2021 (for the period October 2020 to May 2021) and July 2022 (for the period June 2021 to June 2022), no major issues were identified in both reports.
- The LGSCO Annual Review Letter for 2021 was received in July 2021 and was considered by SLT and Cabinet together with the Audit & Standards Committee at its meeting in October 2021. The main actions highlighted, related to taking steps to improve response times to implement recommendations and agreed actions. The most recent LGSCO Annual Review Letter for 2022 was received in July 2022 and has again highlighted the need to action remedies on a more timely basis. In addition, a comment has also been made relating to the Council's late responses to Ombudsman investigation enquiries.
- The 2021/22 Information Governance Annual Report provided assurance regarding compliance with the Data protection Act 2018 and GDPR Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004, and the Local Government Transparency Code 2014. This report was presented to the Audit & Standards Committee in April 2022 for consideration covering the period April 2021 to March 2022. During this reporting period, the Information Governance Team has developed an Information Management Strategy and Framework. The strategy will run between 2022 and 2024 and is

designed to support every member of staff with their individual responsibilities regarding the processing of personal data as well as implementing the new corporate file plan (previously referred to as the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)). No major issues were identified from this year's report.

- In December 2021, eight Members of the Audit & Standards Committee were invited to form a Members-led working group to review and make recommendations to full Council, on the main body of the County Council's Constitution to better reflect current needs and practices. The working group met in January 2022 and the outcome of their review was reported back to the Audit & Standards Committee in February 2022. Various amendments to the Council's Constitution were considered and recommended which were subsequently approved by Full Council at its meeting held on 17th March 2022. Following the review of the Constitution in early 2022, the Council then focused its attention on improving awareness and understanding of the Scheme of Delegation (SoD) as well as to address audit recommendations previously made relating to the SoD. The review of the SoD commenced in April 2022 and was completed in June 2022. The outcome of this review was to (i) transfer the sub-Scheme of Delegation to the dedicated Decision-Making pages on Staff Space (Intranet); (ii) produce a new 'single source' Scheme of Delegations; and (iii) introduce a new easy to follow process and proforma with a clearly defined pathway for changes / additions to the SoD.
- Three whistleblowing matters have been considered by the Monitoring Officer in 2021/22 and two have been

received subsequent to the production of the AGS in 2022/23). In relation to the 2021/22 cases, one related to the potential misuse of climate fund action monies by a county councillor. This matter was reported to the police but there was insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal offence. A second case related to failings in the SEND service. The investigation into this matter highlighted some performance issues which are being managed by the service. However, no impropriety or maladministration was found, and the Council had not disregarded its legal obligations. The third case received in 2021/22 related to a partnership and the use of a company by an officer involved within the partnership (not an SCC employee). No impropriety was found in respect of this matter. The two whistleblowing cases received in 2022/23 relate to operational issues at two satellite location across the County. One involves potential misappropriation of Council assets which is currently being investigated by Internal Audit. Where appropriate they are reported to the Corporate Governance Working Group for further consideration.

12. Impact of COVID 19 on Governance Arrangements in place

In March 2020 the Country experienced a worldwide pandemic from the Coronavirus which created significant challenges for the County Council. As a result, several changes were made to the governance arrangements supporting the decision-making process which have now come to an end.

The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2022 were published in June 2022 and extended the reporting deadline for the 2021/22 accounts to 30th November 2022.

The Local Authorities & Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) Flexibility of Local Authority & Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England & Wales) Regulations 2020 expired on 6th May 2021 and were not capable of being extended. Since then, Committee meetings with voting members of the Council have reverted to taking place in a "physical" format.

In addition, the delegation of authority to issue Directions under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020 which had been approved by Cabinet at its 19th August 2020 meeting and which had been extended several times, was revoked on 24th February 2022.

The only continued impact of the Coronavirus is on the governance arrangements for School Admission Appeals. In April 2020, temporary regulations came into force, to give admission authorities, local authorities and appeal panels some additional flexibility when dealing with appeals during the COVID-19 pandemic. The temporary regulations known as the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations came into force on 24th April 2020 have since been extended until 30th September 2022.

Throughout 2021/22, Cabinet received and considered regular updates from the COVID-19 Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board.

In terms of the overall financial position the County Treasurer states:

'The impact of the pandemic on the County Council is reflected in the considerable additional costs we have borne, particularly in Adults' and Children's Social Care, plus other services such as capital projects which have seen an increase in costs due to the safety measures required to work on site. The County Council has assisted the NHS with testing, tracing and contacting people and with the vaccination programme. The Council's many cost reduction programmes were also significantly impacted as staff focused on dealing with the pandemic. In turn, the County Council has received a large number of one-off grants from the Government for specific initiatives ranging from food parcels to outbreak control.

The financial situation in 2021/22 resulted in a small underspend which has been carried forward into 2022/23 to be spent on the significant inflationary pressures which are emerging. There is considerable uncertainty across the global economy and Staffordshire is not immune to the impact of that which is being felt in increased inflationary pressures across all services.'

13.How has the Council addressed the governance improvement actions from 2020/21?

The Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 contained the following key actions. Details of the issue and how it has been addressed during 2021/22 are provided below:

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Annual Governance Statement 1 | To continue to address the key concerns raised through the CQC/Ofsted report to ensure that the remaining governance elements within the SEND arrangements have been addressed as soon as possible. | Helen Riley – Director for Families & Communities ¹ March 2022 | <p>The Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) was reviewed on the 29th September (6 month point). Almost all of the 24 actions have been achieved as set out for the 6 month mark and workstream leads are confident that progress towards the 9month objectives will be met. The two major workstreams, Revised EHCNA Pathway and Strategy for Special Provision Review are on track as set out in the APP. September 2022 saw a significant communications launch and consultation process also.</p> <p>The Council has until 20th April 2023 to address all actions.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 1</p> |

¹ Neelam Bhardwaja was appointed as Director for Children and Families from 20th June 2022

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| Annual Governance Statement 2 | Use the climate change strategic development framework in-conjunction with Partners in order to deliver on the commitments to make Staffordshire County Council sustainable and achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The framework and action plans will continue to be reviewed over this period. | Darryl Evers – Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills Ongoing | The Council has a 5 year action plan to deliver its climate change strategic development framework, this is reviewed annually and signed off by Cabinet (via corporate scrutiny), alongside an Annual Review of Performance. Performance is reviewed monthly via an officer steering group and Cabinet Member briefing, with a quarterly update through SLT/Cabinet via the corporate performance reporting process. Work with partners is managed through the Staffordshire Sustainability Board which was formally established on 19 January 2022 and reports into the Leaders Board, it is formally constituted with appropriate Cabinet Member representatives from the nine local authorities in Staffordshire. Through this group all Local Authorities have signed up to a vision and 10 commitments which went through SCC Cabinet on 15 June 2022. Status: Implemented |
| Annual Governance Statement 3 | To ensure the continued delivery of a balanced MTFS set against the financial challenges emerging from the COVID 19 crisis. Adherence to the CIPFA Financial Management Code will continue to be evaluated to ensure full compliance by the required 21/22 deadline. Matters highlighted in the action plan from the self-assessment to be implemented, | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer Ongoing | The CIPFA Financial Management Code has been implemented in full with the matters highlighted in the action plan now implemented. Status: Implemented |

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| Annual Governance Statement 4 | To conclude the Children’s operating system transformation project to fully implement the flexible and restorative practice model whilst developing services locally in-conjunction with partners. | Helen Riley – Director for Families & Communities March 2022 ² | <p>The Transformation project was concluded in December 2021. We are now in the process of embedding the new structure and have recently completed our 6 month review of transformation, the findings of which was discussed at Scrutiny on 1st September 2022. Restorative practice continues to support all our work as the new structure and vision from transformation embeds. Whilst there is early assurance from audits and the Ofsted Focused visit held in May 2022 around the impact of our restorative approach within Children’s Social Care (CSC), this approach needs to be well established across the partnership. We are working with all our partners to continue to deliver training and provide support to ensure this approach become an integral part of our delivery as a partnership.</p> <p>Status: Implemented</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 5 | To monitor the arrangements surrounding the operation of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Partnership to ensure that it facilitates relationships and generates new ideas to improve health and care outcomes and services. This will be covered as part of the work of the Health and Well-Being Board | Richard Harling – Director for Health & Care Ongoing | <p>The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent ICB was established on 1st July 2022. An update was provided to the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny committee on 11th July 2022. The Integrated Care Partnership will be co-chaired by the Leaders of Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City</p> |

² Neelam Bhardwaja was appointed as Director for Children and Families from 20th June 2022

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| | | | <p>Council and the ICB Chair. The ICB met for the first time in September 2022 and the operation of the partnership will continue to be closely monitored throughout 2022/23.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 2</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 6 | <p>To remain vigilant against the potential failure of key providers/suppliers and to ensure that suitable business continuity arrangements are in place to deal with an event, should it occur. Attention will continue to be given to Social Care providers.</p> | <p>John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services & Richard Harling – Director for Health & Care</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>This remains actively under review and, among other things, is considered at every meeting by the Corporate Governance Working Group.</p> <p>Status: Carried forward as AGS 3</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 7 | <p>To continue to monitor the cyber security risks and threats to the Councils ICT network to ensure they are sufficiently protected and secured. To undertake the work that is programmed to enhance cyber governance arrangements currently in place.</p> | <p>John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>This work continues to be a priority and is regularly on the agenda of the Council's Senior Leadership Team for a review of the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements.</p> <p>To this end, the Council continues to invest in appropriate people, processes and tools to combat security threats. Furthermore, the reorganisation of SICT</p> |

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| | | | <p>in 2021/22 also created a focussed team that is responsible for ICT Security.</p> <p>Status: Carried forward as AGS 4</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 8 | To undertake a further debrief review on the additional phases of the Council's COVID 19 response in particular regarding the assumption made regarding community resilience; jointly conducted with the Civil Contingencies Unit. | <p>John Henderson – Chief Executive and John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services</p> <p>March 2022</p> | <p>A thorough debrief on the Pandemic was taken to Cabinet on the 20th October 2021 in a report entitled "Impact of Covid-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Progress – Update October 2021 and Way Forward". This paper detailed the high-level impacts which the COVID-19 pandemic has had upon our communities, the economy and the organisation. It recognised that recovery from the pandemic would not be a traditional recovery and that it would take an extended period of time. The paper described the high level priorities identified for recovery across the County Council and our continued progress against these; and it detailed our on-going approach to the leadership, influencing and monitoring of the recovery process moving forward. The paper was thorough and detailed and contained a number of appendices which encapsulated the learning across all of the Council's operations.</p> <p>Status: Implemented</p> |

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| Annual Governance Statement 9 | <p>To continue to be alert to the possibility of unforeseen contraventions of governance arrangements and situations where weaknesses in governance arrangements are exposed by isolated events.</p> <p>In particular to the governance weaknesses identified within the Internal Audit Outturn regarding maintained schools.</p> | Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team Ongoing | <p>During, 2021/22 Internal Audit continued to provide assurance over key risks relating to the Council's business operations and to report upon these to senior management and members. The 2021/22 Schools' compliance programme continued to identify areas of non-compliance and lapses in internal controls. As a result, the school's compliance programme will continue to be supplemented with (i) a programme of Continuous Controls Monitoring and (ii) more regular communications to schools throughout 2022/23 to raise awareness of best practice and counter fraud measures.</p> <p>Status: Carried forward as AGS 5</p> |
| Annual Governance 10 | To consider the Governance Risk and Resilience toolkit produced by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny as to how it may assist the Council in its quest to ensure that it has early sight of the identification of risks around governance and a clear focus on the cultural aspects of good governance. | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services March 2022 | <p>Arrangements are being put in place to raise the profile of key governance processes and arrangements within the Council to be rolled out in 2022/23.</p> <p>Since the beginning of 2022, the County Solicitor and Member & Democratic Services Manager have attended several Team Meetings to present an overview of the Council's governance and decision-making.</p> <p>October 2022 is being badged as 'Governance Month'. This will include heightened visibility on the homepage of</p> |

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| | | | <p>the intranet as well as briefings to SLT / WLT / OMT and a focussed session on the Scheme of Delegation to Business Brief.</p> <p>The MaDS Manager will also work with the County Solicitor on reviewing the CfGS Toolkit and sharing with the 'golden triangle' of Statutory Officers.</p> <p>Status: Carried forward as AGS 6</p> |
| Annual Governance 11 | To complete the update and review of the arrangements for the production and review of the Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register. | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer. December 2021 | <p>An integrated audit and risk management system was purchased and implemented during 2021/22 and is to be rolled out during 2022/23 which will incorporate the corporate risk register. The Risk Management Policy and statement was drafted in during 2021/22 by the Head of Internal Audit & Financial Services and requires final endorsement by the CGWG and SLT before approval by the Audit & Standards Committee.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 7</p> |
| Annual Governance 12 | To ensure that the recommendations contained in the Limited Assurance & special investigation internal audit reports raised in the HOIA opinion are fully implemented. This will be overseen by the Audit & Standards Committee through their recommendation tracking review | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer. Ongoing | <p>During 2021/22, the Internal Audit service procured and implemented an integrated audit and risk management system which includes an on-line portal to record and track all audit recommendations made in-year which is accessed by auditees to add updates about the status of recommendations assigned to them. It is intended that the reporting functionality from the on-line</p> |

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| | | | recommendation portal will be developed during 2022/23 to enhance the management information being reported to senior management and members. Status: Carried Forward as AGS 8 |
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14. What are the Key Governance Matters for 2021/22?

The review of the effectiveness of the Council's governance framework has identified the following actions that will need to be addressed during 2022/23. Those action points in italics are new for 2021/22.

| Review Reference | Governance Matters identified and action to be taken | Target Date | Lead Officer |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| AGS 1 | To continue to address the key concerns raised through the CQC/Ofsted report to ensure that the remaining governance elements within the SEND arrangements have been addressed as soon as possible. | March 2023 | Neelam Bhardwaja Director for Children and Families |
| AGS 2 | To continue to monitor the arrangements surrounding the operation of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Partnership to ensure that it facilitates relationships and generates new ideas to improve health and care outcomes and services. This will be covered as part of the work of the Health and Well-Being Board | Ongoing throughout 2022/23 | Richard Harling – Director for Health & Care |
| AGS 3 | To continue to remain vigilant against the potential failure of key providers/suppliers and to ensure that suitable business continuity arrangements are in place to deal with an event, should it occur. Attention will continue to be given to Social Care providers. | Ongoing throughout 2022/23 | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services & Richard Harling – Director for Health & Care |
| AGS 4 | To continue to monitor the cyber security risks and threats to the Councils ICT network to ensure they are sufficiently protected and secured. To undertake the work that is programmed to enhance cyber governance arrangements currently in place. | Ongoing throughout 2022/23 | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services |
| AGS 5 | To continue to be alert to the possibility of unforeseen contraventions of governance arrangements and situations where weaknesses in governance arrangements are exposed by isolated | Ongoing throughout 2022/23 | Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team |

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| | events. In particular to the governance weaknesses identified within the Internal Audit Outturn regarding maintained schools. | | |
| AGS 6 | To continue to raise the profile of key governance processes and arrangements within the Council throughout 2022/23 including consideration of the Governance Risk and Resilience toolkit produced by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny as to how it may assist the Council in its quest to ensure that it has early sight of the identification of risks around governance and a clear focus on the cultural aspects of good governance. | Ongoing throughout 2022/23 | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services |
| AGS 7 | To complete the update and review of the arrangements for the production and review of the Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register. | March 2023 | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer. |
| AGS 8 | To ensure that the recommendations contained in the Limited Assurance & special investigation internal audit reports raised in the HOIA opinion are fully implemented. This will be overseen by the Audit & Standards Committee through their recommendation tracking review. | Ongoing throughout 2022/23 | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer. |
| AGS 9 | <i>To continue with the highways’ transformation programme, transforming the Council’s highway services and developing effective governance arrangements for the new highways’ delivery model.</i> | March 2023 | <i>Darryl Evers, Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills</i> |
| AGS 10 | <i>To prepare for and collate all the required information and decision making records in readiness for the UK Covid-19 Inquiry which has been set up to examine the UK’s response to and impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.</i> | March 2023 | <i>Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team</i> |
| AGS 11 | <i>To review and evaluate the arrangements in place relating to the role of the Audit & Standards Committee in the governance of Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCOs) and to develop a ‘light touch’ framework for the governance and oversight of the Council’s external trading companies.</i> | March 2023 | <i>John Tradewell, Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services</i> |

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| AGS 12 | <i>To further embed the Staffordshire Leaders' Board, a new Joint Committee, with agreed priorities, which was established in December 2021.</i> | March 2023 | <i>John Tradewell, Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services</i> |
| AGS 13 | <i>To prepare for the additional costs of social care reform, as far as possible, and to reflect these when setting the budget for 2023/24.</i> | March 2023 | <i>Rob Salmon County Treasurer</i> |
| AGS 14 | <i>To implement the necessary arrangements to prepare and provide assurance for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Local Authority assessment framework commencing 2023.</i> | March 2023 | <i>Richard Harling, Director for Health & Care</i> |
| AGS 15 | <i>Following the completion of the Children's transformation programme Project in December 2021, actions are required to ensure that operational gaps identified as a result of the transformation programme are addressed and that the new structure and processes are operating as intended, are embedded and are effective.</i> | <i>On-going throughout 2022/23</i> | <i>Neelam Bhardwaja Director for Children and Families</i> |

15.Certification

To the best of our knowledge, the governance arrangements, as defined above and within the Council's Code of Corporate Governance, have been effectively operating during the year with the exception of those areas outlined at paragraph 14. Over the next year we will be taking steps to tackle the issues listed above, so we can further improve our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will bring about the improvements that we identified in our review of effectiveness, and we will monitor these improvements as part of our next annual review.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Alan White
Leader of Staffordshire County Council

Date: _____

John Henderson
Chief Executive of Staffordshire County Council

Date: _____

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE WORKING GROUP

**THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GOVERNANCE
FRAMEWORK, INCLUDING THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL –
2021/2022**

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Appendix 1 has been drafted in response to the need to formerly define the Framework leading to the production of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

Appendix 2 details the assurance gathering process used to prepare the AGS.

Appendix 2a details an example of a Controls Assurance Statement

Appendix 3 details the extent to which the various sources of assurance contribute to the mitigation of risk.

Good practice suggests that a review of the effectiveness of the Governance Framework should be undertaken prior to producing the AGS

WORKING PAPERS

The review has been undertaken following consideration of a number of Supporting Papers:

- Annual Review of the Code of Corporate Governance (Supporting Paper 1)
- Progress against significant control issues contained within the 2020/21 AGS (Supporting Paper 2)
- Annual Audit Letter 2019/20 (Supporting Paper 3)
- Internal Audit Outturn Report 2021/22 and Performance against the UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (Supporting Paper 4)
- Other Sources of Assurance – Statutory Officers (Supporting Paper 5)
- Other Sources of Assurance – Miscellaneous including COVID 19 response (Supporting Paper 6)

OVERALL CONCLUSION

It is considered that all required components to demonstrate good governance are in place as are appropriate action plans. Sources of assurance have been clearly defined and are varied. Several action points have been identified during the review and have been incorporated into the action plan to be addressed in 2022/23.

SUPPORTING PAPER 1

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The annual review of corporate governance has been undertaken in accordance with the CIPFA / SOLACE document entitled "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework 2016". Following an evaluation of the requirements within the updated framework a revised Code of Corporate Governance was presented to the Audit & Standards Committee at their meeting of 30th July 2020 which included a detailed action plan and approved. Since this date, the Code of Corporate Governance and action plan has continued to be reviewed and updated annually. The latest updated Code of Corporate Governance and subsequent action plan has been reported to the Audit & Standards Committee on 5th July 2022 and approved.

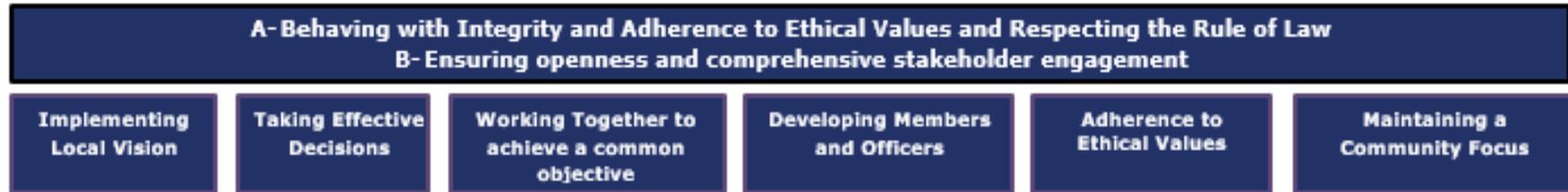
During February 2021 the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny published the results of its project focused on the early identification of risk around governance and the cultural aspects of good governance. The study produced a framework [Governance risk and resilience framework] that can sit alongside existing governance support material, in particular the CIPFA/SOLACE Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016) to assist in the understanding, reviewing, evaluating, and deciding upon governance improvements. Therefore, the Corporate Governance Working Group will explore the potential use of the framework during 2022/23 alongside its annual review of the Code of Corporate Governance work.

Attachments

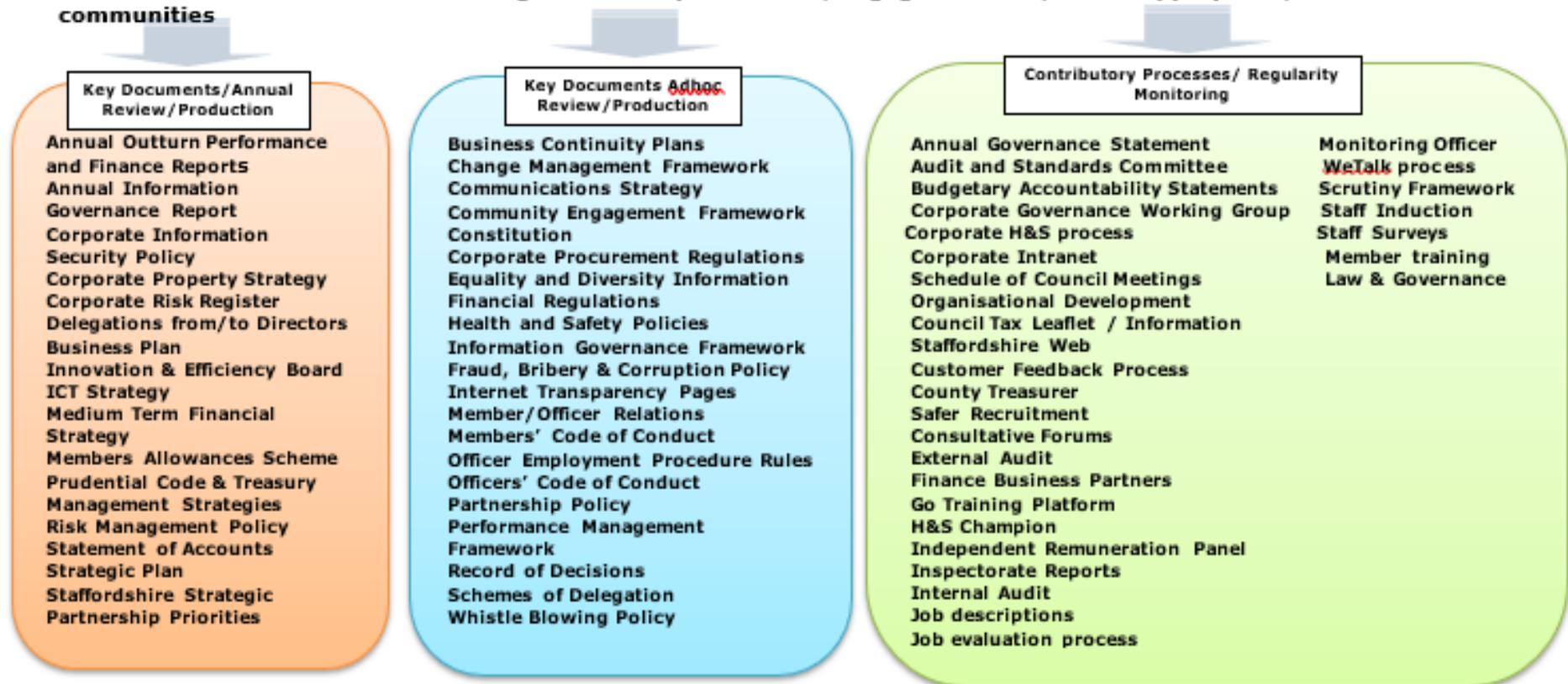
Single Sheet Local Framework – (refreshed as part of the July 2022 Code of Corporate Governance update)

Code of Corporate Governance Action Plan 2021/22 - Progress Extract

Governance Framework - Principles, Statutory Obligations and Organisational Objectives



Corporate Governance comprises the systems and processes, cultures, and values, by which local government bodies are directed and controlled and through which they account to, engage with and, where appropriate, lead their communities



CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN 2021/22- Updated for Progress

| Action Point | SLT Lead | Progress (October 2022) |
|--|--|---|
| To progress the work on the 3 strategic place-based priorities further (Place Branding/5G/Data Institute) and explore two further key issues (climate change and inequalities) | <p>Responsible Officer: Kerry Dove, Assistant Director for Strategy & Transformation</p> <p>Implementation Date: 31st March 2022</p> | <p>“We Are Staffordshire” launched in 2020 and has governance in place to oversee delivery. Staffordshire Centre for Data Analytics proof of concept went live in 2021, with a governance structure in place. The 5G Growth Deal was submitted to central government.</p> <p>This action is now complete.</p> |
| To complete the generation of a comprehensive volunteer management strategy and framework. | <p>Responsible Officer: Interim Assistant Director for Culture Rural & Safer Communities</p> <p>Implementation Date: 31st March 2022</p> | <p>In relation to the previous year’s action, work was paused due to covid recovery, however, there is an action within the 2022/23 Communities Delivery Plan to complete the generation of a comprehensive volunteer management strategy and framework.</p> <p>Revised Implementation Date: 31st December 2022</p> |
| To consider the draft social value framework together with the 2 external social value assessment tools which are being assessed regarding adoption by the Council. | <p>Responsible Officer: Ian Turner, Assistant Director - Commercial Services and Assets</p> <p>Implementation Date: 30 September 2021</p> | <p>A trial has taken place with the TOMS framework. The contract has commenced and recording of social value outcomes is being monitored.</p> <p>Further procurements are being identified to further evaluate use of the TOMS framework.</p> <p>A report on the extent of roll out to be adopted by the organisation will be presented to the senior leadership team by December 2022.</p> <p>Revised Implementation Date: 31st December 2022</p> |
| To ensure ongoing greater visibility and ownership of the Corporate Risk Register, together with regular monitoring and updating of individual risk areas. | <p>Responsible Officer: Lisa Andrews, Head of Audit & Financial Services</p> | <p>During 2021/22, an integrated audit and risk management system was purchased and implemented and which is to be further rolled out during 2022/23. The integrated audit & risk</p> |

| Action Point | SLT Lead | Progress (October 2022) |
|--|--|---|
| | Implementation Date: Ongoing | <p>management system incorporates the corporate risk register which is intended to enhance the greater visibility, ownership and monitoring of risks across the Council's key business operations.</p> <p>On-going – Revised Implementation Date 31st March 2023.</p> |
| <p>The ongoing review the current HR policies in operation to ensure that they reflect the needs of the business.</p> | Responsible Officer: Sarah Getley, Assistant Director – People Implementation Date Next tranche to be completed by 31 March 2022. | <p>There is an ongoing review of the current HR policies in operation to ensure that they reflect the needs of the business. Second tranche implemented in June 2022.</p> <p>Ongoing – Revised Implementation Date: 31st March 2023</p> |
| <p>to refresh the risk management policy and strategy as part of the implementation of the Risk Management Module as part of the Audit Risk Management Software.</p> | Responsible Officer: Lisa Andrews, Head of Audit & Financial Services Implementation Date: 31 st December 2021. | <p>During 2021/22, an integrated audit and risk management system was purchased and implemented and is to be rolled out during 2022/23 which will incorporate the corporate risk register.</p> <p>The Council's Risk Management Policy and statement was drafted during 2021/22 by the Head of Internal Audit & Financial Services and requires final endorsement by the CGWG and SLT before approval by the Audit & Standards Committee.</p> <p>Revised Implementation Date: 31st March 2023.</p> |

SUPPORTING PAPER 2

PROGRESS AGAINST SIGNIFICANT CONTROL ISSUES CONTAINED WITHIN THE 2020/21 AGS

It is a role of the Corporate Governance Working Group to ensure that action plans for those significant internal control issues reported in the AGS are both defined and implemented.

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| Annual Governance Statement 1 | To continue to address the key concerns raised through the CQC/Ofsted report to ensure that the remaining governance elements within the SEND arrangements have been addressed as soon as possible. | Helen Riley – Director for Families & Communities ¹ March 2022 | <p>The Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) was reviewed on the 29th September (6 month point). Almost all of the 24 actions have been achieved as set out for the 6 month mark and workstream leads are confident that progress towards the 9month objectives will be met. The two major workstreams, Revised EHCNA Pathway and Strategy for Special Provision Review are on track as set out in the APP. September 2022 saw a significant communications launch and consultation process also.</p> <p>The Council has until 20th April 2023 to address all actions.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 1</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 2 | Use the climate change strategic development framework in-conjunction with Partners in order to deliver on the commitments to make Staffordshire County Council sustainable and achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The | Darryl Evers – Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills | The Council has a 5 year action plan to deliver its climate change strategic development framework, this is reviewed annually and signed off by Cabinet (via corporate scrutiny), alongside an Annual Review of Performance. Performance is |

¹ Neelam Bhardwaja was appointed as Director for Children and Families from 20th June 2022

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | framework and action plans will continue to be reviewed over this period. | Ongoing | <p>reviewed monthly via an officer steering group and Cabinet Member briefing, with a quarterly update through SLT/Cabinet via the corporate performance reporting process. Work with partners is managed through the Staffordshire Sustainability Board which was formally established on 19 January 2022 and reports into the Leaders Board, it is formally constituted with appropriate Cabinet Member representatives from the nine local authorities in Staffordshire. Through this group all Local Authorities have signed up to a vision and 10 commitments which went through SCC Cabinet on 15 June 2022.</p> <p>Status: Implemented</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 3 | To ensure the continued delivery of a balanced MTFS set against the financial challenges emerging from the COVID 19 crisis. Adherence to the CIPFA Financial Management Code will continue to be evaluated to ensure full compliance by the required 21/22 deadline. Matters highlighted in the action plan from the self-assessment to be implemented, | <p>Rob Salmon – County Treasurer</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>The CIPFA Financial Management Code has been implemented in full with the matters highlighted in the action plan now implemented.</p> <p>Status: Implemented</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 4 | To conclude the Children’s operating system transformation project to fully implement the flexible and restorative practice model whilst developing services locally in-conjunction with partners. | Helen Riley – Director for Families & Communities March 2022 | <p>The Transformation project was concluded in December 2021. We are now in the process of embedding the new structure and have recently completed our 6 month review of transformation, the findings of which was discussed at Scrutiny on 1st September 2022. Restorative practice continues to support all our work as the new structure and vision from transformation embeds. Whilst there is early assurance from audits and</p> |

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | <p>the Ofsted Focused visit held in May 2022 around the impact of our restorative approach within Children’s Social Care (CSC), this approach needs to be well established across the partnership. We are working with all our partners to continue to deliver training and provide support to ensure this approach become an integral part of our delivery as a partnership.</p> <p>Status: Implemented</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 5 | To monitor the arrangements surrounding the operation of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Partnership to ensure that it facilitates relationships and generates new ideas to improve health and care outcomes and services. This will be covered as part of the work of the Health and Well-Being Board | Richard Harling – Director for Health & Care Ongoing | <p>The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent ICB was established on 1st July 2022.</p> <p>An update was provided to the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny committee on 11th July 2022</p> <p>The Integrated Care Partnership will be co-chaired by the Leaders of Staffordshire County Council and Stoke on Trent City Council and the ICB Chair. The ICB met for the first time in September 2022 and the operation of the partnership will continue to be closely monitored throughout 2022/23.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 2</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 6 | To remain vigilant against the potential failure of key providers/suppliers and to ensure that suitable business continuity arrangements are in place to deal with an event, should it occur. | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for | This remains actively under review and, among other things, is considered at every meeting by the Corporate Governance Working Group. |

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Attention will continue to be given to Social Care providers. | Corporate Services & Richard Harling – Director for Health & Care Ongoing | Status: Carried forward as AGS 3 |
| Annual Governance Statement 7 | To continue to monitor the cyber security risks and threats to the Councils ICT network to ensure they are sufficiently protected and secured. To undertake the work that is programmed to enhance cyber governance arrangements currently in place. | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services Ongoing | This work continues to be a priority and is regularly on the agenda of the Council’s Senior Leadership Team for a review of the effectiveness of the Council’s arrangements. To this end, the Council continues to invest in appropriate people, processes and tools to combat security threats. Furthermore, the reorganisation of SICT in 2021/22 also created a focussed team that is responsible for ICT Security. Status: Carried forward as AGS 4 |
| Annual Governance Statement 8 | To undertake a further debrief review on the additional phases of the Council’s COVID 19 response in particular regarding the assumption made regarding community resilience; jointly conducted with the Civil Contingencies Unit. | John Henderson – Chief Executive and John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services | A thorough debrief on the Pandemic was taken to Cabinet on the 20th October 2021 in a report entitled “Impact of Covid-19 on SCC Communities, Economy and Organisation and Recovery Progress – Update October 2021 and Way Forward”. This paper detailed the high-level impacts which the COVID-19 pandemic has had upon our communities, the economy and the organisation. It recognised that recovery from the pandemic would not be a traditional recovery and that it would take an extended period of time. |

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| | | March 2022 | <p>The paper described the high level priorities identified for recovery across the County Council and our continued progress against these; and it detailed our on-going approach to the leadership, influencing and monitoring of the recovery process moving forward. The paper was thorough and detailed and contained a number of appendices which encapsulated the learning across all of the Council's operations.</p> <p>Status: Implemented</p> |
| Annual Governance Statement 9 | <p>To continue to be alert to the possibility of unforeseen contraventions of governance arrangements and situations where weaknesses in governance arrangements are exposed by isolated events.</p> <p>In particular to the governance weaknesses identified within the Internal Audit Outturn regarding maintained schools.</p> | Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team Ongoing | <p>During, 2021/22 Internal Audit continued to provide assurance over key risks relating to the Council's business operations and to report upon these to senior management and members. The 2021/22 Schools' compliance programme continued to identify areas of non-compliance and lapses in internal controls.</p> <p>As a result, the school's compliance programme will continue to be supplemented with (i) a programme of Continuous Controls Monitoring and (ii) more regular communications to schools throughout 2022/23 to raise awareness of best practice and counter fraud measures.</p> <p>Status: Carried forward as AGS 5</p> |
| Annual Governance 10 | To consider the Governance Risk and Resilience toolkit produced by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny as to how it may assist the Council in its quest to ensure that it has early sight of the identification of risks around governance and | John Tradewell – Deputy Chief Executive & Director for | Arrangements are being put in place to raise the profile of key governance processes and arrangements within the Council to be rolled out in 2022/23. |

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|----------------------|---|---|--|
| | a clear focus on the cultural aspects of good governance. | Corporate Services March 2022 | <p>Since the beginning of 2022, the County Solicitor and Member & Democratic Services Manager have attended several Team Meetings to present an overview of the Council's governance and decision-making.</p> <p>October 2022 is being badged as 'Governance Month'. This will include heightened visibility on the homepage of the intranet as well as briefings to SLT / WLT / OMT and a focussed session on the Scheme of Delegation to Business Brief.</p> <p>The MaDS Manager will also work with the County Solicitor on reviewing the CfGS Toolkit and sharing with the 'golden triangle' of Statutory Officers.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 6</p> |
| Annual Governance 11 | To complete the update and review of the arrangements for the production and review of the Risk Management Policy and Corporate Risk Register. | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer. December 2021 | <p>An integrated audit and risk management system was purchased and implemented during 2021/22 and is to be rolled out during 2022/23 which will incorporate the corporate risk register. The Risk Management Policy and statement was drafted in during 2021/22 by the Head of Internal Audit & Financial Services and requires final endorsement by the CGWG and SLT before approval by the Audit & Standards Committee.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 7</p> |
| Annual Governance 12 | To ensure that the recommendations contained in the Limited Assurance & special investigation internal audit reports raised in the HOIA opinion | Rob Salmon – County Treasurer. Ongoing | <p>During 2021/22, the Internal Audit service procured and implemented an integrated audit and risk management system which includes an on-line portal to record and track all audit</p> |

| Review Reference | Governance Issue | Target Date | Progress as at October 2022 |
|------------------|--|-------------|--|
| | are fully implemented. This will be overseen by the Audit & Standards Committee through their recommendation tracking review | | <p>recommendations made in-year which is accessed by auditees to add updates about the status of recommendations assigned to them. It is intended that the reporting functionality from the on-line recommendation portal will be developed during 2022/23 to enhance the management information being reported to senior management and members.</p> <p>Status: Carried Forward as AGS 8</p> |

Conclusion

The review of actions detailed within the 2020/21 AGS has confirmed that whilst significant progress has been made, a number are long term in their nature and therefore for the purposes of the 2021/22 AGS key actions AGS 1, AGS 5, AGS 6, AGS 7, AGS 9, AGS 10, AGS 11 and AGS 12 should be carried forward.

SUPPORTING PAPER 3
ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2019/20

The Annual Audit Letter 2019/20 was submitted to the Audit and Standards Committee on 13 September 2021. The Audit Results report (ISA 260) was presented to the 8 December 2020 Audit and Standards Committee.

***In respect of the Annual Audit Letter 2020/21, an unqualified opinion from the External Auditor has been drafted on the financial statements for 2020/21 as well as for the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness pending some final audit work together with CIPFA guidance on fixed asset accounting. It should be noted, however, that at the time of writing this statement, the External Auditor opinion is in draft form and has not been finalised. ***

Below is the extract from the latest finalised Annual Audit Letter for 2019/20.

Extract from Annual Audit Letter

'Our 2019/20 audit work has been undertaken in accordance with the Audit Plan that we issued in July 2020'

Executive Summary

We are required to issue an annual audit letter to Staffordshire County Council (the Council) following completion of our audit procedures for the year ended 31 March 2020. Below are the results and conclusions on the significant areas of the audit process.

Area of Work

Opinion on the Council's:

► Financial statements

Conclusion

We issued an unqualified opinion on the County Council and Pension Fund financial statements on 30 April 2021. The audit was significantly protracted due to the unforeseen sickness absence of key members of the audit team. We conclude that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the County Council and the Pension Fund as at 31 March 2020 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended. Within the audit opinion we did include a paragraph to emphasise the disclosures made by the pension fund in respect of the material uncertainty reported on the valuation of its directly held property investments

► Consistency of other information published with the financial statements

Other information published with the Financial Statements was consistent with the Annual Accounts.

Concluding on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness

As a result of our procedures, we conclude that a qualified 'except-for' conclusion with respect to your arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in your use of resources is appropriate, specifically in relation to the SEND Written Statement of Actions.

Conclusion (from SCC perspective)

The Extract from the Annual Audit Letter provides an unqualified opinion for financial statements of 2019/20. A 'qualified except for' conclusion was given in relation to the 2019/20 opinion over the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the use of resources, specifically in relation to the SEND Written Statement of Actions.

****An unqualified opinion from the External Auditor has been drafted on the financial statements for 2020/21 as well as for the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency, and effectiveness pending some final audit work together with CIPFA guidance on fixed asset accounting. ****

SUPPORTING PAPER 4

INTERNAL AUDIT OUTTURN REPORT 2021/22 AND PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE UK PUBLIC SECTOR INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS

The overall conclusion taken from the Outturn report states:

Based on the above, an "Adequate Assurance" opinion has been given on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's governance, risk, and control framework, i.e the control environment in 2021/22.

This year's audit plan has been dominated firstly by our planned audit activities supporting various Council transformation programmes including the highways transformation programme, the digital transformation programme and associated new IT systems as well as the new service delivery model for the household waste recycling centres and changes to the Entrust contract. Our work in these areas focussed on ensuring that sufficient controls including fraud controls are considered and built into new and revised business processes at the right time to support a robust control environment going forward. Our work in 2022/23 will turn our attention to the new arrangements operating within Children's services following their transformation programme and also the social care reforms being introduced within the health and care arena. Secondly, during 2021/22, Internal Audit has continued to support the Council's on-going COVID 19 response predominantly focusing on COVID 19 grant verification exercises and post assurance checks to provide assurance that funding had been accurately accounted for and had been used appropriately. No significant concerns were noted. This work in these areas will continue in 2022/23.

Emphasis on strong financial management continued in 2021/22 with a full audit programme of main financial systems conducted and our audit work in-year did not highlight any concerns with all audits awarded a positive assurance opinion with no high level recommendations made. Whilst the level of debt outstanding continued to increase during the 2021/22 financial year, the latest audit review of the Council's debt recovery arrangements identified that significant improvements have been made in the Council's debt recovery processes which has been due, in part to, increasing capacity within the service, a review and documentation of key processes and a focus on improved management reporting.

However, the 2021/22 Schools' compliance programme has continued to identify areas of non-compliance and lapses in internal controls with limited assurance audit opinions being awarded for fourteen school establishments representing a significant increase from previous years. Also, control weaknesses relating to payroll processes operating at schools have continued to be identified during 2021/22. As a result of these audit outcomes, in-year we commenced a continuous controls monitoring (CCM) programme specific to schools to give greater assurance over transactions and where compliance visits highlighted concerns, further investigations were instigated. It is our intention to continue to raise awareness of best practice and counter fraud measures with more regular communications to schools throughout 2022/23. Our school visits will also continue to be supplemented by a programme of CCM that will provide assurance over a greater volume of transactions across all Staffordshire Schools in 2022/23, the findings of which will feature in our communications with schools to reinforce lessons learnt throughout the year.

Finally, despite the increase in the value of financial losses (fraud/error) identified in 2021/22 when compared to previous years, the number of limited assurance opinions awarded across the planned system reviews has reduced considerably from eleven in 2020/21 to four in 2021/22 with no limited assurance opinions being awarded in either the top risk or the key financial systems categories of work. Notably, the financial losses value reported in our annual outturn report predominantly relates to our own initiated proactive exercises using Council data effectively to detect anomalies for further investigation (anomalies in 2021/22 were considered error rather than fraud). We will continue to use data analytical tools to enhance the assurance and insights provided to senior management across all business operations during 2022/23.

SUPPORTING PAPER 5

OTHER SOURCES OF ASSURANCE - STATUTORY OFFICERS

The Chief Finance Officer (County Treasurer)/Context

Any major organisation requires a set of clearly understood rules and regulations for the management of its financial affairs. In response to the requirements of Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the County Council has designated the Chief Finance Officer to be responsible for the administration of these affairs.

In response to the requirements of Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003, the Chief Finance Officer has a duty to report to the Authority on:

- the adequacy of the proposed reserves
- the robustness of the budget

In response to Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Chief Finance Officer has a duty to report to the Council if the Authority or one of its officers:

- has made, or is about to make, a decision which involves incurring unlawful expenditure
- has taken, or is about to take, an unlawful action which has or would result in a loss or deficiency to the Authority
- is about to make an unlawful entry in the Council's accounts

In addition, the Chief Finance Officer is required to make a report under Section 114 if it appears that the expenditure incurred and/or proposed in a financial year is likely to exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to it to meet that expenditure.

The Monitoring Officer/Context

The role of the Monitoring Officer is a statutory one, the office having been created under Section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. Every Local Authority must have a Monitoring Officer and since 2001 that office cannot be held by the person who is the head of that Authority's paid service, nor by the Section 151 Officer, though there are no other formal qualification requirements.

If it at any time appears to (the Monitoring Officer) him that any proposal, decision or omission

- by the Authority;

- by any Committee or Sub-committee of the Authority;
- by any person holding any office or employment under the Authority;
- by any Joint Committee on which the Authority are represented, or;
- in the course of the discharge of functions of the Authority by or on behalf of the Authority's Executive.

constitutes, has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to –

- a contravention of any enactment or rule of law by the Authority, by any Committee or Sub-committee of the Authority, by any person holding any office or employment under the Authority, by any such Joint Committee, or by the Authority's Executive or any person on behalf of the Executive, or
- any such maladministration or injustice as is mentioned in Part 3 of the Local Government Act 1974 where the Ombudsman has conducted an investigation;

then the Monitoring Officer is required to prepare a report to the Authority's Executive (if it relates to executive functions), or in all other cases to the Authority, with respect to that proposal, decision or omission, and in doing so is required to consult so far as practicable with the Authority's Head of Paid Service and their Chief Finance Officer.

Conclusion

Neither the Monitoring Officer nor the Chief Finance Officer has had occasion to use their statutory powers of intervention in 2021/22.

SUPPORTING PAPER 6

OTHER SOURCES OF ASSURANCE – MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION A SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEES

We have effective processes in place. We have four Overview & Scrutiny Committees, the responsibilities of which reflect our focus on key outcomes. We make sure Cabinet Members are held accountable for their actions and we give members an opportunity to assess the impact of the Council's work in their local area. We will continue to develop these initiatives. An annual report is produced each July and submitted to Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee and then Full Council. The report for 2021/22 was considered at the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs/Vice Chairs Forum on 6 June 2022 and subsequently signed off by the Chairman of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny committee and submitted to Full Council on 21 July 2022. Currently, no significant governance issues have been highlighted to date.

The Integrated Performance Report is produced quarterly and presented to Cabinet. This provides an overview of progress, performance, and financial position in delivery against the Council's Strategic and Delivery Plans. The latest report to Cabinet in July 2022 provides a summary update on the Council's performance and financial position. Whilst the report identified that significant progress had been made across the organisation during Quarter 1, inflationary pressures across the organisation are having a significant impact. Also, this latest report highlighted that workforce capacity and recruitment, and demand challenges remain, particularly within Health and Care and Families and Communities and that there continues to be areas of financial risk in Adult Social Care and Families and Communities, The forecast financial outturn is for an overspend.

SECTION B CORPORATE DIRECTORS/RISK OWNERS

Assurance Statements are in the process of being re considered as part of the review of our Risk Management processes (see below). In the interim, Statements continue to be completed for the Corporate Governance risk heading. The Assurance Statement is reproduced at **Appendix 2a**.

SECTION C CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT /STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

The arrangements for the production of the Corporate Risk Register are currently being amended. As part of the Audit & Risk Management software upgrade, the risk management module was configured and went live in September 2021. The roll-out of the new system commenced in November 2021 and this will continue throughout 2022/23. This will provide a digital solution for the production of the corporate risk register and replace the current manual process managed via various excel spreadsheets. Nominated risk owners will be responsible for the completion and update of their service

risk register which will feed directly into the strategic risk register on a continuous basis. This development will increase the level and frequency of reporting and scrutiny.

The Audit and Standards Committee has received ongoing updates regarding significant risks during 2021/22 most notably relating to purchase card cash withdrawals; school transport contractors; cyber risks and the SEND service.

The One Staffordshire Information Sharing Agreement protocol is in place to ensure sharing information with partners is done in a transparent, consistent, and compliant way.

SECTION D EXTERNAL REVIEWS/INSPECTIONS

Two further Ofsted inspections have taken place since our Children's Services 'Good' rating back in February 2019 namely:

- (a) Local Area SEND Inspection - In January 2022, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) revisited the area of Staffordshire to decide whether sufficient progress had been made in addressing each of the areas of significant weakness detailed in the initial SEND inspection report letter published on 8 January 2019. The joint inspection concluded that sufficient progress had been made in addressing six of the eight significant weaknesses identified at the initial inspection. However, further improvement was required relating to (i) improving co-production, particularly with parents; and (ii) improving the quality of EHC Plans. Consequently, an Accelerated Progress Plan (APP) has been developed to demonstrate capability and capacity to deliver the required improvements. Delivery of the APP is overseen by the SEND and Inclusion Partnership Group and is subject of 6 monthly monitoring and review meetings accompanied by ongoing challenge and support from the national SEND and NHS England Advisers; and
- (b) Children's Services Focused Visit - In May 2022, a focused visit was undertaken of Staffordshire's Children's Services which looked at our arrangements for children subject to child in need and child protection planning. The inspection confirmed that assessments and plans were mostly effective in improving outcomes for children and that Leaders have led the workforce effectively through a structural transformation of services, with a focus on consistent relationships between social workers and children. Four areas for improvement were identified relating to (i) the quality of case supervision records; (ii) timely recording; (iii) the effectiveness of the audit process, to improve outcomes for children; and

(iv) the need to ensure that accurate performance data is used effectively, to improve social work practice.

Previously, the External Auditor has qualified the Council's financial accounts 2019/20 value for money opinion on an 'except for basis' in regard to the SEND Written Statement of Actions. An unqualified value for money conclusion has been issued by the External Auditor for 2020/21 albeit it is currently in draft form.

During 2021/22, a number of reports from Internal Audit (both 20/21 & 21/22 audits) have been reviewed by the Audit & Standards Committee in relation to the SEND service. In order to obtain assurance that the recommendations have been fully implemented, Members have received regular updates regarding the progress of their implementation from the Assistant Director for Education Strategy and Improvement. Remaining actions outstanding have been incorporated into the APP which will be reported to the Audit & Standards Committee in due course.

As set out in the 2019-20 Annual Performance Review Guidance (November 2019), following the Annual Performance Review meeting, officials in the Cities and Local Growth Unit undertook a review to look at the performance of each LEP across the three themes: governance, delivery, and strategic impact. The outcome for each theme has been confirmed as follows: Governance: - Good, Delivery: - Good and Strategic Impact: - Requirements Met. This exercise has not been repeated by the Cities and Local Growth Unit in 2021/22. No governance issues have been raised as part of the SSLEP Annual Report 2021-22.

During 2021/22, Internal Audit have undertaken their own annual review of the SSLEP's governance arrangements for compliance against the National Local Growth Assurance Framework and a substantial assurance opinion was awarded. In addition, Internal Audit have also undertaken a review regarding the usage of the Core Funding Grant for the SSLEP and did not identify any significant weaknesses.

SECTION E STANDARDS / OMBUDSMAN REPORTS

Our Audit and Standards Committee received an Annual Report in July 2021 (covering the period October 2020 to May 2021) on the management of elected member related complaints. No significant matters were identified. A further report by the Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services was presented to the Audit & Standards Committee on 5th July 2022 covering the period June 2021 to June 2022. 11 complaints were received and concluded. For this reporting period there was no underlying theme to the nature of complaints other than the fact that many relate to one to one dealings which a member has had with a constituent. It was noted that previously common themes, including the use of social media, did not feature

highly in the latest annual report. For all 11 complaints, it was concluded that there was no breach of the Code of Conduct.

The LGSCO Annual Review Letter for 2021 was received on 21 July 2021 and there were no major matters from a Formal Report perspective but reference to undertaking remedies in a timely manner was highlighted. The latest LGSCO Annual Review Letter for 2022 was received by the Council on 20th July 2022 and was considered by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 25th October 2022. Like previous years, comment has been made again relating to the failure to complete remedies within agreed timescales. In addition, a comment has also been made relating to the Council's late responses to Ombudsman investigation enquiries. In response, it should be noted that there may be circumstances where individuals fail to respond to the Council to facilitate a timely response. In relation to the Council's LGSCO complaint statistics, of the 115 decisions (complaints) by the Ombudsman, less than half (40%) progressed to a detailed investigation. Of these detailed investigations (46 cases) carried out for the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022, 67% of these decisions were upheld which is lower (better) than the national average of 71%. Furthermore, in all cases, the LGSCO were satisfied the Council had successfully implemented their recommendations.

Several whistleblowing issues have been considered by the Monitoring Officer (3 in 2021/22 and 2 subsequent, to the production of the AGS) and where appropriate are considered by the Corporate Governance Working Group in year.

During 2021/22, internal audit reviews of both Subject Access Requests and the Freedom of Information process including the Public Interest Test Arrangements were carried out and positive assurance given to both areas of operation.

In December 2021, eight Members of the Audit & Standards Committee were invited to form a Members-led working group to review and make recommendations to full Council, on the main body of the County Council's Constitution to better reflect current needs and practices. The working group met in January 2022 and the outcome of their review was reported back to the Audit & Standards Committee in February 2022. Various amendments to the Council's Constitution were considered and recommended which were subsequently approved by Full Council at its meeting held on 17th March 2022.

Following the completion of the above review in early 2022, focus then turned to improving awareness and understanding of the Scheme of Delegation (SoD) as well as to address audit recommendations previously made relating to the SoD. The review of the SoD commenced in April 2022 and was completed in June 2022. The outcome of this review was to (i) transfer the sub-Scheme of Delegation to the dedicated Decision-Making pages on Staff Space (Intranet); (ii) produce a new 'single source' Scheme of Delegations; and (iii) introduce a new easy to follow process and proforma with a clearly defined pathway for changes / additions to the SoD.

SECTION F – CONTINUED COVID 19 RESPONSE

The Local Code of Corporate Governance was reviewed in 2021 and 2022 in accordance with the normal timescales and was endorsed by the Corporate Governance Working Group.

In March 2020 the Country experienced a worldwide pandemic from the Coronavirus which created significant challenges for the County Council. As a result, a number of changes were made to the governance arrangements supporting the decision-making process which have now come to an end.

The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus)(Amendment) Regulations 2020 remained in force for the production of the 2019/20 financial accounts only which extended the reporting deadline to of the accounts to 30th November 2020.

The Local Authorities & Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) Flexibility of Local Authority & Police and Crime Panel Meetings (England & Wales) Regulations 2020 expired on 6th May 2021 and were not capable of being extended. Since then, Committee meetings with voting members of the Council have reverted to taking place in a “physical” format.

In addition, the delegation of authority to issue Directions under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 3) Regulations 2020 which had been approved by Cabinet at its 19th August 2020 meeting and which had been extended several times, was revoked on 24th February 2022.

The only continued impact of the Coronavirus is on the governance arrangements for School Admission Appeals. In April 2020, temporary regulations came into force, to give admission authorities, local authorities and appeal panels some additional flexibility when dealing with appeals during the COVID-19 pandemic. The temporary regulations known as the School Admissions (England) (Coronavirus) (Appeals Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations came into force on 24th April 2020 have since been extended until 30th September 2022.

Throughout 2021/22, Cabinet received and considered regular updates from the COVID-19 Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board.

There has been no reduction in the scope of the work of Internal Audit during 2021/22 and therefore sufficient work has been performed to support the production of the Head of Audit annual opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control.

As previously reported, 2020/21 was a shadow year for the implementation of the CIPFA Financial Management Code and a high-level self-assessment review was performed during 2020/21 to assess the extent to which the Council's financial management arrangements complied with the FM Code. This review confirmed that whilst there was a high level of conformance with requirements, an action plan was prepared which identified 3 areas for improvement namely:

- Developing standard option appraisal documentation for use in business cases
- SLT needing to monitor the elements on the balance sheet which are a risk to financial sustainability
- The need to carry out a credible financial resilience assessment.

The above improvements have been implemented during 2021/22, as appropriate and there is full compliance with the Code. Compliance will continue to be monitored and updated as required.

During 2021/22, the Internal Audit Service has continued to support the Council's response to the COVID 19 pandemic, undertaking various grant verification exercises relating to infection control grant funding, COVID 19 workforce grant funding and the coronavirus schools fund (exceptional costs) grant funding to name but a few to ensure that COVID 19 funding had been spent by third parties as intended. Other specific audit work connected to the COVID 19 pandemic included the new contact tracing system and the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) programme which was conducted during the 2021/22 year.

In addition to the above, other additional COVID 19 work has been undertaken by Internal Audit (reported in 2021/22) as follows:

- In 2020/21, the Internal Audit Team was requested to provide assurance that decisions made regarding the use of additional funding provided in 2020/21 from Central Government, to deal with the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic were appropriate, transparent and in-line with the Council's corporate decision - making processes.

Overall, testing and review of key documentation confirmed that decision making regarding the use of funding was compliant with SCC corporate decision-making processes. Decisions, in general, were well documented and services ensured that SLT and Cabinet were kept updated regarding various COVID 19 activities. The Assistant County Treasurer & Deputy S.151 officer received weekly updates regarding spend of COVID 19 monies and these were reported regularly to the MHCLG.

Regarding the adequacy of records and audit trails maintained relating to decisions regarding funding, based upon testing, Internal Audit awarded a '*substantial assurance*' over the systems in place to record decision making. However, testing did identify seven decisions where improvements could be made.

In relation to the monitoring and reporting arrangements, our review confirmed that there was sufficient scrutiny of COVID 19 grant expenditure during 2020/21 via SLT, Cabinet and MHCLG reporting.

- Following on from the above, in 2021/22, two further audit reviews were requested by senior management and carried out in-year, namely:
 1. Delivering Good Governance – Corporate Decision Making Arrangements; and
 2. COVID 19 – Procurement Activities.

In respect of the Delivering Good Governance – Corporate Decision Making Arrangements audit review, the purpose of this audit was to review compliance with the Council's corporate decision-making arrangements. The audit reviewed both Key Decisions taken by Cabinet and Delegated Decisions taken by Cabinet Members and Executive Officers. In addition, the audit reviewed processes in place for the appropriate completion of Community Impact Assessments (CIAs). Internal Audit's testing confirmed for a sample of Key Decisions, Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions and Executive Officer Delegated Decisions that all had been taken in full compliance with the Council's corporate decision making arrangements and that the decisions made had been sufficiently recorded.

As a result, a '*substantial*' assurance opinion was also awarded in relation to the system and application of controls.

- Following Internal Audit's work on the decision making arrangements for the use of COVID grant monies in 2020/21, a further exercise was undertaken in 2021/22 to review the procurement activities conducted in relation to COVID 19 expenditure. Overall, audit testing and a review of key documentation has confirmed that the procurement approach for the expenditure sampled was reasonable and that where a call off from an existing contract or a direct award exception to Procurement Regulations had been obtained, compliance with the required processes were confirmed. However, due to the urgency with which decisions had to be made, it has been acknowledged that value for money may not have been achieved in all instances.

Overall, an '*adequate*' assurance opinion was awarded in relation to Covid 19 procurement activities including PPE stock management and lessons learnt. However, some improvements were required and recommendations were made relating to:

- The transparency of the contact award decisions being made;
- The transparency around the recording of conflicts of interest prior to a procurement;
- The need to involve the Procurement Team/Legal Services early in the procurement process;

- The need to improve processes where an exception to the Procurement Regulations was required i.e. undertake the appropriate finance/insurance checks and the need to ensure that exceptions are approved by an appropriate officer.

Conclusions

Section A

- **An effective system of scrutiny is in place.**

Section B

- **Our system of controls assurance is currently being reviewed and updated.**

Section C

- **The overall arrangements for the production and updating of the Corporate Risk Register changed wef 1st October 2021 and the new arrangements are currently being implemented and embedded.**

Section D

- **Our Children's Services are rated 'Good' by Ofsted (2019).**
- **The revisit of the local area SEND services by Ofsted and CQC in January 2022 concluded that sufficient progress had been made in addressing six of the eight significant weaknesses identified during the initial inspection in January 2019.**
- **An accelerated progress Plan (APP) has been developed to deliver the remaining improvements which is overseen by the SEND and Inclusion Partnership Group and subject to six-monthly monitoring and review meetings.**
- **The Children's Services Focused Visit in May 2022 gave positive feedback and concluded that assessments and plans were mostly effective in improving outcomes for children and that Leaders have led the workforce effectively through a structural transformation of services. Four areas for improvement were, however, identified which are being taken forward by the Service**
- **As part of the final accounts process for 2020/21 the External Auditor has issued an unqualified opinion albeit it in draft form.**

Section E

- **The Audit and Standards Committee received the Annual Reports on the management of elected member related complaints. No major issues reported.**
- **A few whistleblowing issues (3 related to 2021/22 and 2 have subsequently been received in 2022/23) have been /are being considered by the Monitoring Officer and will be considered by the Corporate Governance Working Group in due course, where appropriate.**

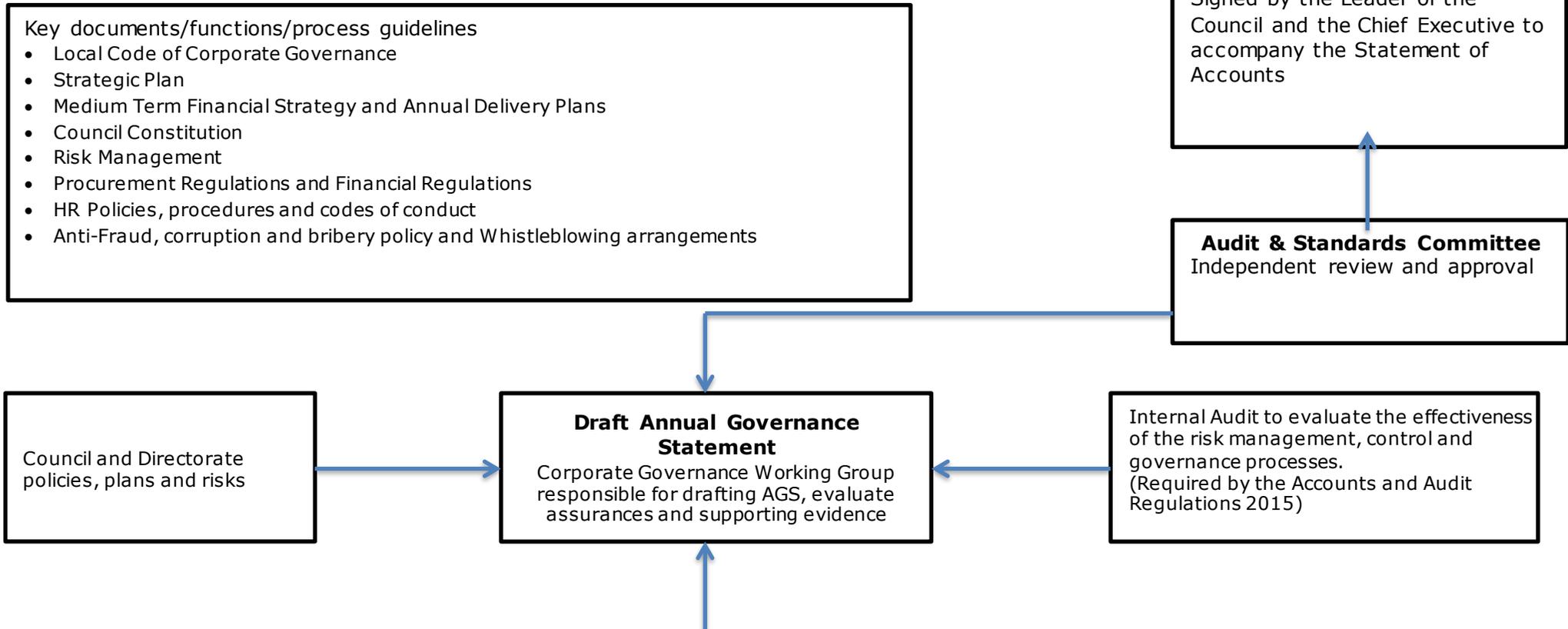
- **The 2021/22 Information Governance Annual Report provided assurance regarding compliance with the Data protection Act 2018 and GDPR Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and the Local Government Transparency Code 2014. This report was presented to the Audit & Standards Committee in April 2022.**
- **The latest LGSCO Annual review letter 2022 again highlighted the need to ensure that remedies are completed within the required timescales and also raised concern over late responses to investigation enquiries.**

Section F

- **Only one governance change remains as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and this expires at the end of September 2022.**
- **There were no limitations in scope of the Head of Internal Audit annual opinion and the Code of Corporate Governance was refreshed in accordance with the standard timetable.**
- **Additional sources of assurance were received from Internal Audit regarding the decision-making process for COVID 19 related monies and COVID 19 procurement activities as well as for the general corporate decision making arrangements of the Council.**
- **Internal Audit has continued to support the Council's response to the COVID 19 pandemic during 2021/22, undertaking various grant verification exercises and other assurance reviews relating to the Council's COVID 19 response and recovery activities.**

THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT - FRAMEWORK

APPENDIX 1



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| Provision of ongoing assurance on adequacy and effectiveness of controls over key risks | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Performance Management and Data Quality | External Inspections – e.g. Ofsted, Care Quality Commission) | Financial Control Assurance (S151 Officer) | Legal and Regulatory Assurance (Monitoring Officer) | Members’ Assurance | Internal Audit | External Audit | Risk Management | Assurances by Directors/Risk Owners |

APPENDIX 2

THE AGS – ASSURANCE GATHERING PROCESS

Stage 1 – Establish principal statutory obligations and organisational objectives

The Strategic Plan is underpinned by three interconnected priority outcomes providing a simple and clear focus.

The people of Staffordshire will:

- Have access more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth
- Be healthier and more independent for longer
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community

The associated Delivery Plan defines a set of Commissioning Priorities which are consistent with these outcomes.

Stage 2 – Identify principal risks to achieving Commissioning Priorities

The Corporate Risk Register currently comprises 14 risk categories. As part of the new risk management system, risks will be cross-referenced to our Strategic Plan.

Stage 3 - Identify and evaluate key controls to manage principal risks

The Corporate Risk Register currently defines key controls (documents and processes) for each specific risk area. Each control is evaluated. Controls will be crossed reference to the Audit Universe and evaluated through that process to ensure that they are effective.

Stage 4 – Obtain assurances on effectiveness of key controls

As defined within Appendix 1 to this report and Section 11 of the AGS.

Stage 5 – Evaluate assurances and identify gaps in control / assurances

As defined within Appendix 3 to this report and Section 11 of the AGS.

Stage 6 – Action Plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system of corporate governance

As defined within the Code of Corporate Governance Action Plans and Section 14 of the AGS.

Stage 7 – Annual Governance Statement

As considered by the Corporate Governance Working Group.

Stage 8 – Report to Members

As considered by the Audit and Standards Committee.

APPENDIX 2A

EXAMPLE OF A CONTROLS ASSURANCE STATEMENT

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Risk Details

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Risk Description | Failure to maintain effective corporate governance arrangements resulting in a breakdown in internal controls, the non-achievement of objectives and loss of reputation |
| Risk Owner | Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services – John Tradewell |
| Associated Risk Owners | Corporate Governance Working Group |
| Sources of Assurance | Risk Owner and Associated Risk Owners, plus Internal and External Audit |

Key Controls and Processes

| | | |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Annual Governance Statement | Customer Feedback Process | Members Code of Conduct |
| Business Continuity Framework | Delegations to/from Directors & Sub Schemes of Delegation | Officers Code of Conduct |
| Code of Corporate Governance | Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy including the Integrity Policy Statement | Record of Decisions |
| Committees (Overview & Scrutiny /Audit and Standards) | Member/Officer Relations | Risk Management Policy Statement |
| Constitution | Member Training | Schedule of Council Meetings |
| Corporate Risk Register | Members Allowances Scheme | Whistle Blowing Policy |

Controls Assurance**

| Key Control | Evidence of Control | Sources of Assurance (if available) | Control Rating |
|-------------------------------|---|--|----------------|
| Annual Governance Statement | Annual Governance Statement | Corporate Governance Working Group Audit and Standards Committee Review Monitoring Officer County Treasurer Head of Paid Service | 3 |
| Business Continuity Framework | Staffordshire Prepared Website Business Continuity Website | Testing of Business Continuity Plans Corporate Governance Working Group Staffordshire Civil Contingencies Unit | 2 |

| Key Control | Evidence of Control | Sources of Assurance (if available) | Control Rating |
|------------------------------|--|---|-------------------|
| | <p>SCC Shared drive for Civil Contingencies</p> <p>Defined Work Programme approved</p> | <p>Staffordshire Resilience Forum</p> <p>Exercise Aurora</p> | |
| Code of Corporate Governance | <p>Code of Corporate Governance</p> <p>Annual Action Plan</p> <p>Internal Audit Review in 19/20 resulting in Substantial Assurance</p> | <p>Audit and Standards Committee Assessment</p> <p>Corporate Governance Working Group</p> <p>Monitoring Officer</p> <p>County Treasurer</p> <p>Head of Paid Service</p> | 3 |
| Committees | <p>Overview & Scrutiny Committees</p> <p>Audit and Standards Committee</p> | <p><u>Scrutiny (Select) Committee</u></p> <p>Examples of effective scrutiny include Integration and the work on the Budget</p> <p><u>Audit and Standards Committee</u></p> <p>Delivery of training</p> <p>Review of the effectiveness of the Audit & Standards Committee periodically undertaken with each Committee refresh.</p> | <p>3</p> <p>3</p> |
| Constitution | Constitution | <p>Reviews overseen by the Audit and Standards Committee</p> <p>Corporate Services resource</p> <p>Monitoring Officer</p> | 2 |
| Corporate Risk Register | Corporate Risk Register | <p>Audit and Standards Committee -</p> <p>Corporate Risk Register – Senior Leadership Team</p> <p>Corporate Governance Working Group</p> <p>Risk Management Software</p> | 2 |

| Key Control | Evidence of Control | Sources of Assurance (if available) | Control Rating |
|-------------------------------|--|--|----------------|
| Customer Feedback Process | <u>See Risk Category 1</u> | <u>See Risk Category 1</u> | |
| Delegations to/from Directors | Delegations to Directors Delegations from Directors Corporate Governance Action Plan | Delegations to Directors Review of Delegations to Directors Review of sub delegation schemes | 2 |
| Integrity Policy Statement | Integrity Policy | Development of E-Learning Fraud Awareness Tool Anti -Fraud, Bribery & Corruption Policy | 2 |
| Member / Officer Relations | Member / Officer Relations | Member/Officer protocol Strategic Delivery Managers 'Buddy' support system with nominated Democratic Services officers Monitoring Officer | 3 |
| Member Training | Member Training | Municipal Journal Councillor Development Achievement Award (Former Winners) Member Induction Process Regular Training Events | 3 |
| Members Allowances Scheme | Members Allowances Scheme | Internal Audit Report Independent Remuneration Panel | 3 |
| Members Code of Conduct | Members Code of Conduct | Overseen by Audit and Standards Committee Member investigations by Audit and Standards Committee – where appropriate Member Training Monitoring Officer | 3 |
| Officers Code of Conduct | Officers' Code of Conduct | Annual Declaration of Interests Confidentiality Letters Procurement – declaration forms | 2 |

| Key Control | Evidence of Control | Sources of Assurance (if available) | Control Rating |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|
| Record of Decisions | Record of Decisions | Corporate Services resource | 3 |
| Risk Management Policy Statement | Risk Management Policy Statement | Corporate Risk Management Leads Corporate Governance Working Group Embedding of risk management in Transformation process | 1 (By virtue of need to revise and update the Statement and accountabilities) |
| Schedule of Council Meetings | Schedule of Council Meetings | Corporate Services resource | 3 |
| Whistle Blowing Policy | Whistle Blowing Policy | Regular review by CGWG | 2 |

****Key**

| | |
|--|--|
| Key Control | Key documents and process identified within a specific risk category that are in place or required to be put in place in order to contain the risk to an acceptable level. |
| Evidence of Control | Name of a document or a process / procedure that governs the identified control. |
| Sources of Assurance (if available) | E.g. Internal / External Audit inspections, Audit & Standards Committee, Cabinet, Scrutiny Panels, Internal Reviews, Control Self-assessment. |
| Control Rating | <p>1 (Limited) – The stated control requires major revision and/or there is little evidence of the effectiveness of the control framework.</p> <p>2 (Adequate) – The stated control requires only minor revision and/or the effectiveness of the control framework can be partly evidenced by reference to Sources of Assurance.</p> <p>3 (Substantial) – The stated control has been in place all year and does not require revision. The effectiveness of the control framework can be substantially evidenced by reference to Sources of Assurance.</p> |

Annual Governance Statement

"Following consultation (where appropriate with Directorates) in terms of Control Rating, I am satisfied that, in relation to the Corporate Governance Strategic Risk Category, the stated level of compliance against required standards gives a true and fair view of the control frameworks in place. Where any Control Rating is assessed as "Limited" an appropriate Action Plan will be defined and implemented during 2022/23."



John Tradewell
Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services
Date: 26th October 2022

APPENDIX 3

The AGS – SOURCES OF ASSESSMENT - COVERAGE

| Risk Ref | Risk Category | Risk | Scrutiny | Internal Audit | External Agencies | Director / Risk Owner | Statutory Officers |
|-----------------|--|---|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Planning and Performance | Failure to establish and communicate clear plans and objectives and monitor performance | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 2 | Service Delivery | Failure to maintain day to day service provision | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 3 | Corporate Governance | Failure to maintain effective corporate governance arrangements | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 4 | Human Resources | Failure to resource safely, effectively and efficiently – manage the implications of a reducing headcount – handle poor performance | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 5 | Organisational Development | Failure to ensure the workforce has the appropriate knowledge and skill set | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| 6 | Health and Safety | Failure to protect staff / third parties from injury | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 7 | Procurement | Failure of ensure the procurement process provides best value | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| 8 | Law and Democracy and Information Governance | Failure to comply with key legislation or legal requirements | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

| | | | | | | | |
|------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9/10 | Financial Management | Failure to provide sufficient finance to enable the Council to meet its objectives and ensure income and expenditure is contained within the budget and is properly accounted for | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| 11 | Change Management | Failure to manage corporate projects and organisational change | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 12 | Information Management | Failure to transform services throughout Staffordshire by the innovative use of ICT | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 13 | Property | Failure to provide, protect and maintain property that will deliver a suitable and safe working environment for staff and visitors | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| 14 | Business Continuity | Failure to maintain service delivery in the event of major disruption | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

Notes:

- (1) Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, controls and governance processes (UK

Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and CIPFA Local Government Application Note).

- (2) External audit evaluate significant financial systems, and the associated internal financial controls, for the purpose of giving an opinion on the financial statements. Where external audit identify any weaknesses in such systems, external audit will draw them to the attention of the Council, but external audit cannot be expected to identify all weaknesses that exist. External audit are not responsible for forming an opinion on the adequacy of systems of internal control and were appointed by Public Sector Auditor Appointments (PSAA).

Audit and Standards Committee - Tuesday 13 December 2022

2021/22 Statement of Accounts

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- a. Members approve the 2021/22 Statement of Accounts as attached to this report.
- b. Members delegate authority to the County Treasurer in consultation with the Chairman to make any final amendments to the accounts as deemed necessary by the external auditors.

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of the County Treasurer

Report

Background

Summary

1. The 2021/2022 Statement of Accounts is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report and covers the County Council and Staffordshire Pension Fund. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (Code of Practice).

The Code of Practice is updated annually and for 2021/2022 there were no major changes.

Revenue Outturn

2. Services spent £1.381 million less than the budget for their day-to-day activities, this is 0.3% less than the revised budget of £505.0 million. This demonstrates our excellent financial management and good budgetary controls which have allowed spending to be so close to budget, a feature of a well-run council. The Contingency budget was only partially spent, leaving a total underspend of £3.984 million which has been

contributed to an earmarked reserve to be spent on inflationary pressures in 2022/2023.

3. The final outturn is very similar to the forecasts at the third and fourth quarters, when it became clear that the services with the greatest pressures were Children's Services and SEND Transport. There were also continuing costs of Covid during the year, and these have been funded from the specific grants received.
4. The Health and Care Directorate has seen the majority of the Covid-19 related financial impact and were mostly a continuation from 2020/2021, with the addition of assisting care providers with managing outbreaks. Due to reductions in demand as a result of the pandemic, the service made savings on its placements budgets. The service continues to manage its finances as part of the 5-year MTFS through careful use of reserves although there appears a very significant risk of unfunded costs of adult social care reform in future years. Overall, the Directorate has achieved a small underspend of £0.477 million in 2021/2022.
5. Children's Services has experienced an increase in the numbers of children in our care and also continued to incur costs related to Covid. Setting aside the financial impacts of Covid, which were funded from the general grant allocation, the service overspent by £1.463 million. During 2021/2022 the Families and Communities transformation programme was finalised, and the new design implemented from the end of October as planned. The redesign, which is informed by best practice, seeks to change both the practice and culture across the children's system and it will enable a whole system approach, bringing together children's social care, SEND and Inclusion, the Place Based Approach and commissioning.
6. In addition, there are significant transport costs in Education Services which has resulted in an overspend and this continues to be an area of pressure going forward. Additional money has been included in the 2022/2023 budget for this service area, in recognition of the pressures it faces.
7. In the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Directorate, the service achieved an overall small underspend of £0.782 million, mostly relating to the climate change budget and additional income from Farms and Enterprise Centres.
8. Corporate Services has achieved a small underspend by the end of the year as a result of savings from vacant posts and additional income for Registrars, as people booked weddings which had been cancelled during the lockdowns.

9. The centrally controlled budgets underspent by £2.6 million at the end of the year, most of this relates to the unspent Contingency budget. The overall underspend will be contributed into earmarked reserves and set aside to meet inflationary pressures in 2022/2023.

Capital Outturn

10. In 2021/2022, our final capital spend was £111.4 million, compared to £134.4 million in 2020/2021. This investment was funded from a variety of sources including grants from the Government totalling £51.1 million and borrowing of £14.5 million.
11. The capital spend of £111.4 million includes £5.1 million of revenue transformational spend which has been capitalised and funded from capital receipts generated in year, in accordance with the Capitalisation Direction issued by the Secretary of State. The nature of this expenditure is revenue but will generate ongoing revenue cost reductions, this includes salary costs of staff supporting transformational activities and redundancy costs.
12. Despite the national lockdowns and restrictions required to deal with the pandemic, significant progress has still been made on a number of capital projects. Our achievements during the year include the following:
 - a. Work is underway on two new schools, a primary school at Fradley Park and a first school at Park Farms.
 - b. Work on the Stafford Western Access Route has been completed.
 - c. The continued roll out of superfast broadband to rural and isolated communities.
 - d. Eastgate street regeneration project has made significant progress with the acquisition of the old County Courts building.
 - e. Economic development to extend the i54 Strategic Employment Site is continuing.
 - f. Continued work to maintain the County's rural spaces and footpaths despite the increased demands lockdown created.
 - g. ICT have successfully completed the Data Centre Network Refresh and made good progress on the Compute refresh.
 - h. Continue the process of rationalising farm assets and initiate a programme of reinvestment in existing stock.
 - i. In addition, continue the wider rationalisation of SCC property and its use in order to support MTFS decisions.

Interpretation and comment on the main financial information

13. The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement shows the amount that services have cost to provide, and the amount of income received to fund them. A deficit on this statement means that the cost of services has not been covered by income and may need to be funded by taxpayers in future years. However, not all the charges in this statement are actual cash and these notional charges are required by the Accounting Code of Practice, these are shown in detail in Note 4. These notional charges mean that the figures in this statement are different from the final outturn figures described above. The outturn shows the cash position of services and how their spending compared with their budgets. This statement is showing a surplus on the provision of services of £98.2 million which is an increase from the previous year's surplus of £66.1 million. The net cost of services has reduced to £488.6 million in 2021/2022 from £524.4 million in 2020/2021. This reflects the reduction in anticipated demand in Health and Care and the increased demand in Children's Services, the net costs of these directorates are reflective of this situation. In addition, expenditure on insurance has reduced as schools are now part of the Risk Protection Arrangement run by the Department for Education.
14. The Balance Sheet shows the amount held in reserves, both usable and unusable, as well as the liabilities that will need to be paid in future years. The total of assets less liabilities in 2021/2022 is £990.6 million, an increase from 2020/2021 which was £403.5 million. The difference is £587.1 million and can be explained by various changes but the largest movement is in the pensions liability which has reduced by £429.9 million. It should be noted that this liability is reviewed and amended each year by the actuary who analyses a range of variables before reaching his conclusion. The liability is an estimate of the value of all the pensions that will need to be paid in the future, compared with projections of the Pension Fund's value. However, many factors will change between now and when the pensions are actually paid.
15. Other smaller movements include an increase in cash and short-term investments held, plus a reduction in debtors. These changes means there is more cash held on 31st March 2022 than the previous year, a fact which is also shown in the cashflow statement. Liabilities relating to the PFI schemes and long-term borrowing have reduced in line with expectations.

Reserves and Balances

16. There are two types of reserves, those that are cash-backed and hold money set aside for specific purposes and those which are notional and exist for accounting purposes. The cash-backed reserves are called

usable reserves while those which are for accounting purposes only are called unusable.

17. The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the final balances of the County Council's general fund and other reserves, and this statement shows the money available to support services in future years. The general fund balance is £47.3 million and other earmarked reserves are £328.7 million, of which £28.8 million relates to schools and cannot be spent on other services and £40.8 million is unspent revenue grants. This leaves an amount of £259.1 million which is earmarked for specific projects and risks. Overall, general balances have remained static during 2021/2022, which is in line with the MTFs and the intention to retain balances to mitigate the risks inherent in-service budgets.

Going Concern Assessment

18. In setting the County Council's budget for 2022/2023, it was important to maintain a watching brief on the impacts of Covid, and although no further allocations of general grant have been made, some residual costs remain. The refresh of our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council on 10th February 2022. This included a collection fund deficit for business rates which was broadly offset by a surplus on council tax, the net impact being a surplus of £120,000.
19. Since the budget was set, the war in Ukraine has had an impact on finances across the world, with inflationary pressures being felt in all services. The Second Quarter report to Cabinet requested additional funding from reserves for £5m of inflationary pressures relating to Highways and Transport in particular.
20. In setting the budget, the risk assessment of general balances required £54m to meet all estimate high and medium risks. General balances were £47.3m as of 31st March 2022 and the budget for 2022/2023 includes a contribution of £5m to bring them closer to the amount needed in the risk assessment. This will ensure that we remain financially resilient and maintain a balances budget in line with our statutory duties.
21. The Council is also closely monitoring its cashflow position to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to meet its financial obligations. The decision has been taken to hold cash in short-term investments so that the Council has the ability to respond rapidly to any situation in an uncertain and changing environment.

22. Whilst there is a high degree of inherent uncertainty relating to future funding levels, However, the Council has resilience in terms of budgetary planning, proven financial management arrangements, available reserves, and cash flow to March 2023 and that it is appropriate to use the going concern basis in the preparation of the 2021/2022 financial statements.

Pension Fund

23. The Pension Fund performed well and increased in value in 2021/2022. The Fund achieved a return of 12.2% over the year, generated principally by the Fund's equity investments, despite high inflation and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 affecting the global economy. The Fund was valued at £6,832.7 million on 31 March 2022.

Format of the Statement of Accounts

24. We have to produce the accounts in line with a range of regulations and reporting standards, but it is important that most people can understand them. In this report I have tried to explain what I believe are the main issues in a way that I hope is understandable. Although I have kept to the relevant regulations and reporting standards, I am always looking for ways to improve the content and format of the Statement of Accounts. To help me do this, I would appreciate your comments on how we could improve the accounts and other information in future.
25. We can also provide this Statement of Accounts in other formats, such as in large print, in Braille, or in other languages. To ask us for the Statement of Accounts in other formats, please call 01785 276065.
26. The full statement and the summary version will also be available on our website (www.staffordshire.gov.uk).

Equalities Implications

None

Legal Implications

None

Resource and Value for Money Implications

None

Risk Implications

None

Climate Change Implications

None

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Rob Salmon – **County Treasurer**

Report Author: Rachel Spain
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Draft
Statement of Accounts
for
2021/2022

This report is available in other formats such as in large print and Braille, or you can get it in other languages. If you need a copy of this report in another format or language, phone us on 01785 276065.

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Introduction

This Statement of Accounts gives you an overall impression of our finances.

Accounting rules and practices are complex and difficult to understand, and there are some technical words and terms that we have to use. We have tried to make this statement as clear and understandable as possible in the circumstances. To help you, at the back of this document, we have provided a glossary to explain some of the financial and accounting terms we have had to use.

The Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022 was available for inspection from 1 August to 12 September 2022. The formal audit of our accounts began on 14 November 2022, and we received an unqualified opinion on the accounts on X. This means that, in the auditors' opinion, our accounts presented a true and fair view of our financial position.

Our external auditors are Ernst and Young LLP. Their address is:

Ernst & Young LLP
No 1 Colmore Square
Birmingham
B4 6HQ.

We have both revenue and capital spending. Broadly, our comprehensive income and expenditure account relates to income received in the year and spending for items used in the year. Our capital expenditure relates to items we have bought and which will be used for more than one year.

To help you, we have explained the various sections in the Statement of Accounts below.

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

This provides a brief background to the budget for 2021/2022, the final financial position and an assessment of our financial prospects in the future.

Statement of Accounting Policies

This specifies the accounting practices we have used to prepare the accounts. We provide other notes to explain the information we have given. We have prepared the accounts and statements in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). If we have not been able to do this fully, we say so in the accompanying notes. The Code of Practice is updated each year and the new Standards coming into effect in 2021/2022 have not had a material impact on the accounts.

Introduction

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This covers income and spending on all services which are paid for from Council Tax, Revenue Support Grant and Non-Domestic Rates. The spending for each service includes charges made by the various trading organisations we run. This account is a summary of the resources we have created and used in the year.

The Movement in Reserves Statement

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council, accounted for as 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other reserves.

Balance Sheet

This sets out our financial position on 31 March 2022 and includes all our funds apart from the Staffordshire Pension Fund.

Cash Flow Statement

This statement summarises the cash that has been paid to us and which we have paid to other organisations.

Staffordshire Pension Fund

We run the Staffordshire Pension Fund. We have included the accounts of the pension fund in our statement of accounts. As a result, the independent auditors' report and the statement of responsibilities cover both our accounts and the Pension Fund accounts. You can find additional information relating to the Pension Fund on its own website at www.staffspf.org.uk

Glossary

Wherever possible we have tried not to use technical terminology. We have provided a glossary which aims to simplify and explain this terminology if we have used it.

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

Introduction

I am pleased to introduce our statement of accounts for 2021/2022.

Staffordshire County Council covers an area of around 1,047 square miles, with a population of around 871,000, comprising 62 electoral divisions. It is bordered by Shropshire to the west, Derbyshire and Leicestershire to the east, Stoke on Trent to the north, Cheshire to the northwest, Warwickshire to the southeast and the West Midlands County and Worcester to the south. It is a significant rural county, with urban centres and most people living in one of the eight largest towns: Lichfield, Stafford, Burton upon Trent, Cannock, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Rugeley, Leek and Tamworth. In the north and the south, the county is hilly with wild moorlands, while in the middle regions the landscape is low and undulating. Staffordshire is home to the highest village in Britain, Flash, which stands at 1519 ft above sea level. It has 80 square miles of national park and 27 square miles of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty including Cannock Chase. It has 160 conservation areas and over 5,000 listed buildings. There are a number of stately homes in the county, including Shugborough Estate, Weston Park and Trentham Gardens along with both Sudbury Hall and Himley Hall and Park.

The Council forms the upper tier of local government in Staffordshire, providing a wide range of services such as social care, education, planning, libraries, waste management and trading standards. There are eight District and Borough Councils and 195 parish and town councils providing a further range of services to businesses and residents.

The County Council's Vision

This year we have continued to manage our finances carefully, investing across the county to help create more jobs for Staffordshire people, providing care and support for people who need our help, and keeping council tax low to protect local taxpayers.

Our priorities last year reflected both county-wide and national issues. The three priority outcomes, which are clearly connected to ensure that the people of Staffordshire will:

- Be able to access more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth;
- Be healthier and independent for longer;
- Feel safer, happier and more supported in their community.

In addition to the above, the County Council is committed to ensuring that as a well run council, management and support services are provided in the most effective and efficient manner. Despite the pandemic, the County Council remains ambitious for Staffordshire and will continue working with Government, business and partners to invest in our communities: in new and emerging technologies; in business premises; in transport; in schools and skills programmes; to raise the profile of the county and promote Staffordshire to a national and international audience; and to help create the right conditions for residents and business to strive and succeed.

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

Political and Democratic Structures

At the end of March 2022, the County Council was made up of 62 councillors, controlled by the Conservatives. On 6th May 2021 local elections were held and the membership of the County Council changed, although it remains controlled by the Conservatives with the current political composition as follows:

- Conservative: 56
- Labour: 2
- Labour and Co-operative Party: 2
- Independent: 2

The Council follows the Leader and Cabinet model as its democratic structure, with functions allocated across the full Council itself, Cabinet and other committees. The Council's Constitution explains how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to make sure these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Further details can be found on the Council's website here:

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=624&info=1&bcr=1>

Revenue Budget

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) provides the strategy for our revenue and capital budgets, decisions on council tax, cost reductions and investment plans. We have developed it alongside our Strategic Plan and together they provide the direction and financial framework that we need to deliver our programme of change and to achieve improvements in our services and the way we work.

The County Council approved a revenue budget of £530.3 million on providing services during 2021/2022. This money came from government grants of £35.3 million, council tax of £387.2 million (after adjusting for any surplus or deficit), £106.8 million of business rates and a £1.0m contribution from reserves. Staffordshire has a good track record of generating cost reductions and the five-year MTFS to 2025/2026 includes a total of £25.8 million identified reductions.

In 2016/2017, the government first allowed local authorities to raise additional money from council tax for the costs of adult social care. However, the government has set limits on how much this precept can be increased and in 2021/2022, the limit was 3% for the Adult Social Care precept, which was in addition to the general limit above which a referendum would be required. The County Council increased its council tax by 4.99% in 2021/2022 and this was split into 3% for the Adult Social Care precept and 1.99% for the general precept. Most other local authorities approved similar increases and Staffordshire's council tax rate remained among the lowest of any English County Council in 2021/2022.

The Government had previously announced there would be no further business rates pilots and therefore the County Council instead became part of a business rates pool in this year. The Pool includes all authorities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, that is all District and Borough Councils, the City Council and the Office for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. This means that all income generated from business rates is kept within

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and an agreed distribution methodology shares the additional income between all authorities involved.

When the budget for 2021/2022 was approved by the County Council on 11th February 2021, the country had already been through more than one lockdown and there was a vaccination programme underway to allow hope of a return to normal. The impact of the pandemic on the County Council is reflected in the considerable additional costs we have borne, particularly in Adults' and Children's Social Care, plus other services such as capital projects which have seen an increase in costs due to the safety measures required to work on site. The County Council has assisted the NHS with testing, tracing and contacting people and with the vaccination programme. The council's many cost reduction programmes were also significantly impacted as staff focussed on dealing with the pandemic. In turn, the County Council has received a large number of one-off grants from the Government for specific initiatives ranging from food parcels to outbreak control. The table below shows the allocations of these grants in 2021/2022.

| | £m |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| General Covid Grant Funding | 16.204 |
| Covid Local Support Grant | 2.613 |
| Adult Social Care Infection Control | 7.981 |
| Lateral Flow Testing in Care Homes | 5.632 |
| Workforce Capacity Adult Social Care | 6.820 |
| Clinically Extremely Vulnerable | 1.477 |
| Practical Support for Self-Isolating | 1.405 |
| Additional Restrictions Grant | 1.265 |
| Covid Winter Grant | 1.883 |
| Sales, Fees and Charges Funding | 0.226 |
| Contain Outbreak Management | 4.182 |
| ASC Omicron Support | 0.885 |
| Bus Capacity Work | 0.539 |
| Growth Hub | 0.222 |
| Other Schools Grants | 1.060 |
| Catch Up Premium | 1.258 |
| Covid Recovery Premium | 0.599 |
| Mental Health Support | 0.074 |
| Other | 0.102 |
| Total | 54.427 |

Any unspent grants will be carried forward to be utilised in 2022/2023 as there remain on-going financial impacts of Covid.

Final Outturn

Services spent £1.381 million less than the budget for their day to day activities, this is 0.3% less than the revised budget of £505.0 million. This demonstrates our excellent financial management and good budgetary controls which have allowed spending to be so close to budget, a feature of a well-run council. The Contingency budget was only partially spent,

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

leaving a total underspend of £3.984 million which has been contributed to an earmarked reserve to be spent on inflationary pressures in 2022/2023.

The final outturn is very similar to the forecasts at the third and fourth quarters, when it became clear that the services with the greatest pressures were Children's Services and SEND Transport. There were also continuing costs of Covid during the year and these have been funded from the grants shown in the table above.

The Health and Care Directorate has seen the majority of the Covid-19 related financial impact and were mostly a continuation from 2020/2021, with the addition of assisting care providers with managing outbreaks. Due to reductions in demand as a result of the pandemic, the service made savings on its placements budgets, but these are not expected to continue into 2022/2023 as demand was beginning to increase again. The service continues to manage its finances as part of the 5 year MTFS through careful use of reserves although there appears a very significant risk of unfunded costs of adult social care reform in future years. Overall the Directorate has achieved a small underspend of £0.477 million in 2021/2022.

Children's Services has experienced an increase in the numbers of children in our care and also continued to incur costs related to Covid. Setting aside the financial impacts of Covid, which were funded from the general grant allocation, the service overspent by £1.463 million. During 2021/2022 the Families and Communities transformation programme was finalised, and the new design implemented from the end of October as planned. The redesign, which is informed by best practice, seeks to change both the practice and culture across the children's system and it will enable a whole system approach, bringing together children's social care, SEND and Inclusion, the Place Based Approach and commissioning.

In addition there are significant transport costs in Education Services which has resulted in an overspend and this continues to be an area of pressure going forward. Additional money has been included in the 2022/2023 budget for this service area, in recognition of the pressures it faces.

In the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Directorate, the service achieved an overall small underspend of £0.782 million, mostly relating to the climate change budget and additional income from Farms and Enterprise Centres.

Corporate Services has achieved a small underspend by the end of the year as a result of savings from vacant posts and additional income for Registrars, as people booked weddings which had been cancelled during the lockdowns.

The centrally controlled budgets underspent by £2.6 million at the end of the year, most of this relates to the unspent Contingency budget. The overall underspend will be contributed into earmarked reserves and set aside to meet inflationary pressures in 2022/2023.

Schools

Spending on schools is paid for through a Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from Central Government and both the expenditure and grant income are included in the financial statements. Separate reporting arrangements exist for schools, governing bodies and LEAs. We received £291.5 million in DSG during 2021/2022 and brought forward a deficit of £2.1 million from 2020/2021. We spent a total of £298.1 million meaning that the year end

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

position is a deficit of £8.7 million on the DSG reserve (see note 31 on page 71). This deficit is forecast to increase and is being monitored carefully. After allowing for all spending from reserves including capital investment, overall school reserves have increased by £1.5 million to £28.8 million at the end of the year.

Similar to many other authorities, the SEND High Needs block has overspent by £8.2 million and is the main reason why the balance on the DSG reserve is now a deficit of £8.7 million. Regulations have been issued by the government to ensure that council tax payers do not have to fund any deficit in this reserve.

Capital Programme

In 2021/2022, our final capital spend was £111.4 million, compared to £134.4 million in 2020/2021. This investment was funded from a variety of sources including grants from the Government totalling £51.1 million and borrowing of £14.5 million.

The capital spend of £111.4 million includes £5.1 million of revenue transformational spend which has been capitalised and funded from capital receipts generated in year, in accordance with the Capitalisation Direction issued by the Secretary of State. The nature of this expenditure is revenue but will generate ongoing revenue cost reductions, this includes salary costs of staff supporting transformational activities and redundancy costs.

Despite the national lockdowns and restrictions required to deal with the pandemic, significant progress has still been made on a number of capital projects. The achievements we have made during the year include the following.

- Work is underway on two new schools, a primary school at Fradley Park and a first school at Park Farms;
- Work on the Stafford Western Access Route has been completed;
- The continued roll out of superfast broadband to rural and isolated communities;
- Eastgate street regeneration project has made significant progress with the acquisition of the old County Courts building;
- Economic development to extend the i54 Strategic Employment Site is continuing;
- Continued work to maintain the County's rural spaces and footpaths despite the increased demands lockdown created;
- ICT have successfully completed the Data Centre Network Refresh and made good progress on the Compute refresh;
- Continue the process of rationalising farm assets and initiate a programme of reinvestment in existing stock;
- In addition, continue the wider rationalisation of SCC property and its use in order to support MTFS decisions;

We use borrowing to fund our capital programme to supplement other sources of finance to deliver our ambitions and we monitor our borrowing to ensure it remains affordable. The County Council's Treasury Management Strategy sets out the limits around the borrowing and the indicators we will use to monitor it. Our capital financing requirement reflects the total amount that would need to be financed if the County Council was to cease operating. This requirement at the end of 2021/2022 is £678.4 million. To put this in context, the

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

carrying value of all our long term assets is £1,887.9 million therefore the capital financing requirement is 35.9% of this.

You can get more information on how our services have managed their finances in 2021/2022 in the report to Cabinet on 15 June 2022, 'Final Financial Outturn Report 2021/2022'.

[Final Financial Outturn 2021-22.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

The Financial Statements

There are four financial statements in the accounts; these are the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet and the Cashflow Statement. The format and content of the financial statements is prescribed by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/2022. The purpose of each statement is described below:

| | |
|--|--|
| Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | Shows the financial gains and losses experienced over the year. |
| Movement in Reserves Statement | Sets out the change in the Council's 'net worth' during the year. |
| Balance Sheet | Shows the value of the Council's assets and liabilities at the end of the year along with how they are financed. |
| Cashflow Statement | A summary of movements of cash into and out of the Council over the year. |

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis is Note 9 to the accounts and it provides a link from the outturn described above to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The accounting policies have been reviewed and updated where necessary. The Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022 includes the County Council and the Pension Fund. Although the Council owns shares in Entrust and has a subsidiary, Nexus, the assessment of both these companies has not led to a requirement to include them in Group Accounts. The assessment is updated annually and may change.

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement shows the amount that services have cost to provide and the amount of income received to fund them. A deficit on this statement means that the cost of services has not been covered by income and may need to be funded by taxpayers in future years. However, not all the charges in this statement are actual cash and these notional charges are required by the Accounting Code of Practice, these are shown in detail in Note 4. These notional charges mean that the figures in this statement are different from the final outturn figures described above. The outturn shows the cash position of services and how their spending compared with their budgets. Many of the non-cash transactions required to be shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement relate to the use of assets, the financing of capital expenditure, items relating to retirement benefits and an amount representing the debt owed to or by the Borough and District Councils for the outturn on the collection fund.

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

This statement is showing a surplus on the provision of services of £98.2 million which is an increase from the previous year's surplus of £66.1 million. The net cost of services has reduced to £488.6 million in 2021/2022 from £524.4 million in 2020/2021. This reflects the reduction in anticipated demand in Health and Care and the increased demand in Children's Services, the net costs of these directorates are reflective of this situation. In addition, expenditure on insurance has reduced as schools are now part of the Risk Protection Arrangement run by the Department for Education.

The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the final balances of the County Council's general fund and other reserves and this statement shows the money available to support services in future years. The general fund balance is £47.3 million and other earmarked reserves are £328.7 million, of which £28.8 million relates to schools and cannot be spent on other services and £40.8 million is unspent revenue grants. This leaves an amount of £259.1 million which is earmarked for specific projects and risks. Overall, general balances have remained static during 2021/2022, which is in line with the MTFS and the intention to retain balances to mitigate the risks inherent in service budgets.

Our reserves are reviewed annually to ensure they are still required and are at the correct level; this occurs as part of our budget setting process in February. The reserves were last reviewed in February 2022 and were deemed to be sufficient with the additional contributions. The review formed part of a report to the County Council which can be viewed here:

[County Council report 2223 v2.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

The Balance Sheet shows the amount held in reserves, both usable and unusable, as well as the liabilities that will need to be paid in future years. The total of assets less liabilities in 2021/2022 is £990.6 million, an increase from 2020/2021 which was £403.5 million.

The difference is £587.1 million and can be explained by various changes but the largest movement is in the pensions liability which has reduced by £429.9 million. It should be noted that this liability is reviewed and amended each year by the actuary who analyses a range of variables before reaching his conclusion. The liability is an estimate of the value of all the pensions that will need to be paid in the future, compared with projections of the Pension Fund's value. However many factors will change between now and when the pensions are actually paid.

Other smaller movements include an increase in cash and short term investments held, plus a reduction in debtors. These changes means there is more cash held at 31st March 2022 than the previous year, a fact which is also shown in the cashflow statement. Liabilities relating to the PFI schemes and long term borrowing have reduced in line with expectations.

The Cashflow Statement shows how the County Council has managed its cash during the year and would highlight whether there was a problem with the amount of cash coming in or flowing out of the organisation. This statement reflects the increase in the cash balance held as at 31st March 2022 as mentioned above.

Pension Fund

The Pension Fund performed well and increased in value in 2021/2022. The Fund achieved a return of 12.2% over the year, generated principally by the Fund's equity investments,

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

despite high inflation and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 affecting the global economy. The Fund was valued at £6,832.7 million at 31 March 2022 and more detail on the Fund's assets and liabilities can be seen in the Pension Fund Accounts and Net Assets Statement.

Outlook

In 2021/2022, the global coronavirus pandemic continued to dominate all our lives, including the services provided by the County Council. Although we have incurred millions of pounds of additional expenditure, lost income from fees and charges and suffered delays to our planned cost reduction programme, we have also received a large amount of additional grants which have funded it. Towards the end of the financial year, activities began to return to normal and demand levels began to reflect the impact of the pandemic. For our normal, daily activities we have managed to achieve a small underspend, as a result of services living within their means, which is hugely important to the financial sustainability of this Council. This approach of sound financial management will continue to be necessary as the Council faces an uncertain future. The small underspend has been contributed to earmarked reserves in order to fund inflationary pressures in 2022/2023. The level of both general balances and earmarked reserves is reviewed annually to ensure they are fit for purpose. The review includes a risk assessment which takes into account the uncertainty of future funding levels. This has increased our general balances and earmarked reserves which we will need to be available for future investment requirements.

The world is now facing the economic consequences of conflict in Ukraine and the release of pent-up demand for goods and services, creating increased inflation. This is being felt by individuals and businesses in the country as a whole, including. Whilst individuals are feeling the impact in the cost of food, fuel, gas and electricity, the County Council is not immune from the impact. Our strong financial management continues to be required and we are monitoring expenditure against budgets carefully, reports will be presented to Cabinet each quarter, as usual. In February a balanced budget for 2022/2023 was approved with a small amount of headroom in 2023/2024 and gaps in the later years, mainly caused by uncertainty over future funding arrangements for all local authorities. We have carried out a review of the impact of the pandemic on the Council's going concern position and this is summarised in Note 1 to the Accounts on page 32.

The budget for 2022/2023 identified £16.8 million of cost reductions, over and above those already planned. The government allowed local authorities to increase the general part of the council tax by up to 2% in this financial year and the Adult Social Care precept could also be increased by 1% therefore we have increased council tax by 2.99% in total in 2022/2023. The MTFs contains significant risks and these will be monitored going forward, the Contingency budget for 2022/2023 was increased to £10 million pa to reflect the severity of the risks. Since the 2022/2023 budget was approved in February 2022, rising inflation has hit all services but particularly transport and highways services. The first quarterly monitoring report was presented to Cabinet in July 2022 and recommended a contribution from reserves of £5 million to assist services with these pressures. The situation will continue to be monitored closely but it is anticipated that further contributions from reserves may be required. It is also anticipated that the Contingency budget will be spent in full in 2022/2023, the First Quarter report included a recommendation to use £6 million of this budget on pressures arising in Children's Services.

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

Looking ahead, the process of refreshing the MTFS for 2023/2024 is already beginning but again, uncertainty is dominating. The last two years have seen one-year settlements issued for local government and it is hoped that the settlement for 2023/2024 might be for longer than this. This will enable us to have more certainty over our funding levels for future years, to ensure more accurate planning. The impact of the reform of adult social care is also predicted to cost local authorities millions of pounds. Our current estimates show this will be unaffordable for the County Council, without additional funding from Government. Estimates show that at least half the income generated by the National Insurance Levy needs to be allocated to local government in order to fund the reforms.

Authorities can only use their reserves once and without an increase in the overall level of funding allocated for social care and SEND it will place local government in an unsustainable financial position. In addition, the Government has previously said there would be a far funding review of government funding, including the business rates scheme and changes are anticipated, especially as the latter has been in place since 2013. The timing of these reviews is uncertain and this, combined with one year finance settlements, reduces the effectiveness of medium term plans.

All of this means that we are faced with some important financial challenges and risks over the medium term. We will face increasing financial pressures in all services due to the pandemic, in addition to the pressures caused by changes in the population (for example, an increasing elderly population, health issues, increasing numbers of looked after children, unemployment and so on). The financial impact of the pandemic will continue to be felt in Staffordshire for some time to come and it will be necessary to revise the MTFS in the light of the impact of inflation on services and the changes to the adult social care system.

It is essential that we achieve the cost reductions we have agreed to make, and that we continue to ensure the Government is aware of the impact on our finances both short term and in the longer term. We are continuing to work with residents, voluntary groups, partners or the private sector to find new ways to improve lives and to get the county back on its feet. We are also working with public sector partners across Staffordshire in order to ensure the funding available is used most effectively.

Financial Health Indicators

We use a variety of indicators to measure how we are performing against our priority outcomes. The outstanding sundry debt indicator has been a concern during the year in relation to adult social care client debt and this has been monitored carefully. It is flagged as red as the debt exceeds the target level and a working group is in place to monitor and review processes and make efforts to reduce this level. The level of client debt has also increased and this is as a result of the pandemic. All the indicators, together with a summary of our performance in 2021/2022, can be viewed here:

[Microsoft Word - RESTRICTED - Q4 202122 - Integrated Performance - Cabinet Report FINAL DRAFT \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

This is the Quarter Four Integrated Performance Report which also contains budget monitoring information.

Narrative Statement by the County Treasurer

Format of the Statement of Accounts

We have to produce the accounts in line with a range of regulations and reporting standards, but it is important that most people can understand them. In this report I have tried to explain what I believe are the main issues in a way that I hope is understandable. Although I have kept to the relevant regulations and reporting standards, I am always looking for ways to improve the content and format of the Statement of Accounts. To help me do this, I would appreciate your comments on how we could improve the accounts and other information in future. Please send any comments to:

Rachel Spain
Corporate Finance Manager
1 Staffordshire Place
Tipping Street
Stafford
ST16 2DH.

E-mail: rachel.spain@staffordshire.gov.uk

We can also provide this Statement of Accounts in other formats, such as in large print, in Braille, or in other languages. To ask us for the Statement of Accounts in other formats, please call 01785 276065.

The full statement will also be available on our website (www.staffordshire.gov.uk).



Rob Salmon CPFA
County Treasurer
Date: 29th July 2022

Audit Opinion

To follow.

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority is required to:

- Make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the County Treasurer;
- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets, and
- Approve the Statement of Accounts.

The County Treasurer's Responsibilities

The County Treasurer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA / LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code).

In preparing this statement of accounts, the County Treasurer has:

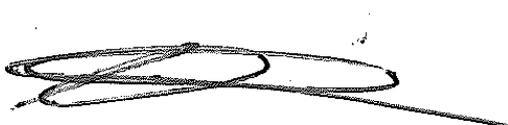
- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent; and
- complied with the local authority Code.

The County Treasurer has also:

- kept proper accounting records which were up to date; and
- taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

COUNTY TREASURER'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that the Statement of Accounts presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the County Council as at 31 March 2022 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2022.



Rob Salmon CPFA
County Treasurer
Date: 29th July 2022

Chairman's Certificate

I confirm that the 2021/2022 Statement of Accounts for Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Pension Fund were approved by the Audit and Standards Committee on 13 December 2022.

Responsibility for making further amendments to the accounts, as agreed with the external auditors, was delegated to the Chairman of the Audit and Standards Committee along with the County Treasurer.

Chairman of Audit and Standards Committee
Date: 13th December 2022

Statement of Accounting Policies

1 General

The Statement of Accounts shows the Authority's transactions for the 2021/2022 financial year and its position at the year end of 31 March 2022. In preparing the accounts we have followed the accounting practices set out in the 'Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/2022' (the Code), supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and statutory guidance including the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The accounts are prepared on a going concern basis. The accounting convention used is mainly historical cost, other than for certain items of property, plant and equipment and financial instruments, which are held at fair value.

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared with reference to:

- The objective of providing information about the financial position, performance and cash flows in a way that meets the 'common needs of most users'.
- The objective of showing the results of the stewardship and accountability of elected members and management for the resources entrusted to them.

2 Accruals of Income and Expenditure

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared on the accruals basis, which means that activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- We recognise revenue from the sale of goods and services in accordance with the performance obligations of the contract
- We record supplies as expenditure when they are used. Where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and when they are used, they may be carried as stock in the Balance Sheet
- We record expenses in relation to services received (including provided by employees) when the service is received rather than when payments are made.
- We account for interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue or expenditure have been recognised, but cash has not been received or paid, we record a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

3 Property, plant and equipment

Recognition

We capitalise expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment if future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

Expenditure that maintains the asset and restores the level of service provision but does not enhance the asset (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it is incurred.

Statement of Accounting Policies

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost made up of the purchase price and costs associated with bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be used as intended.

The Authority employs an external Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) qualified valuer to provide a valuation of its assets.

We classify non-current assets into groupings given by the Code. We value them on the following basis:

- We include property assets in the Balance Sheet at current value which is determined as the amount that would be paid for them in their existing use value (EUUV), or at Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC). DRC is a method of valuation which provides the current cost of replacing an asset with its modern equivalent asset less deductions for all physical deterioration. DRC is used as a proxy for current value if there is no market-based evidence of current value because of the specialist nature of the asset and the asset is rarely sold.
- We include assets under construction in the Balance Sheet at the cost we originally paid.
- We include infrastructure assets and vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment on the Balance Sheet at depreciated historic cost, as a proxy measurement of 'Current Value'.
- If we do not know the original cost of community assets, we include them in the Balance Sheet at a value of £1 each. If we know the original cost of community assets, these are held on the balance sheet at that cost
- We include surplus assets that we do not currently need in the Balance Sheet at fair value, measured at the highest and best use price for the asset.

We revalue non-current assets again on a rolling five-year programme, with the effective valuation date of the 31st March. However, in the meantime we make changes to the valuation of assets if there are major changes which would have a significant effect on an asset's fair value, residual value or useful life.

We review the value of each category of assets and the value of major individual assets at the end of each financial year, to see if there is any reduction in market value or impairment to the asset.

If there are any changes in asset valuations, we deal with this in the following way:

Reduction in valuation

- We write the loss off against the Revaluation Reserve, if there is a balance in that reserve.
- If there is no balance in the reserve, we charge the loss to the relevant service revenue account.

Increase in valuation

Where an impairment loss is reversed, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised. Any remaining gain is added to the revaluation reserve

Statement of Accounting Policies

Disposal of assets

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, we reclassify it as an asset held for sale. We revalue the asset immediately before reclassification and then carry it at fair value less costs to sell. Where there is a subsequent decrease to fair value less costs to sell, the loss is posted to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services. Depreciation is not charged on assets held for sale.

Assets that are to be abandoned or scrapped are not reclassified as assets held for sale.

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether property, plant and equipment or assets held for sale) is written off to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals (if any) are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the revaluation reserve are transferred to the capital adjustment account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts remains within the capital receipts reserve and can then only be used for new capital investment or to set aside to reduce the amount we owe in loans. Receipts are appropriated to the reserve from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against council tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Schools

We have assessed whether Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled and Foundation Schools should be included within the balance sheet, based upon an assessment of ownership and control of the assets. Maintained schools are already held on the balance sheet as the County Council controls these entities and therefore all transactions relating to maintained schools are recognised in these accounts. Other types of schools such as Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled and Foundation schools are subject to a test of ownership. The Council recognises a school's assets on its balance sheet where it directly owns them, and/or the Council retains substantive rights over the assets and the future economic benefits/service potential of school assets flow to the Council or rights to use the assets have been transferred from another entity.

4 Depreciation

We reflect depreciation (loss in value) charges in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account, and we work the loss out based on the opening valuation of the asset. Any Revaluation Reserve an asset has from a previous upward revaluation is amortised to the Capital Adjustment Account. We do this on all property, plant and equipment in line with the following policy:

Statement of Accounting Policies

- We charge for all non-current assets and components (e.g. land, buildings and services) of non-current assets with a set useful life. We work this charge out using the straight-line method (which assumes that the value of the asset will reduce by an equal amount each year of its life).
- We do not do this for land, assets under construction or those assets held for sale.
- We work out the charge for buildings assuming that their expected lives range from 15 to 60 years.
- We expect the life of infrastructure assets, for example, roads, bridges and footpaths, to be 50 years.
- The expected lives of vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment range from five to 20 years.
- We work out charges for new assets from the financial year following the year that we buy them.
- We assume that an asset has no value at the end of its useful life.

5 Charges to revenue for non-current assets

We do not have to raise council tax to cover depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisation. However, under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) 2003 Regulations (amended in 2008), we have set aside an amount of revenue to repay any debt equal to 4% of the borrowing supported by government grant at the beginning of the year. Where we have used unsupported borrowing to pay for an asset, we will repay that borrowing over the life of that asset. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses, and amortisation are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund balance, by way of an adjusting transaction with the capital adjustment account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two. We only start to repay the borrowing for assets which are completed.

6 Heritage assets

The Museums and Archives services hold the County Council's heritage assets. The assets are held at Shugborough, in the Shire Hall Gallery, in County Buildings and in the Judge's House. We account for these assets in accordance with our policy on property, plant and equipment. We show these assets on the Balance Sheet at insurance valuation and this value will be updated each year.

The carrying amounts of these assets are reviewed where there is evidence of impairment, for example where an asset has suffered physical deterioration or breakage. Any impairment is recognised and measured in accordance with our policy on impairment. It is extremely unlikely that we would dispose of any heritage assets, however if a disposal were to take place then the proceeds would be accounted for in accordance with our policy on disposing of property, plant and equipment. Disposal proceeds are disclosed separately in the notes to the accounts and are accounted for in accordance with statutory accounting requirements relating to capital expenditure and capital receipts.

7 Leases

We apply the Code's definition of a finance lease as a lease that transfers substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of an asset (even though title to the property may not be transferred). An operating lease is any lease that is not a finance lease.

Statement of Accounting Policies

Council as lessee

Finance leases

We assess all leases to determine whether they are operating leases or finance leases under International Accounting Standard (IAS)17. Where we have decided that a lease is a finance lease then we show the assets in the Balance Sheet and show a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. The Authority recognises finance leases as assets and liabilities at the lower of the present value of the minimum lease payments and the fair value at the inception of the lease. The Authority's incremental borrowing rate on PWLB loans has been used to determine the interest rate implicit in the lease. Any initial indirect costs of the lease are added to the value of the asset.

Operating leases

We use various assets which we have accounted for as operating leases. In the Balance Sheet we do not show a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. We include the annual lease rentals in the appropriate service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement each year and the outstanding commitments for future years are shown in the notes to the accounts where the value is significant.

Council as lessor

Finance leases

The Authority is not the lessor of any finance leases.

Operating leases

We lease out property and have a number of operating leases. We include income from these leases in the appropriate service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and in the notes to the accounts where the value is significant. Income is recognised in accordance with the payment terms in the lease agreements. The associated assets are retained on the balance sheet.

8 Pensions

We take part in two different pension schemes that meet the needs of employees in particular services. All the schemes give members defined benefits that are related to their pay and length of service. One scheme is for teachers and one is for other employees, as follows:

- **Teachers'**
This is an unfunded scheme (that is, there is no fund set aside to pay future pensions) run by the Department for Education. The pension cost we charge to the accounts is the contribution rate set by the Department for Education.
- **Other employees**
Other employees, depending on certain conditions, can join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which we run. The pension costs we charge to our accounts for these employees are equal to the contributions we pay to the pension scheme for these employees, including the effect of any actuarial changes. See Note 40 for further detail.

The liabilities of Staffordshire Pension Fund attributable to the County Council are included in the balance sheet on an actuarial basis, using the project unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates etc and projected earnings for current employees.

Statement of Accounting Policies

We discount liabilities to their value at current prices, using a discount rate of 5.5% (based on the rate of return on high-quality corporate bonds, (as measured by the yield on iboxx Sterling Corporates Index, AA over 15 years).

The assets of Staffordshire Pension Fund attributable to the County Council are also included in the balance sheet at their fair value:

- Quoted securities – current bid price
- Unquoted securities – professional estimate
- Unitised securities – current bid price
- Property – market value

The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:

Service cost, which comprises:

- Current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year, shown in the CIES on the appropriate service line where the employee worked;
- Past service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years, this is included in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the CIES;
- Net interest on the net defined benefit liability or (asset) – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the financing and investment income and expenditure line of the CIES, this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.

Remeasurements, which comprise:

- The return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) charged to the pension reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure;
- Actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pension liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions, charged to the pensions reserves as other comprehensive income and expenditure;
- Contributions paid to the Staffordshire Pension Fund – cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities, not accounted for as an expense.

We charge the general fund with the amount due to the Pension Fund during the year or directly to pensioners and not the amount calculated in accordance with the relevant accounting standards. In the movement in reserves statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the pensions reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the pensions reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the general fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Statement of Accounting Policies

Discretionary benefits

We also have restricted powers to choose to pay retirement benefits to people who retire early. We add together any liabilities we expect to arise as a result of this in the year of the decision to pay the benefits. We account for these using the same policies we use for the Local Government Pension Scheme.

10 Reserves

In line with the Code we split our reserves between those which are 'usable' (contain resources which can be used to fund activities in the future) and 'unusable' reserves (those which are used to facilitate accounting adjustments required by statute).

11 Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute

Where we incur expenditure during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset, we charge this expenditure to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. We then make a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account to reverse out the amount charged so that there is no impact on the level of council tax.

12 Provisions

We make provisions in the accounts where an event has taken place that gives the authority a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the authority may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

We charge provisions as an expense to the appropriate service line in the comprehensive income and expenditure statement when the authority has an obligation. We measure provisions at the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the balance sheet date, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, we charge these to the provision carried in the balance sheet. We review estimated settlements at the end of each financial year and where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), we reverse the provision and credit it back to the relevant service.

Contingent liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the authority a possible obligation whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the authority. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that an outflow of resources will be required, or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured reliably.

We do not recognise contingent liabilities in the balance sheet but disclose them in a note to the accounts.

Statement of Accounting Policies

Contingent assets

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the authority a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the authority.

We do not recognise contingent assets in the balance sheet but disclose them in a note to the accounts only where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

13 Interest on balances

During the year we invest cash and pay the interest earned into the revenue account as interest receivable. We also make a contribution (similar to interest) to certain reserves and provisions.

14 VAT

Income and spending do not include amounts related to VAT. VAT we collect is paid to HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). The VAT we pay is reclaimed from HMRC.

15 Government grants and contributions

We receive grants from government and other bodies and we account for grants as income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when there are no conditions attached or when we have reasonable assurance that the grant conditions will be met. If the grant conditions have not been met, and we do not have reasonable assurance that the conditions will be met, then we show the grant in the Balance Sheet as a creditor as it may have to be returned to the grant providing body.

If a grant has not been spent at the end of the year but the conditions have been met, then it is shown in the usable reserves section of the Balance Sheet.

Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset in the form of the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

16 Private finance initiative (PFI)

PFI and similar contracts are agreements to receive services, where the responsibility for making available the property, plant and equipment needed to provide the services passes to the PFI contractor. As the authority is deemed to control the services that are provided under its PFI schemes, and as ownership of the property, plant and equipment will pass to the authority at the end of the contracts, for no additional charge, we carry the assets used under the contracts on our Balance Sheet as part of property, plant and equipment.

We have four PFI schemes, which we account for in line with the Code.

The assets of these schemes are included in the Balance Sheet. We also have a liability in the Balance Sheet to show that we owe the contractor further payments for these assets. The value of the building assets has been determined by our in-house valuer. At the end of the contracts, the assets of these schemes will be owned by the Council and will remain on the Balance Sheet.

Statement of Accounting Policies

We have shown the payment to the contractor in three places in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account, as a cost to the service, as part of interest payable and to repay the liability. The Waste PFI scheme also receives income from the electricity generated by the plant; we account for this as income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.

We have transferred land to the contractor next to the new Sir Graham Balfour School with planning permission for a housing development. The value of this land (about £2 million) has resulted in lower contract payments. We have treated this as deferred consideration in the Balance Sheet. We reduce the value of this over the life of the contract.

17 Endowment and trust funds

We run 26 of these funds. They mostly include small amounts received from private individuals, which we have invested to provide an income each year. They do not form part of our accounts.

18 Financial instruments

In line with the Code, financial liabilities and financial assets are shown in the Balance Sheet when we become a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument.

Financial liabilities

We initially measure financial liabilities at their fair value (the price that would be paid to transfer a liability) and report this in the notes to the accounts. The carrying value in our Balance Sheet is shown at amortised cost, which includes the principal amount we borrowed, with adjustments for stepped interest, premiums and discounts and accrued interest. The method used to calculate the amortised cost is called the 'effective interest rate method'.

In the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account, we base the yearly charges for interest due on our loans on the carrying amount of the liability. This represents the amount we owe for the year under the loan agreement.

Where premiums and discounts have been charged for restructuring loans, regulations allow us to spread the impact on the General Fund Balance over future years. We have a policy of spreading the gain or loss over the term that was remaining on the loan against which the premium was payable or discount receivable when it was repaid.

Lender option borrower option (LOBO)

We have taken out a number of loans which have a fixed interest rate for a set period. After that period the lender can change the interest rate. We can choose whether to repay the loan or to accept the higher interest rate. These are called lender option borrower option (LOBO) loans. Some LOBOs have a stepped interest rate with a lower rate for the fixed period and a higher rate afterwards. For these LOBO loans the Code requires us to smooth the interest charged to the revenue account over the life of the loan using a method called the Equivalent Interest Rate (EIR).

Financial assets

Investment balances are typically longer-term commitments either where cash cannot be realised quickly or where there is a risk that the value of the investment will change over time:

- Fixed term deposits greater than one day in duration
- Treasury bills and gilts
- Certificates of deposit
- Multi-lateral development bank investments

Statement of Accounting Policies

We classify financial assets based on their cashflow characteristics and our business model for holding the financial assets. This gives rise to three methods of accounting:

- *Amortised cost*
These are financial assets that we hold in order to collect contractual cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest. Financial assets at amortised cost are initially measured at fair value and subsequently measured at their amortised cost. The amount presented in our Balance Sheet includes the outstanding principal receivable plus accrued interest.
- *Fair value through profit or loss (FVPL)*
When there are no contractual cash flows, we measure financial assets at FVPL. These assets are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arrive in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. We measure the fair value of these assets in accordance with the following three levels:
Level 1 inputs – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets that the authority can access at the measurement date.
Level 2 inputs – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset, either directly or indirectly.
Level 3 inputs – unobservable inputs for the asset.

When we derecognise these assets, any gains and losses are credited or debited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

- *Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI)*
If we hold a financial asset which is within a business model whose objective is achieved by both collecting contractual cash flows and selling financial assets plus the contractual terms of this same financial asset mean that on specified dates there will be cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding. If these conditions are met then we can account for the financial asset through FVOCI instead of FVPL. Any gains and losses from changes in fair value are taken to the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve instead of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.

Expected credit losses

We recognise expected credit losses on our financial assets held at amortised cost (or where relevant FVOCI), either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the authority.

We calculate impairment losses to reflect the expectation that the future cash flows might not take place because the borrower could default on their obligations. Where risk has increased significantly since an instrument was initially recognised, losses are assessed on a lifetime basis. Where risk has not increased significantly or remains low, losses are assessed on the basis of 12-month expected losses.

Credit losses for our treasury investments are expected to be minimal and CIPFA has ruled that no credit losses be recognised for financial assets made with central or local government.

Statement of Accounting Policies

19 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include the following classes of financial assets that can be called upon at short-notice (less than 3 months) and (if necessary) turned into cash:

- Cash in hand
- Money Market Fund balances
- Call accounts with banks or building societies
- Overnight fixed term deposits with banks or building societies

In the Cashflow statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts that are repayable on demand and form an integral part of the Council's cash management.

20 Employee benefits

We have shown an amount in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement which relates to the cost of employees carrying forward leave entitlement. The full cost of staff retiring or being made redundant has also been shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These amounts have not affected the amount raised by council tax as they have been posted to the Accumulated Absences Reserve and Pensions Reserve within unusable reserves in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

21 Pooled budgets

Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups have entered into a framework agreement under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006. This is a pooled fund arrangement known as the Better Care Fund. The Council is the host partner of the fund. Each partner accounts separately for the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities which relate to or arise from expenditure on individual schemes and its interest in pooled funds. Further information is shown in Note 26 to the accounts.

22 Prior period adjustments, changes in accounting policies and estimates and errors

Prior period adjustments may arise as a result of a change in accounting policies or to correct a material error. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change and do not give rise to a prior year adjustment.

We only make changes in accounting policies when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the affect of transactions, other events and conditions on the authority's financial position. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

We correct material errors discovered in prior period figures retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

Statement of Accounting Policies

23 Accounting Standards issued but not yet adopted

At the balance sheet date, the following new standards and amendments to existing standards have been published but not yet adopted by the Code.

- Annual improvements to IFRS Standards 2018-2020. The annual IFRS improvement programme notes four changed standards:
 - o IFRS 1 (First-time adoption). The amendment relates to foreign operations of acquired subsidiaries transitioning to IFRS.
 - o IAS 37 (Onerous contracts). This clarifies the intention of the standard with regards to relevant contract costs.
 - o IFRS 16 (Leases). The amendment removes a misleading example that is not referenced in the Code material.
 - o IAS 41 (Agriculture). The amendment references the cash flows to be included when measuring the fair value of biological assets.

- Property, Plant and Equipment: Proceeds before Intended Use (Amendments to IAS 16). The amendment prohibits the deduction from the cost of an item of property, plant and equipment any proceeds from selling items produced while bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for operation as intended by management.

We have reviewed the above changes and concluded that adoption would have no impact on the Council's accounts.

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. Councils raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations, this may be different from the accounting cost. The taxation position is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

| 2020/2021 Gross expenditure £m | 2020/2021 Gross income £m | 2020/2021 Net expenditure £m | | 2021/2022 Gross expenditure £m | 2021/2022 Gross income £m | 2021/2022 Net expenditure £m |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 368.9 | (166.8) | 202.1 | Health and Care | 353.5 | (227.6) | 125.9 |
| 514.7 | (354.1) | 160.6 | Families and Communities Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | 584.8 | (365.3) | 219.5 |
| 180.1 | (78.3) | 101.8 | Corporate Services | 173.2 | (81.1) | 92.1 |
| 62.0 | (13.6) | 48.4 | Centrally Controlled Costs | 65.2 | (18.9) | 46.3 |
| 15.5 | (3.1) | 12.4 | Non distributed costs | 11.9 | (3.1) | 8.8 |
| (1.1) | 0.0 | (1.1) | | (4.0) | 0.0 | (4.0) |
| 1,140.1 | (615.9) | 524.2 | Cost of services | 1,184.6 | (696.0) | 488.6 |
| | | 13.1 | Other operating expenditure (Note 6) | | | 37.6 |
| | | 49.0 | Financing and investment (income)/expenditure (Note 7) | | | 49.5 |
| | | (652.4) | Taxation and non-specific grant income (Note 8) | | | (673.9) |
| | | (66.1) | Deficit/(Surplus) on provision of services | | | (98.2) |
| | | (43.6) | Deficit/(Surplus) on revaluation of non current assets | | | (17.6) |
| | | 217.5 | Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset) (Note 40) | | | (471.3) |
| | | 173.9 | reclassified to the deficit/(surplus) on the provision of services | | | (488.9) |
| | | 0.0 | reclassified to the deficit/(surplus) on the provision of services | | | 0.0 |
| | | 173.9 | Other comprehensive expenditure/(income) | | | (488.9) |
| | | 107.8 | Total comprehensive expenditure/(income) | | | (587.1) |

Movement in Reserves Statement

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council, accounted for as 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other reserves. The (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Council's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the general fund balance for council tax setting purposes. The 'Net increase/decrease before transfers to earmarked reserves' line shows the statutory general fund balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the Council.

| | General Fund Balance £m | Schools (Note 5) £m | Other Reserves Revenue (Note 5) £m | Amalgamated General Revenue Reserves £m | Capital Receipts Reserve £m | Capital Grants Unapplied £m | Amalgamated Capital Reserves £m | Total Usable Reserves £m | Unusable Reserves £m | Total Council Reserves £m |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Balance at 1 April 2020 | (35.5) | (21.1) | (132.9) | (154.0) | (6.4) | (51.6) | (58.0) | (247.5) | (263.8) | (511.3) |
| <u>Movement in reserves during 2020/2021</u> (Surplus) or Deficit on the provision of services | (66.1) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (66.1) | 0.0 | (66.1) |
| Other comprehensive (income)/expenditure | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 173.9 | 173.9 |
| Total comprehensive income and expenditure | (66.1) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (66.1) | 173.9 | 107.8 |
| Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 4) | (5.9) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.4 | (11.2) | (4.8) | (10.7) | 10.7 | 0.0 |
| Net (increase)/decrease before transfers to earmarked reserves | (72.0) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.4 | (11.2) | (4.8) | (76.8) | 184.6 | 107.8 |
| Transfers (to)/from earmarked reserves | 60.1 | (6.2) | (53.9) | (60.1) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| (Increase)/decrease in year | (11.9) | (6.2) | (53.9) | (60.1) | 6.4 | (11.2) | (4.8) | (76.8) | 184.6 | 107.8 |
| Balance at 31 March 2021 carried forward | (47.4) | (27.3) | (186.8) | (214.1) | 0.0 | (62.8) | (62.8) | (324.3) | (79.2) | (403.5) |
| <u>Movement in reserves during 2021/2022</u> (Surplus) or Deficit on the provision of services | (98.2) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (98.2) | 0.0 | (98.2) |
| Other comprehensive (income)/expenditure | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (488.9) | (488.9) |
| Total comprehensive income and expenditure | (98.2) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (98.2) | (488.9) | (587.1) |
| Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 4) | (16.3) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 15.5 | 15.5 |
| Net (increase)/decrease before transfers to earmarked reserves | (114.5) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | (113.7) | (473.4) | (587.1) |
| Transfers (to)/from earmarked reserves | 114.6 | (1.5) | (113.1) | (114.6) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| (Increase)/decrease in year | 0.1 | (1.5) | (113.1) | (114.6) | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.8 | (113.7) | (473.4) | (587.1) |
| Balance at 31 March 2022 carried forward | (47.3) | (28.8) | (299.9) | (328.7) | 0.0 | (62.0) | (62.0) | (438.0) | (552.6) | (990.6) |

The total General Fund of the Council is equal to the sum of the General Fund Balance and the Amalgamated General Revenue Reserves disclosed above. The total General Fund of the Council is therefore £376m as at 31 March 2022.

Balance Sheet

The Balance sheet shows the value of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council as at the Balance Sheet date. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the Council may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use. The second category of reserves includes those amounts which the Council are not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes those reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses, where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold (an example would be the revaluation reserve). Furthermore it includes reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

| 31 March 2020 £m | 31 March 2021 £m | | Notes | 31 March 2022 |
|------------------------|------------------------|--|-------|------------------|
| 1,752.6 | 1,816.6 | Property, plant and equipment | 12 | 1,825.7 |
| 9.6 | 9.6 | Heritage assets | 13 | 9.6 |
| 32.3 | 22.8 | Long term debtors | 15 | 22.2 |
| 30.4 | 30.4 | Long term investments | 14 | 30.4 |
| 1,824.9 | 1,879.4 | Long term assets | | 1,887.9 |
| 15.5 | 20.3 | Assets held for sale | 18 | 9.7 |
| 64.1 | 0.0 | Short term investments | 14 | 42.0 |
| 1.4 | 1.0 | Inventories | | 1.0 |
| 112.5 | 133.5 | Short term debtors | 16 | 119.2 |
| 79.0 | 201.4 | Cash and cash equivalents | 17 | 289.8 |
| 272.5 | 356.2 | Current assets | | 461.7 |
| (0.4) | (0.4) | Short term borrowing | | (0.4) |
| (115.0) | (149.8) | Short term creditors | 19 | (118.9) |
| (39.0) | (40.0) | Long term borrowing repayable within one year | 14 | (44.0) |
| (7.5) | (7.6) | PFI and finance leases deferred liability | 14 | (7.7) |
| (7.5) | (8.3) | Accumulated absences creditor | 21 | (7.2) |
| (169.4) | (206.1) | Current liabilities | | (178.2) |
| (0.6) | (0.3) | Long term creditors | | (0.1) |
| (20.1) | (11.9) | Long term provisions | 20 | (10.7) |
| (413.1) | (412.2) | Long term borrowing | 14 | (404.4) |
| (793.4) | (1,025.8) | Pension scheme liability | 40 | (595.9) |
| (74.8) | (70.8) | PFI and finance lease liability | 14 | (60.7) |
| (62.8) | (59.3) | PFI third party financing liability | 36 | (55.8) |
| (38.7) | (45.7) | Capital grants receipts in advance | 32 | (53.2) |
| (1,403.5) | (1,626.0) | Long term liabilities | | (1,180.8) |
| 524.5 | 403.5 | Net assets | | 990.6 |
| (260.7) | (324.3) | Usable reserves (Movement in Reserves Statement) | | (438.0) |
| (263.8) | (79.2) | Unusable reserves | 21 | (552.6) |
| (524.5) | (403.5) | Total reserves | | (990.6) |

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting year. The statement shows how the Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the Council are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Council's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Council.

| 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|--|------------------|
| £m | £m |
| (66.1) Net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services | (98.2) |
| (118.7) Adjustments to net deficit on the provision of services for non cash movements | (120.9) |
| 114.9 Adjustments for items included in the net deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities | 89.1 |
| (69.9) Net cash flows from Operating activities (Note 22) | (130.0) |
| (73.8) Investing Activities (Note 23) | 29.1 |
| 8.0 Financing Activities (Note 24) | 12.5 |
| (135.7) Net (increase)/decrease in cash and cash equivalents | (88.4) |
| 65.7 Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting year (Note 17) | 201.4 |
| 201.4 Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting year (Note 17) | 289.8 |

Notes to the Accounts

1. Basis of preparation

In applying the accounting policies the Council has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

- 1) There is a high degree of uncertainty regarding future levels of funding for local government. The Council has undertaken a rigorous challenge of reviewing its spending and as a result has ensured appropriate savings are built into its medium term financial plans. The Council has determined that this uncertainty regarding future funding levels is not known in sufficient enough detail to provide an indication that its assets would be impaired or services reduced significantly. Any action to reduce spending would be taken in a planned and systematic way to reduce the impact on service delivery.
- 2) The Council has four PFI contracts to provide schools, children's homes, waste disposal and street lighting facilities. The accounting policies for PFI schemes have been applied to these arrangements and the assets are recognised as non-current assets in the Balance Sheet. These contracts have to be accounted for in this way as we have assessed that they meet the requirements of the applicable accounting standard IFRIC 12.
- 3) The Council acts as the accountable body for the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) and the Midlands Engine Partnership (ME). We do not account for the transactions of these bodies or hold balances on their behalf. Separate accounts are produced for both the SSLEP and the ME. We therefore account for the funds on an agent basis.
- 4) The Council holds interests in three companies, Entrust (49% holding), Penda (50% holding) and Nexus (100% holding). We have judged that these holdings are immaterial to the Council both qualitatively and quantitatively, and there is therefore no requirement to prepare group accounts.
- 5) Coronavirus - Basis of Preparation
During 2021/2022, Covid continued to make its presence felt and impacted on the finances of the County Council, requiring additional expenditure to assist with containing outbreaks. Many of the grants allocated by the Government in 2020/2021 continued and these covered both general and specific Covid-19 related costs. These grants and the overall impact of the pandemic on the 2021/2022 outturn are reported in the Narrative Statement.

Notes to the Accounts

1. Basis of preparation (cont'd)

In setting the County Council's budget for 2022/2023, it was important to maintain a watching brief on the impacts of Covid, and although no further allocations of general grant have been made, some residual costs remain. The refresh of our Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council on 10th February 2022. This included a collection fund deficit for business rates which was broadly offset by a surplus on council tax, the net impact being a surplus of £120,000.

Since the budget was set, the war in Ukraine has had an impact on finances across the world, with inflationary pressures being felt in all services. The First Quarter report to Cabinet requested additional funding from reserves for £5m of inflationary pressures relating to Highways and Transport in particular.

In setting the budget, the risk assessment of general balances required £54m to meet all estimate high and medium risks. General balances were £47.3m as at 31st March 2022 and the budget for 2022/2023 includes a contribution of £5m to bring them closer to the amount needed in the risk assessment. This will ensure that we remain financially resilient and maintain a balances budget in line with our statutory duties.

The Council is also closely monitoring its cashflow position to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to meet its financial obligations. The decision has been taken to hold cash in short-term investments so that the Council has the ability to respond rapidly to any situation in an uncertain and changing environment. As at 24th June 2022, the Council holds a total of £443.9m in cash and short-term investments.

The Council has produced a detailed cashflow forecast to 31st March 2023, which is used to monitor actual trends in line with expectations. There is also a high-level 5 year forecast prepared as part of the MTFS planning. The Council does not currently anticipate that it will need to borrow for cashflow purposes over the life of the current MTFS.

We recognise that there is a high degree of inherent uncertainty relating to future funding levels. The impact of the reform of adult social care is also predicted to cost local authorities millions of pounds. Our current estimates show this will be unaffordable for the County Council, without additional funding from Government. Estimates show that at least half the income generated by the National Insurance Levy needs to be allocated to local government in order to fund the reforms. However, we are satisfied that the Council has resilience in terms of budgetary planning, proven financial management arrangements, available reserves and cash flow to March 2023 and that it is appropriate to use the going concern basis in the preparation of the 2021/2022 financial statements.

Notes to the Accounts

2. Assumptions Made About the Future and Other Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Council about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2022 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

| Item | Uncertainties | Effect if actual results differ from assumptions |
|--|--|--|
| Property, plant and equipment valuation | Operational assets are revalued in accordance with the Council's accounting policy on Property, Plant and Equipment. Asset valuations are based on market prices and are periodically reviewed to ensure the Council does not materially misstate its non-current assets. | A reduction in the estimated valuation of assets would result in reductions to the Revaluation Reserve and/or a loss recorded as appropriate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). An increase in estimated valuations would result in increases to the Revaluation Reserve, and/or reversals of previous negative revaluations to the CIES, and/or gains being recorded as appropriate in the CIES. A change of + / - 1% in the value of property, plant and equipment would be a movement of around £22m in the balance sheet. |
| Property, plant and equipment depreciation | Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to assets. | If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the asset falls. If funding streams were reduced, in so far as it results in the reduction of service delivery or closure of facilities, this could result in the impairment of assets due to obsolescence. The Council has determined that the level of uncertainty at this time is not sufficient to indicate this course of action. A change in the amount of depreciation charged of either + / - 1% would mean a movement of around £0.5m in the balance sheet. |

Notes to the Accounts

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Pensions Liability | <p>Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages and mortality rates. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied in producing the accounting entries necessary for the accounts.</p> <p>The ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic has created uncertainty around illiquid asset values.</p> | <p>The effects on the net pensions liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured, including the impact of the McCloud judgement. The accounts currently reflect the latest estimate of these additional costs. The actuary provides a sensitivity analysis which is shown in Note 40.</p> |
| Impairment Allowance for Doubtful Debts | <p>The Council has made an impairment allowance against debtor balances. It is not certain that this impairment allowance would be sufficient as we cannot assess with certainty which debts will be collected or not. The economic uncertainty around the coronavirus pandemic has made the estimation of debt impairment more difficult as there is more uncertainty about the economic viability of debtors and hence their ability to settle their debts.</p> | <p>An understatement of doubtful debts would lead to a future adjustment and impairment to be reflected. A change in the amount of allowance made for doubtful debts of + / - 1% would result in a movement of around £250,000.</p> |

Notes to the Accounts

3. Events After the Balance Sheet Date

On 29th July 2022 the County Treasurer authorised the Statement of Accounts to be issued. When preparing the accounts we have considered events between the date we produced the balance sheet and 29th July 2022. No events have occurred which require disclosure in the accounts.

Notes to the Accounts

4. Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement recognised by the Council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Council to meet future capital & revenue expenditure.

| | Usable Reserves | | | Movement in unusable reserves |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | General Fund Balance | Capital grants unapplied | Capital receipts reserve | |
| 2021/2022 | | | | |
| Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account: | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| <u>Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u> | | | | |
| Charges for depreciation and impairment of non current assets | (62.4) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 62.4 |
| Capital grants and contributions applied | 70.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (70.1) |
| Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute | (17.0) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 17.0 |
| Amounts of non current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | (51.8) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 51.8 |
| <u>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u> | | | | |
| Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment | 35.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (35.4) |
| Capital expenditure charged against the General fund balance | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.5) |
| Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 8.5 | (8.5) | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account | 0.0 | 9.3 | 0.0 | (9.3) |
| Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve: | | | | |
| Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 14.5 | 0.0 | (14.5) | 0.0 |
| Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure | 0.0 | 0.0 | 14.5 | (14.5) |
| Adjustments primarily involving the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve: | | | | |
| Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.5) |
| Adjustments involving the Pensions Reserve: | | | | |
| Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (Note 21) | (100.7) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 100.7 |
| Employers pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year | 42.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (42.5) |
| Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions | 16.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (16.8) |
| Adjustments involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account: | | | | |
| Amount by which council tax and business rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and business rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements | 32.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (32.2) |
| Adjustments involving the Accumulated Absences Account: | | | | |
| Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements | 1.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (1.2) |
| Adjustments involving the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment | | | | |
| Transfer of Dedicated Schools Grant deficit to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Accounts | (6.6) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 6.6 |
| Total adjustments | (16.3) | 0.8 | 0.0 | 15.5 |

Notes to the Accounts

4. Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations (Cont'd)

| | Usable Reserves | | | Movement in unusable reserves |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | General Fund Balance | Capital grants unapplied | Capital receipts reserve | |
| 2020/2021 | | | | |
| Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account: | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| <u>Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u> | | | | |
| Charges for depreciation and impairment of non current assets | (62.5) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 62.5 |
| Capital grants and contributions applied | 85.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (85.4) |
| Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute | (21.5) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 21.5 |
| Amounts of non current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | (25.5) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 25.5 |
| <u>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u> | | | | |
| Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment | 29.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (29.2) |
| Capital expenditure charged against the General fund balance | 1.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (1.6) |
| Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 18.6 | (18.6) | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account | 0.0 | 7.4 | 0.0 | (7.4) |
| Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve: | | | | |
| Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 13.8 | 0.0 | (13.8) | 0.0 |
| Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure | 0.0 | 0.0 | 20.2 | (20.2) |
| Adjustments primarily involving the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve: | | | | |
| Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.5) |
| Adjustments involving the Pensions Reserve: | | | | |
| Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (see Note 22) | (72.6) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 72.6 |
| Employers pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year | 92.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (92.3) |
| Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions | (34.7) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 34.7 |
| Adjustments involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account: | | | | |
| Amount by which council tax and business rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and business rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements | (27.7) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 27.7 |
| Adjustments involving the Accumulated Absences Account: | | | | |
| Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements | (0.8) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 |
| Adjustments involving the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account | | | | |
| Transfer of Dedicated Schools Grant deficit to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Accounts | (2.0) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 |
| Total adjustments | (5.9) | (11.2) | 6.4 | 10.7 |

Notes to the Accounts

5. Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2021/2022.

| | Balance at 31 March 2020 | Transfers out 2020/2021 | Transfers in 2020/2021 | Balance at 31 March 2021 | Transfers out 2021/2022 | Transfers in 2021/2022 | Balance at 31 March 2022 |
|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| General Fund: | | | | | | | |
| Information technology | (4.7) | 0.2 | (6.1) | (10.6) | 0.7 | (8.7) | (18.6) |
| PFI equalisation | (1.6) | 0.1 | (1.4) | (2.9) | 0.8 | (3.1) | (5.2) |
| Other Service Reserves | (0.4) | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.4) | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.4) |
| Trading services appropriation reserve | (2.9) | 1.5 | (2.1) | (3.5) | 2.1 | (2.2) | (3.6) |
| Other insurance reserves | (1.7) | 0.0 | (0.4) | (2.1) | 0.1 | (0.8) | (2.8) |
| Business Rates Pool | (6.5) | 4.8 | (17.8) | (19.5) | 1.0 | (18.5) | (37.0) |
| Capital Reserves | (35.1) | 5.1 | (25.8) | (55.8) | 7.0 | (24.2) | (73.0) |
| Revenue carried forward | (80.0) | 69.3 | (81.3) | (92.0) | 53.5 | (120.8) | (159.3) |
| Total earmarked reserves | (132.9) | 81.0 | (134.9) | (186.8) | 65.2 | (178.3) | (299.9) |

Notes to the Accounts

5. Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves (Cont'd)

School Reserves

Under the Education Reform Act 1988, if we have given a budget to a school and they have not spent it, they can still use that money, even though, technically it is held in our reserves. In other words, these unspent balances represent a special form of reserve which is not available for us to use. The schools revenue balances we hold in this way currently total £23.7 million. Schools also hold balances of £5.3 million for specific purposes, most of which relate to the standards fund formula capital programme.

Since 1997/1998 a loan scheme has been working for schools, where they can borrow money from overall school balances to pay for small capital-related projects. The 'loans' to schools are interest-free if under £100,000 and they must repay them over no more than five years.

| | Balance 31 March 2020 £m | (Increase)/ reduction £m | Balance 31 March 2021 £m | (Increase)/ reduction £m | Balance 31 March 2022 £m |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <u>Delegated revenue budgets</u> | | | | | |
| Primary schools | (12.9) | (4.1) | (17.0) | 0.2 | (16.8) |
| Secondary schools | (1.2) | (1.7) | (2.9) | (1.0) | (3.9) |
| Special | (1.1) | (0.4) | (1.5) | (0.5) | (2.0) |
| Pupil Referral Unit | (0.3) | (0.4) | (0.7) | (0.3) | (1.0) |
| | (15.5) | (6.6) | (22.1) | (1.6) | (23.7) |
| Outstanding loans | 0.5 | (0.2) | 0.3 | (0.1) | 0.2 |
| Net school reserves as 31st March | (15.0) | (6.8) | (21.8) | (1.7) | (23.5) |
| Earmarked reserves | (6.1) | 0.6 | (5.5) | 0.2 | (5.3) |
| Total | (21.1) | (6.2) | (27.3) | (1.5) | (28.8) |

Notes to the Accounts

6. Other Operating Expenditure

| 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|--|-----------------|
| 0.3 Levies | 0.3 |
| 1.1 Impairment on assets held for sale | 0.0 |
| 11.7 Losses on the disposal of non current assets* | 37.3 |
| 13.1 Total | 37.6 |

*The losses on disposal include the reclassification of school assets for newly created academies. These are accounted for as leased assets and they amount to £17.9 million (£15.4 million in 2020/2021) on Academy and Foundation conversions and losses of £19.4 million (£2.6 million gain in 2020/2021) on non school asset disposals.

7. Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

| 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|--|-----------------|
| 32.9 Interest payable and similar charges | 32.5 |
| 17.8 Pensions interest cost and expected returns on pension assets | 20.1 |
| (3.3) Interest receivable and similar income | (3.0) |
| 1.6 Trading services (surplus) / deficit | (0.1) |
| 49.0 Total | 49.5 |

8. Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income

| 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|---|-----------------|
| (367.1) Council tax income | (401.3) |
| (86.7) NNDR | (131.7) |
| (94.6) Non-ringfenced government grants (Note 32) | (62.3) |
| (104.0) Capital grants and contributions | (78.6) |
| (652.4) Total | (673.9) |

Notes to the Accounts

9. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

This analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from unallocated general fund resources by the Council in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the Council in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. The Council's earmarked general reserves are shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement and in Note 5. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's directorates. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

| 2020/2021 Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund | 2020/2021 Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (Note 10) | 2020/2021 Net Expenditure in the Comprehen- sive Income and Expenditure Statement | | 2021/2022 Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund | 2021/2022 Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (Note 10) | 2021/2022 Net Expenditure in the Comprehen- sive Income and Expenditure Statement |
|---|--|---|---|--|--|---|
| £m | £m | £m | | £m | £m | £m |
| 239.5 | (37.4) | 202.1 | Health and Care | 212.0 | (86.1) | 125.9 |
| 222.8 | (62.2) | 160.6 | Families and Communities Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | 238.3 | (18.8) | 219.5 |
| 121.0 | (19.2) | 101.8 | Corporate Services | 125.8 | (33.7) | 92.1 |
| 49.4 | (1.0) | 48.4 | Centrally Controlled Costs | 56.8 | (10.5) | 46.3 |
| (80.8) | 93.2 | 12.4 | Non distributed costs | 22.9 | (14.1) | 8.8 |
| 0.0 | (1.1) | (1.1) | | 0.0 | (4.0) | (4.0) |
| 551.9 | (27.7) | 524.2 | Cost of services | 655.8 | (167.2) | 488.6 |
| 1.4 | 11.7 | 13.1 | Other operating expenditure (Note 6) | 0.3 | 37.3 | 37.6 |
| 31.2 | 17.8 | 49.0 | Financing and investment (income)/expenditure (Note 7) | 29.4 | 20.1 | 49.5 |
| (652.4) | 0.0 | (652.4) | Taxation and non-specific grant income (Note 8) | (673.9) | 0.0 | (673.9) |
| (67.9) | 1.8 | (66.1) | Deficit/(Surplus) on provision of services | 11.6 | (109.8) | (98.2) |
| (35.5) | | | Opening General Fund Balance | (47.4) | | |
| (11.9) | | | Surplus/Deficit on General Fund Balance in Year | 0.1 | | |
| (47.4) | | | Closing General Fund Balance at 31 March | (47.3) | | |

Notes to the Accounts

10. Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2021/2022

| Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts | Adjustments for Capital Purposes (a) £m | Net change for the Pensions Adjustments (b) £m | Other Differences (c) £m | Total Adjustments £m |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Health and Care | (25.7) | 1.6 | (62.0) | (86.1) |
| Families and Communities | (46.0) | 36.9 | (9.7) | (18.8) |
| Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | (22.1) | 1.6 | (13.2) | (33.7) |
| Corporate Services | (9.3) | 2.1 | (3.3) | (10.5) |
| Centrally Controlled Costs | 36.1 | (16.8) | (33.4) | (14.1) |
| Non distributed costs | 0.0 | (4.0) | 0.0 | (4.0) |
| Net Cost of Services | (67.0) | 21.4 | (121.6) | (167.2) |
| Other income and expenditure for the Expenditure and Funding Analysis | 37.3 | 20.1 | 0.0 | 57.4 |
| Difference between General Fund surplus/deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services | (29.7) | 41.5 | (121.6) | (109.8) |

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2020/2021 Comparative Figures

| Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts | Adjustments for Capital Purposes (a) £m | Net change for the Pensions Adjustments (b) £m | Other Differences (c) £m | Total Adjustments £m |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Health and Care | (34.4) | (3.1) | 0.1 | (37.4) |
| Families and Communities | (34.7) | (27.2) | (0.3) | (62.2) |
| Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | (17.7) | (2.1) | 0.6 | (19.2) |
| Corporate Services | 2.6 | (4.0) | 0.4 | (1.0) |
| Centrally Controlled Costs | 31.2 | 34.7 | 27.3 | 93.2 |
| Non distributed costs | 0.0 | (1.1) | 0.0 | (1.1) |
| Net Cost of Services | (53.0) | (2.8) | 28.1 | (27.7) |
| Other income and expenditure for the Expenditure and Funding Analysis | 11.7 | 17.8 | 0.0 | 29.5 |
| Difference between General Fund surplus/deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services | (41.3) | 15.0 | 28.1 | 1.8 |

(a) Adjustments for Capital Purposes

For Services - this represents the cost of capital and the cost of repaying borrowing used in prior years.

For Taxation and Specific Grant Income - this reflects income from capital grants received in the year.

(b) Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments

Net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income:

For Services - this represents the removal of the employer pension contributions made by the Council as allowed by statute and the replacement with current service costs and past service costs.

For Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure - the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

(c) Other Differences

For Services - notional charges representing the costs of employees' annual leave, the cost to the Pension Fund of employees retiring early and contributions to or from earmarked reserves.

For Taxation and Specific Grant Income - the council tax and business rates amounts reflect the actual collection funds for both those funding streams.

Notes to the Accounts

11. Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

The Council's expenditure and income is analysed as follows:

| 2020/2021 | | 2021/2022 |
|------------------|---|------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| | Expenditure | |
| 362.4 | Employee benefits expenses | 384.9 |
| 736.5 | Other service expenses | 760.2 |
| 62.5 | Depreciation, amortisation and impairment | 62.5 |
| 32.9 | Interest payments | 32.5 |
| 0.3 | Precepts and levies | 0.3 |
| 11.7 | Loss on disposal of assets | 37.3 |
| 1,206.3 | Total expenditure | 1,277.7 |
| | Income | |
| (182.9) | Fees, charges and other service income | (232.8) |
| (3.3) | Interest and investment income | (3.0) |
| (453.7) | Income from council tax and non-domestic rates | (533.0) |
| (632.5) | Government grants and contributions | (607.1) |
| (1,272.4) | Total income | (1,375.9) |
| (66.1) | Deficit/(Surplus) on the Provision of Services | (98.2) |

The deficit/(surplus) on provision of services includes many transactions which are not cash based. These notional transactions are then reversed out of the General Fund and are not funded by council tax. There is more detail in Note 4.

Fees, charges and other service income has been broken down across services below.

| 2020/2021 | | 2021/2022 |
|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| £m | | £m |
| (92.1) | Health and Care | (112.2) |
| (15.0) | Families and Communities | (32.7) |
| (59.2) | Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | (63.0) |
| (13.5) | Corporate Services | (22.0) |
| (3.1) | Centrally Controlled Costs | (2.9) |
| 0.0 | Non distributed costs | 0.0 |
| (182.9) | Net Cost of Services | (232.8) |

Notes to the Accounts

12. Property, Plant and Equipment

Movements on Balances in 2021/2022

| | Land and Buildings £m | Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m | Infrastructure Assets £m | Surplus Assets £m | Assets Under Construction £m | Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m | PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m |
|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Cost or Valuation | | | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2021 | 669.8 | 329.7 | 1,178.9 | 17.2 | 8.5 | 2,204.1 | 292.6 |
| Additions | 2.8 | 2.2 | 54.5 | 0.3 | 14.4 | 74.2 | 1.3 |
| Revaluation increases recognised in the Revaluation Reserve | 20.5 | (34.6) | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.4) | (14.5) | (33.3) |
| Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Deficit on the Provision of Services | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.3) | 1.0 | 0.0 |
| Derecognition - Disposals | (36.7) | (0.7) | 0.0 | (1.2) | (2.0) | (40.6) | 0.0 |
| Assets Reclassified (to) / from Held for Sale | 7.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (1.1) | (9.5) | (2.7) | 0.0 |
| At 31 March 2022 | 665.6 | 296.6 | 1,233.4 | 15.2 | 10.7 | 2,221.5 | 260.6 |

Notes to the Accounts

12. Property, Plant and Equipment (Cont'd)

Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment

| | Land and Buildings £m | Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m | Infrastructure Assets £m | Surplus Assets £m | Assets Under Construction £m | Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m | PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m |
|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| At 1 April 2021 | (18.8) | (133.6) | (235.0) | (0.1) | 0.0 | (387.5) | (50.4) |
| Depreciation Charge | (15.8) | (9.4) | (23.1) | 0.0 | 0.0 | (48.3) | (8.2) |
| Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve | 19.8 | 16.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 36.2 | 20.9 |
| Depreciation written out to the Deficit on the Provision of Services | 1.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 0.0 |
| Derecognition - Disposals | 1.3 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 0.0 |
| At 31 March 2022 | (11.7) | (125.9) | (258.1) | (0.1) | 0.0 | (395.8) | (37.7) |
| Net Book Value | | | | | | | |
| At 31 March 2022 | 653.9 | 170.7 | 975.3 | 15.1 | 10.7 | 1,825.7 | 222.9 |
| At 31 March 2021 | 651.0 | 196.1 | 943.9 | 17.1 | 8.5 | 1,816.6 | 242.2 |

Notes to the Accounts

12. Property, Plant and Equipment (Cont'd)

Comparative Movements in 2020/2021

| | £m Land and Buildings | £m Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment | £m Infrastructure Assets | £m Surplus Assets | £m Assets Under Construction | £m Total Property, Plant and Equipment | £m PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment |
|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| Cost or Valuation | | | | | | | |
| At 1 April 2020 | 669.6 | 322.7 | 1,106.4 | 12.6 | 3.4 | 2,114.7 | 287.3 |
| Additions | 1.8 | 4.9 | 72.9 | 1.6 | 3.0 | 84.2 | 1.2 |
| Revaluation increases recognised in the Revaluation Reserve | 25.0 | 5.2 | 0.2 | 5.6 | 0.1 | 36.1 | 4.1 |
| Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Deficit on the Provision of Services | 3.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.1) | 3.3 | 0.0 |
| Derecognition - Disposals | (20.8) | (3.1) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (23.9) | 0.0 |
| Assets Reclassified (to)/ from Held for Sale | (9.2) | 0.0 | (0.6) | (2.6) | 2.1 | (10.3) | 0.0 |
| At 31 March 2021 | 669.8 | 329.7 | 1,178.9 | 17.2 | 8.5 | 2,204.1 | 292.6 |

Notes to the Accounts

12. Property, Plant and Equipment (Cont'd)

Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment

| | Land and Buildings £m | Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m | Infrastructure Assets £m | Surplus Assets £m | Assets Under Construction £m | Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m | PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m |
|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| At 1 April 2020 | (17.6) | (131.1) | (213.3) | (0.1) | 0.0 | (362.1) | (45.9) |
| Depreciation Charge | (13.5) | (9.1) | (21.7) | 0.0 | 0.0 | (44.3) | (8.1) |
| Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve | 8.6 | 3.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 12.1 | 3.6 |
| Depreciation written out to the Deficit on the Provision of Services | 2.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.6 | 0.0 |
| Derecognition - Disposals | 1.1 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.2 | 0.0 |
| At 31 March 2021 | (18.8) | (133.6) | (235.0) | (0.1) | 0.0 | (387.5) | (50.4) |
| Net Book Value | | | | | | | |
| At 31 March 2021 | 651.0 | 196.1 | 943.9 | 17.1 | 8.5 | 1,816.6 | 242.2 |
| At 31 March 2020 | 652.0 | 191.6 | 893.1 | 12.5 | 3.4 | 1,752.6 | 241.4 |

Notes to the Accounts

12. Property, Plant and Equipment (Cont'd)

Valuations

The Council revalues Property, Land and Buildings on a rolling five year programme on a current value basis as set out in Accounting Policy Note 2. All valuations were carried out externally by Catriona Banks MRICS, District Valuer Services. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out with an effective date of 31st March 2022 in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Summary values are shown in the following table:

| | £m Land and Buildings | £m Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment | £m Infrastructure Assets | £m Surplus Assets | £m Assets Under Construction | £m Total Property, Plant and Equipment |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 2021/2022 | | | | | | |
| Carried at historical cost | 0.0 | 60.6 | 975.3 | 0.0 | 10.6 | 1,046.5 |
| Carried at valuation | | | | | | |
| Revaluation in 2017/18 | 145.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 0.0 | 150.7 |
| Revaluation in 2018/19 | 52.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 52.9 |
| Revaluation in 2019/20 | 88.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.2 | 0.0 | 93.5 |
| Revaluation in 2020/21 | 156.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.8 | 0.0 | 158.9 |
| Revaluation in 2021/22 | 212.3 | 110.1 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 323.2 |
| | 653.9 | 170.7 | 975.3 | 15.2 | 10.6 | 1,825.7 |

13. Heritage Assets

Reconciliation of the Carrying Value of Heritage Assets Held by the Council

| | £m Archives | £m Museums | £m County Buildings & Judges House | £m Total Assets |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|---|--------------------|
| Cost or Valuation | | | | |
| 1 April 2021 | 6.8 | 2.5 | 0.3 | 9.6 |
| Additions | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| At 31 March 2022 | 6.8 | 2.5 | 0.3 | 9.6 |
| Cost or Valuation | | | | |
| 1 April 2020 | 6.8 | 2.5 | 0.3 | 9.6 |
| Additions | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| At 31 March 2021 | 6.8 | 2.5 | 0.3 | 9.6 |

Notes to the Accounts

13. Heritage Assets (Cont'd)

Archives

The Council has a number of archived documents held across various Record Offices and Libraries. They are reported in the Balance Sheet at insurance valuation. These insurance valuations are updated annually.

The archived collections include a number of significant documents such as The Sutherland Papers valued at £1.2 million and a printed book collection valued at £1 million.

Museums

The County Council Museum collection contains various objects, photographs and ephemera covering a wide range of subjects within the fields of Staffordshire's social and agricultural history, and, to a lesser extent, crafts and industry. The Museum collection includes 19th century horse drawn carriages with a total value of £0.3 million.

The Council's Art collection is located at Shire Hall. This includes fine art collections by artists associated with Staffordshire and decorative art collections by contemporary craftsmakers.

County Buildings and Judges House

The asset described as County Buildings is a late Victorian Grade II listed building which houses the Council Chamber and other County Council offices and meeting rooms. The Judges House sits within County Buildings; it was previously used to accommodate Justices of the Peace but is now primarily used for member meetings.

Both these buildings contain historical artefacts including oil paintings, antique silver cutlery and mayoral regalia.

Notes to the Accounts

14. Financial Instruments

Categories of Financial Instruments

Under accounting regulations, the Council needs to break down the 'financial instruments' (relating to our investment, lending and borrowing activities) shown on the Balance Sheet into various categories. A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity and this breakdown is shown below.

| | Long - Term | | | Current | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | 31 March 2020 £m | 31 March 2021 £m | 31 March 2022 £m | 31 March 2020 £m | 31 March 2021 £m | 31 March 2022 £m |
| <u>Financial assets</u> | | | | | | |
| <i>At amortised cost:</i> | | | | | | |
| Investments | 30.4 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 64.1 | 0.0 | 42.0 |
| Call accounts and short term deposits | | | | 3.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Bank Overdraft | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (23.4) | (46.1) | (15.1) |
| <i>At fair value through profit & loss</i> | | | | | | |
| Cash equivalents | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 85.3 | 247.5 | 304.9 |
| Total investments and cash equivalents | 30.4 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 129.8 | 201.4 | 331.8 |
| <i>At amortised cost</i> | | | | | | |
| Long Term Debtors | 32.3 | 22.8 | 22.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Trade receivables | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 99.6 | 113.5 | 103.6 |
| Total Financial Assets | 62.7 | 53.2 | 52.6 | 229.4 | 314.9 | 435.4 |
| <u>Financial liabilities</u> | | | | | | |
| <i>At amortised cost:</i> | | | | | | |
| Loans | (413.1) | (412.2) | (404.4) | (39.0) | (40.0) | (44.0) |
| Total borrowings | (413.1) | (412.2) | (404.4) | (39.0) | (40.0) | (44.0) |
| PFI and finance lease liabilities | (137.6) | (130.1) | (116.5) | (7.5) | (7.6) | (7.7) |
| Total other liabilities | (137.6) | (130.1) | (116.5) | (7.5) | (7.6) | (7.7) |
| Trade and other creditors | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (76.6) | (144.0) | (98.3) |
| Total creditors | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | (76.6) | (144.0) | (98.3) |
| Total Financial Liabilities | (550.7) | (542.3) | (520.9) | (123.1) | (191.6) | (150.0) |

Investments and borrowing are classified as current if the Council is likely either to settle the balances or to receive proceeds within 12 months. Interest owed to or payable by the Council within the next 12 months is shown in the Balance Sheet as at 31 March under the "current" category.

Notes to the Accounts

14. Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset, or paid to transfer a liability in an arms-length transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

The Council has estimated fair value by calculating the net present value of the remaining cash flows. This gives an estimate, in today's terms, of the value of the payments in the future and this is shown in the table below. The assumptions made when calculating fair values are:

- Loans borrowed have been valued by discounting the contractual cash flows over the whole life of the instrument at the appropriate market rate for local authority loans.
- For non-PWLB loans fair value estimates have been calculated using both PWLB redemption and new PWLB Certainty Rate loan discount rates. The PWLB redemption rates provide a reasonable proxy for rates that a number of market participants appear to have used when asked about early redemption costs for market loans.
- No early repayment or impairment of loans is recognised for any financial instrument.
- The fair value of short-term instruments is assumed to approximate to the carrying value.

Fair values are also shown in the table below, split by their level in the fair value hierarchy:

- Level 1. Fair value is only derived from quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities, e.g. bond prices.
- Level 2. Fair value is calculated from inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability, e.g. interest rates for similar instruments.
- Level 3. Fair value is determined using unobservable inputs, e.g. non-market data.

The fair values calculated are as follows:

| | | 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2022 |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | Fair value level | Carrying amount £m | Fair Value £m | Carrying amount £m | Fair Value £m | Carrying amount £m | Fair Value £m |
| PWLB - maturity | 2 | 400.1 | 632.8 | 400.3 | 631.3 | 396.4 | 575.9 |
| PWLB - equal instalments of principal | 2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Lender option borrower option | 2 | 51.9 | 99.5 | 51.8 | 84.8 | 51.9 | 76.5 |
| Total borrowings | | 452.1 | 732.4 | 452.2 | 716.2 | 448.4 | 652.5 |

The fair value of the liabilities held at amortised cost is higher than the carrying amount as at 31 March 2022. This is because the Council has a number of fixed rate loans where at the balance sheet date, the interest rates are higher than the current rates available from the market for similar loans.

Notes to the Accounts

14. Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities (Cont'd)

| | | 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2022 |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | Fair value level | Carrying amount | Fair Value | Carrying amount | Fair Value | Carrying amount | Fair Value |
| | | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Deposits with banks and building societies | 2 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| Local authority and DMO deposits | 2 | 94.5 | 102.1 | 30.4 | 37.0 | 62.4 | 67.0 |
| Financial assets held at amortised cost | | 98.3 | 105.9 | 30.4 | 37.0 | 72.4 | 77.0 |
| Money market funds (*) | 1 | 85.3 | 85.3 | 247.5 | 247.5 | 304.9 | 304.9 |
| Financial assets held at fair value | | 85.3 | 85.3 | 247.5 | 247.5 | 304.9 | 304.9 |
| Financial Assets | | 183.6 | 191.2 | 277.9 | 284.5 | 377.3 | 381.9 |

* The valuation technique used to measure the fair value of money market funds is 'unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical shares'

The fair value and carrying amount for money market funds and bank and building society deposits are broadly the same at 31 March 2022 as interest rates being received are similar to market rates. The fair value of the local authority deposits is higher at 31 March 2022 as the interest rate on similar investments is now lower than when the investments were originally made.

Notes to the Accounts

14. Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

Gains and Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments consist of the following:

| | 2020/2021 | | | 2021/2022 | | |
|---|---|--|---------------|---|--|---------------|
| | Financial Liabilities at amortised cost £m | Financial Assets at amortised cost and at FVPL £m | Total £m | Financial Liabilities at amortised cost £m | Financial Assets at amortised cost and at FVPL £m | Total £m |
| Interest expense | (32.9) | 0.0 | (32.9) | (32.5) | 0.0 | (32.5) |
| Total expense in (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services | (32.9) | 0.0 | (32.9) | (32.5) | 0.0 | (32.5) |
| Interest income | 0.0 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Total income in (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services | 0.0 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Net (loss) /gain for the year | (32.9) | 3.3 | (29.6) | (32.5) | 3.0 | (29.5) |

Notes to the Accounts

15. Long Term Debtors

| 31 March 2020 £m | 31 March 2021 £m | | 31 March 2022 £m |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 0.4 | 0.3 | Deferred consideration (PFI) | 0.3 |
| 31.9 | 22.5 | Other long term debtors | 21.9 |
| 32.3 | 22.8 | Total | 22.2 |

As part of the Two Schools PFI scheme, we transferred land next to the new Sir Graham Balfour School over to the contractor. The land had planning permission for a housing development. The value of this land was about £2 million and this has resulted in lower contract payments. This is the deferred consideration and is being written down over the life of the PFI contract.

The other long term debtors shown above includes an amount that relates to Stoke on Trent City Council (£8m). This debt arose when this organisation was part of the County Council. The organisation makes payments to us to service the debt.

There is an amount of £13.9m relating to Section 106 developer contributions which are due to fund capital schemes, however the money has not yet been received.

Notes to the Accounts

16. Short Term Debtors

| 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|---------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| £m | £m | | £m |
| 117.4 | 113.7 | Trade debtors | 118.9 |
| 3.3 | 38.1 | Prepayments | 20.1 |
| 6.2 | 4.0 | VAT (due to us) | 7.5 |
| (14.4) | (22.3) | Allowance for doubtful debts (debts we think may not be paid) | (27.3) |
| 112.5 | 133.5 | Total | 119.2 |

17. Cash and Cash Equivalents

The balance of cash and equivalents is made up of the following elements:

| 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|---------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| £m | £m | | £m |
| (23.4) | (46.1) | Bank overdraft | (15.1) |
| 3.8 | 0.0 | Call accounts and short-term deposits * | 0.0 |
| 85.3 | 247.5 | Money Market Funds * | 304.9 |
| 65.7 | 201.4 | Total cash and cash equivalents | 289.8 |

* In accordance with the appropriate guidelines, these balances are defined as "cash and cash equivalents" because they are all accessible by the Council at short notice. The cash is held in various accounts with banks and Money Market Funds earning a market rate of interest.

Notes to the Accounts

18. Assets Held for Sale

| 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | Short term assets held for sale | 31 March 2022 |
|---------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| £m | £m | | £m |
| 10.5 | 15.5 | Balance outstanding at start of year | 20.3 |
| 11.5 | 10.2 | Assets newly classified as held for sale | 2.7 |
| 0.0 | 0.1 | Additions | 0.0 |
| (1.7) | 0.0 | Assets reclassified as surplus | 0.0 |
| 0.0 | 0.0 | Assets reclassified as operational | (0.1) |
| (0.4) | 0.0 | Assets reclassified as under construction | 0.0 |
| 0.0 | 0.3 | Impairments/ Revaluations | 0.0 |
| <u>(4.4)</u> | <u>(5.8)</u> | Assets sold | <u>(13.2)</u> |
| 15.5 | 20.3 | Balance outstanding at year-end | 9.7 |

Although there are some assets classified as held for sale that have been brought forward from the previous year, it is envisaged that all of these assets will have been sold by the end of March, therefore the Council does not hold assets held for sale which would be classified as non-current.

19. Short-Term Creditors

| 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|----------------|----------------|---|----------------|
| £m | £m | | £m |
| (78.5) | (140.0) | Trade and other creditors | (98.4) |
| (5.3) | (5.7) | Tax and money owed to HM Revenues and Customs | (11.3) |
| (31.1) | (4.1) | Money received in advance | (9.2) |
| <u>(114.9)</u> | <u>(149.8)</u> | Total | <u>(118.9)</u> |

Notes to the Accounts

20. Provisions

We hold various provisions in line with schemes of management that set out the financial arrangements for how they are used. We regularly review the balances we hold. A summary of the balances held on each provision is shown below.

Long term provisions

| | Business Rates Appeals | Insurance | | Long Term Provisions Total |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| | | Before LGR | After LGR | |
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Balance at 1 April 2021 | (4.0) | (1.0) | (6.9) | (11.9) |
| Amounts contributed to provision | (0.2) | (0.3) | (3.4) | (3.9) |
| Amounts used in 2021/22 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 4.1 | 5.1 |
| Balance at 31 March 2022 | (3.5) | (1.0) | (6.2) | (10.7) |

There is a significant provision of £3.5m (£4m in 2020/21) for the repayment of any successful non-domestic rates appeals (business rates appeals) upheld by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). Prior to the introduction of the Retained Business Rates Scheme, these appeals were met from the national pool administered by central government, but now the Council is liable for 9% of the costs of the appeals. The timing of these appeals is uncertain and outside the control of the Council as they are dependent on the timing of reviews of cases by the VOA.

Our insurance arrangements are a combination of insurance with other providers and money we provide ourselves. The balances we hold, stated above, are to meet claim payments, motor vehicle and fire (education properties) insurance claims which are not covered by other insurers. We have split the provisions between those before local government reorganisation (LGR) - 31 March 1997 and those after that date. When we have paid all claims relating to before 31 March 1997, we will share any profit or loss with Stoke-on-Trent City Council in line with the transfer of property agreement.

It is not known when future claims will be made or how much the County Council may be liable to pay for them, however it is not likely that any of the claims provided for will be settled or recovered within the next 12 months.

Notes to the Accounts

21. Unusable Reserves

| 31 March 2020 | | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 | |
|----------------|--|---------------|--|----------------|--|
| £m | | £m | | £m | |
| (228.3) | | (257.4) | Revaluation reserve | (249.1) | |
| (846.2) | | (895.1) | Capital adjustment account | (919.6) | |
| 17.0 | | 16.5 | Financial instruments adjustment account | 16.0 | |
| 793.5 | | 1,026.0 | Pensions reserve | 595.9 | |
| (7.3) | | 20.5 | Collection fund adjustment account | (11.6) | |
| 7.5 | | 8.3 | Accumulated absences account | 7.2 | |
| 0.0 | | 2.0 | Dedicated Schools Grant adjustment account | 8.6 | |
| (263.8) | | (79.2) | Total Unusable Reserves | (552.6) | |

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets. The balance is reduced when accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost,
- used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation, or
- disposed of and the gains are realised.

The reserve contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

| 2020/2021 | | 2021/2022 | |
|-------------|--|-------------|----------------|
| £m | £m | £m | £m |
| (49.3) | (228.3) | (59.9) | (257.4) |
| | Balance at 1 April | | |
| | Upward revaluation of assets | | |
| | Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the deficit on the provision of services | | |
| <u>5.6</u> | | <u>41.7</u> | |
| | Surplus on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the deficit on the provision of services | | |
| | (43.7) | | (18.2) |
| | Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation | | |
| 4.5 | | 6.2 | |
| <u>10.1</u> | Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped | <u>20.3</u> | |
| | 14.6 Amounts written off to the Capital adjustment account | | 26.5 |
| | (257.4) Balance at 31 March | | (249.1) |

Notes to the Accounts

21. Unusable reserves (Cont'd)

Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or enhancement of those assets under statutory provisions. The Account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or enhancement as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The Account is credited with the amounts set aside by the Council as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement.

The account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains.

Note 4 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

| 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|--|----------------|
| £m | £m |
| (846.2) Balance at 1 April | (895.1) |
| Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement: | |
| Charges for depreciation and impairment of non | |
| 62.5 current assets | 62.4 |
| Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute | |
| 21.5 (REFCUS) | 16.9 |
| Amounts of non current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the | |
| 25.5 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 51.8 |
| Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation | |
| (14.7) Reserve | (26.5) |
| 94.8 Net written out amount of the cost of non current assets consumed in the year | 104.6 |
| Capital financing applied in the year: | |
| Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new | |
| (20.2) capital expenditure (including REFCUS) | (14.5) |
| Capital grants and contributions credited to the Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to | |
| (85.4) capital financing | (70.1) |
| Application of grants to capital financing from the | |
| (7.4) Capital Grants Unapplied Account | (9.3) |
| Statutory provision for the financing of capital | |
| (29.2) investment charged against the General Fund balance | (35.4) |
| (1.5) Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund | 0.2 |
| (143.7) | (129.1) |
| (895.1) Balance at 31 March | (919.6) |

Notes to the Accounts

21. Unusable reserves (Cont'd)

Pensions Reserve

The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Council accounts for post employment benefits in the Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Council makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Council has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time benefits come to be paid.

| 2020/2021 | 2020/2021 |
|---|---------------|
| £m | £m |
| 793.5 Balance at 1 April | 1,026.0 |
| 217.5 Actuarial (gains)/losses on pension assets and liabilities | (471.5) |
| Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the deficit/surplus on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and | |
| 72.6 Expenditure Statement | 100.7 |
| Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the | |
| (92.3) year | (42.5) |
| <u>34.7</u> Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions | <u>(16.8)</u> |
| 1,026.0 Balance at 31 March | 595.9 |

Notes to the Accounts

22. Cash Flow Statement - Operating Activities

The cash flows from operating activities includes the following items:

| 2020/2021 £m | | 2021/2022 £m |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| (3.1) | Interest received | (3.1) |
| 22.4 | Interest paid | 22.4 |

The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following non-cash movements

| 2020/2021 £m | | 2021/2022 £m |
|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| (43.2) | Depreciation | (47.4) |
| (18.2) | Impairment and downward valuations | (14.1) |
| (7.8) | Increase/(Decrease) in impairment of bad debts | (5.0) |
| (33.2) | (Increase)/Decrease in creditors | 28.3 |
| 30.3 | Increase/(Decrease) in debtors | (29.4) |
| (0.5) | Increase/(Decrease) in stock valuation | 0.1 |
| (14.9) | Pension benefits charged in excess of contributions | (38.2) |
| 34.7 | Prepayment of pension contributions* | 17.9 |
| (25.5) | Net carrying amount of non-current assets sold | (51.9) |
| (40.4) | Other non-cash items charges to the net Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services | 18.8 |
| (118.7) | | (120.9) |

* The prepayment relates to a lump sum paid to the Pension Fund as a deficit repair payment. By paying for three years in one payment, the County Council has received a discount on the amount due.

The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following items that are investing and financing activities

| 2020/2021 £m | | 2021/2022 £m |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| 111.0 | Capital grants credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services | 84.8 |
| 13.8 | Proceeds for the sale of PPE, investment property and intangible assets | 14.5 |
| (9.9) | Other items for which the cash effects are investing or financing cash flows | (10.2) |
| 114.9 | | 89.1 |

Notes to the Accounts

23. Cash Flow Statement - Investing Activities

| 2020/2021 £m | | 2021/2022 £m |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| 113.7 | Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investments and intangible assets | 106.4 |
| (12.4) | Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets | (34.5) |
| (64.1) | (Receipts)/purchases of short-term and long-term investments | 42.0 |
| (111.0) | Other receipts from investing activities | (84.8) |
| (73.8) | Net cash flows from investing activities | 29.1 |

24. Cash Flow Statement - Financing Activities

| 2020/2021 £m | | 2021/2022 £m |
|-----------------|--|-----------------|
| (1.9) | Receipts from financing activities | (1.9) |
| 9.9 | Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases and on balance sheet PFI contracts | 10.4 |
| 0.0 | Repayments of short and long-term borrowing | 4.0 |
| 8.0 | Net cash flows from financing activities | 12.5 |

25. Reconciliation of Liabilities Arising from Financing Activities

| | 1 April 2020 £m | Financing Cash Flows £m | Non- Financing Cash Flows £m | 31 March 2021 £m |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Long-term borrowing repayable after more than one year | (413.1) | 0.0 | 0.9 | (412.2) |
| Long-term borrowing repayable within one year | (39.0) | 0.0 | (1.0) | (40.0) |
| PFI schemes | (139.6) | 9.9 | (2.4) | (132.1) |
| Finance leases | (5.7) | 0.1 | 0.0 | (5.6) |
| Total liabilities from financing activities | (597.4) | 10.0 | (2.5) | (589.9) |

| | 1 April 2021 £m | Financing Cash Flows £m | Non- Financing Cash Flows £m | 31 March 2022 £m |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Long-term borrowing repayable after more than one year | (412.2) | 0.0 | 7.8 | (404.4) |
| Long-term borrowing repayable within one year | (40.0) | 4.0 | (8.0) | (44.0) |
| PFI schemes | (132.1) | 10.4 | (2.5) | (124.2) |
| Finance leases | (5.6) | 0.1 | 5.5 | 0.0 |
| Total liabilities from financing activities | (589.9) | 14.5 | 2.8 | (572.6) |

Notes to the Accounts

26. Pooled Budgets

Better Care Fund

In 2021/2022 Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups entered into a Section 75 Framework Agreement of the National Health Service Act 2006 pooled fund arrangement, known as the Better Care Fund. Staffordshire County Council is the Host Partner for the pool. The total value of the pool was £142.5m.

Each Partner accounts separately for the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities which relate to or arise from expenditure on Individual Schemes and its interest in Pooled Funds.

In accordance with the agreement, the income and expenditure included in Staffordshire County Council accounts and detailed below relates to income received from CCG's and spent by the County Council as the Lead Commissioner for these services.

| Section 75 | 2020/2021 | | 2021/2022 | |
|---|-----------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Funding provided to the pooled budget: | | | | |
| East Staffordshire CCG | (3.2) | | (6.7) | |
| South East Staffordshire & Seisdon CCG | (6.6) | | (11.9) | |
| Cannock Chase CCG | (4.2) | | (7.1) | |
| North Staffordshire CCG | (6.1) | | (11.0) | |
| Stafford & Surrounds CCG | (4.7) | | (8.1) | |
| Stoke on Trent CCG | (0.2) | | (0.3) | |
| | | (25.0) | | (45.1) |
| Expenditure met from the pooled budget | | 21.8 | | 25.8 |
| County Council share of net surplus/deficit arising on the pooled budget | | (3.2) | | (19.3) |

The following memorandum account shows the gross income and expenditure of the scheme in 2021/2022.

| | 2020/2021 | | 2021/2022 | |
|---|-----------|--------------|-----------|---------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Funding provided to the Pooled Budget: | | | | |
| Clinical Commissioning Groups | (77.9) | | (100.7) | |
| Department for Communities & Local Government | (41.7) | | (41.8) | |
| | | (119.6) | | (142.5) |
| Expenditure met from the Pooled Budget: | | | | |
| Clinical Commissioning Groups | 56.0 | | 58.4 | |
| Staffordshire County Council | 50.4 | | 54.8 | |
| District & Borough Councils | 10.0 | | 10.0 | |
| | | 116.4 | | 123.2 |
| Net position on the pooled budget | | (3.2) | | (19.3) |

Notes to the Accounts

27. Members' Allowances

The Council paid the following amounts to members of the Council during the year:

| | 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Basic Allowance | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Special Responsibility Allowance | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Expenses | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | <u>1.0</u> | <u>1.0</u> |

Notes to the Accounts

28. Officers' Remuneration

The remuneration paid to the Council's senior officers is set out in the table below. The definition of senior officer is:

- an officer whose salary is £150,000 or more
- a statutory chief officer as per section 2(6) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- a non-statutory chief officer as per section 2(7) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989

| Officer | Year | Salary, fees and allowances £ | Performance related pay £ | Taxable expenses and allowances £ | Compensation for loss of office £ | Employer's pension contributions £ | Total including pension contributions £ |
|--|------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Chief Executive - John Henderson | 2020/2021 | 208,738 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 223,738 |
| Chief Executive - John Henderson notes 1, 3 | 2021/2022 | 211,743 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 211,743 |
| Director of Health and Care - Richard Harling | 2020/2021 | 154,502 | 11,262 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 165,764 |
| Director of Health and Care - Richard Harling notes 2, 3 | 2021/2022 | 195,694 | 11,262 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 206,956 |
| Director of Families and Communities | 2020/2021 | 152,227 | 0 | 12,458 | 0 | 37,409 | 202,094 |
| Director of Families and Communities | 2021/2022 | 156,942 | 0 | 13,193 | 0 | 43,369 | 213,504 |
| Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills | 2020/2021 | 146,127 | 10,854 | 10,100 | 0 | 32,690 | 199,771 |
| Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills note 3 | 2021/2022 | 148,319 | 0 | 9,106 | 0 | 46,950 | 204,375 |
| Director of Corporate Services | 2020/2021 | 146,127 | 0 | 7,464 | 0 | 37,409 | 191,000 |
| Director of Corporate Services | 2021/2022 | 148,319 | 0 | 5,861 | 0 | 39,453 | 193,633 |

Notes to the Accounts

28. Officers' Remuneration (Cont'd)

| Officer | Year | Salary, fees and allowances £ | Performance related pay £ | Taxable expenses and allowances £ | Compensation for loss of office £ | Employer's pension contributions £ | Total including pension contributions £ |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Section 151 Officer, County Treasurer | 2020/2021 | 115,466 | 0 | 10,755 | 0 | 29,559 | 155,780 |
| Section 151 Officer, County Treasurer | 2021/2022 | 122,780 | 0 | 11,401 | 0 | 32,659 | 166,840 |

Notes for clarification

All senior officers have received a 1.5% pay award in the 2021/22 financial year.
Performance related pay received in year is attributable to the previous financial year.

Note 1 The Chief Executive is not part of the Local Government Pensions Scheme.

Note 2 The Director of Health and Care is not part of the Local Government Pensions Scheme.

Note 3 Senior officers had a pay review in year which removed performance related pay and placed officers on national terms for pay awards. The review led to the Chief Executive, Director for Health and Care and the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills receiving pay backdated to April 2020. The pay figures for 2020/21 have been adjusted for this.

Notes to the Accounts

28. Officers' Remuneration (Cont'd)

The Council's employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions) are as follows. The figures include severance payments and those employees have been identified within the 'Leavers' column. The number of employees includes teachers.

The employees identified within the previous tables in this note are included in the table below.

| Number of employees 2020/2021 | | | Remuneration band | Number of employees 2021/2022 | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Teachers | Non-teachers | Leavers | | Teachers | Non-teachers | Leavers |
| 107 | 131 | 1 | £ 50,000 to £ 54,999 | 69 | 144 | 1 |
| 56 | 43 | 2 | £ 55,000 to £ 59,999 | 45 | 52 | 1 |
| 49 | 24 | 1 | £ 60,000 to £ 64,999 | 44 | 34 | 1 |
| 29 | 20 | 1 | £ 65,000 to £ 69,999 | 23 | 19 | 4 |
| 20 | 10 | 3 | £ 70,000 to £ 74,999 | 18 | 4 | 3 |
| 9 | 8 | 1 | £ 75,000 to £ 79,999 | 14 | 5 | 0 |
| 3 | 14 | 0 | £ 80,000 to £ 84,999 | 5 | 14 | 0 |
| 3 | 4 | 1 | £ 85,000 to £ 89,999 | 2 | 5 | 3 |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | £ 90,000 to £ 94,999 | 1 | 7 | 4 |
| 3 | 9 | 1 | £ 95,000 to £ 99,999 | 3 | 13 | 2 |
| 1 | 2 | 0 | £100,000 to £104,999 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 0 | 1 | 1 | £105,000 to £109,999 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 | £110,000 to £114,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 6 | 2 | £115,000 to £119,999 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £120,000 to £124,999 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | £125,000 to £129,999 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | £130,000 to £134,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £135,000 to £139,999 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £140,000 to £144,999 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £145,000 to £149,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 2 | 0 | £150,000 to £154,999 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | £155,000 to £159,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | £160,000 to £164,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £165,000 to £169,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £170,000 to £174,999 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £175,000 to £179,999 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £180,000 to £184,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £185,000 to £189,999 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £190,000 to £194,999 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £195,000 to £199,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 | £205,000 to £209,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | £210,000 to £214,999 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 285 | 282 | 16 | Total | 225 | 320 | 31 |

Notes to the Accounts

29. Exit Packages

The number of exit packages is disclosed below in bands of £20,000, up to £100,000. Thereafter the number is disclosed in bands of £50,000.

| (a) Exit package cost band (including special payments) | (b) Number of compulsory redundancies | | (c) Number of other departures agreed | | (d) Total number of exit packages by cost band [(b) + (c)] | | (e) Total cost of exit packages in each band | |
|--|---|----------------|---|----------------|---|----------------|--|--------------|
| | 2020/21 No. | 2021/22 No. | 2020/21 No. | 2021/22 No. | 2020/21 No. | 2021/22 No. | 2020/21 £ | 2021/22 £ |
| £0 - £20,000 | 13 | 23 | 2 | 7 | 15 | 30 | 119,012.68 | 221,520.88 |
| £20,001 - £40,000 | 8 | 18 | 5 | 1 | 13 | 19 | 404,123.91 | 499,576.05 |
| £40,001 - £60,000 | 2 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 149,689.67 | 620,287.22 |
| £60,001 - £80,000 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 278,829.43 | 278,576.25 |
| £80,001 - £100,000 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 254,917.20 | 343,414.00 |
| £100,001 - £150,000 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 383,771.60 | 869,934.60 |
| £150,001 - £200,000 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 509,132.34 | 531,264.11 |
| £200,000 - £250,000 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 417,010.70 |
| £250,000 - £300,000 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 284,562.09 |
| £300,000 - £350,000 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 330,375.29 |
| Total cost included in bandings and in the CIES | 30 | 71 | 14 | 12 | 44 | 83 | 2,099,476.83 | 4,396,521.19 |

The note includes all costs to the Council when an employee leaves. Therefore redundancy payments, lump sum payments to the individual and any actuarial strain owed to the Pension Fund have been included.

In 2021/2022 there was a restructure planned as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy which resulted in a larger number of exit packages than in an average year.

Notes to the Accounts

30. External Audit Costs

The Council has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts, certification of grant claims and statutory inspections and to non-audit services provided by the Council's external auditors.

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year * | 0.183 | 0.085 |
| Fees payable in respect of other services provided by the external auditor during the year. | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| Total | 0.183 | 0.085 |

* this includes a scale variation fee of £98k for additional work to complete the audit of the 2020/2021 financial statements. No estimate for any scale variation fee for the audit of the 2021/22 financial statements is yet available.

Notes to the Accounts

31. Dedicated Schools Grant

In 2021/2022 we received a specific grant from Central Government called the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As a result, we have shown this on the schools service figures in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement.

We pay for our spending on schools using this grant. We can only use the DSG to pay for spending properly included in the schools budget, as defined by government regulations. The schools budget includes estimates for a restricted range of services provided on a council-wide basis and for an individual school's budget. We divide this up into a share of the budget, for each school. We have to account for overspending and underspending on the two parts separately.

Details of how we used the DSG for 2021/2022 are as follows:

| | Schools budget funded by DSG | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| | Central Expenditure £m | Individual Schools Budget (ISB) £m | Total £m |
| Final DSG for 2021/2022, before academy recoupment | 130.8 | 581.0 | 711.8 |
| Academy figure recouped for 2021/2022 | 0.0 | (420.3) | (420.3) |
| Total DSG after academy recoupment for 2021/2022 | 130.8 | 160.7 | 291.5 |
| Plus: brought forward from 2020/2021 | (2.1) | 0.0 | (2.1) |
| Less: carry-forward to 2022/2023 agreed in advance | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Agreed budgeted distribution in 2021/2022 | 128.7 | 160.7 | 289.4 |
| In year adjustments* | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Final budget distribution for 2021/2022 | 128.7 | 160.7 | 289.4 |
| Less: Actual central expenditure | 137.4 | 0.0 | 137.4 |
| Less: Actual ISB deployed to schools | 0.0 | 160.7 | 160.7 |
| Plus: Local Authority contribution for 2021/2022 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| In year carry-forward to 2022/2023 | (8.7) | 0.0 | (8.7) |
| Plus: carry forward to 2022/2023 agreed in advance | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Carry forward to 2022/2023 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2020/2021 | | | (2.1) |
| Addition to unusable reserve at the end of 2021/2022 | | | (6.6) |
| Total of DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2021/2022 | | | (8.7) |
| Net DSG position at the end of 2021/2022 | | | (8.7) |

*Amount recognised in year but not accrued for in accordance with Education Funding Agency guidance.

Notes to the Accounts

32. Grant Income

The Council credited the following grants to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2021/2022.

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income | | |
| Revenue Support Grant | 10.9 | 10.9 |
| New Homes Bonus | 2.7 | 2.0 |
| Local Services Support Grant | 0.4 | 0.6 |
| Social Care Grant | 20.8 | 25.3 |
| Better Care Fund ** | 31.7 | 0.0 |
| Covid 19 Emergency Funding * | 28.1 | 23.5 |
| Total | 94.6 | 62.3 |
| Credited to Services | | |
| Department for Education | 41.2 | 32.8 |
| Department for Transport | 3.2 | 4.2 |
| Department of Health | 71.3 | 71.2 |
| Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ** | 6.8 | 39.4 |
| DEFRA | 10.2 | 9.5 |
| Higher Education Funding Council for England | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Home Office | 3.3 | 3.5 |
| Youth Justice Board | 0.6 | 1.0 |
| Other | 7.5 | 12.9 |
| Total | 144.4 | 174.8 |

* This figure relates to non-specific Covid 19 grants only. Where grants have been received for specific purposes, these are included as amounts credited to services.

** The Better Care Fund grant of £31.7m is treated as a service specific grant in 2021/2022.

Notes to the Accounts

32. Grant Income (Cont'd)

The Council has received a number of grants and contributions that have yet to be recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them that will require monies or property to be returned to the originator. The balances at year-end are as follows:

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Capital Grants Receipts in Advance | | |
| Department for Education | 5.1 | 4.2 |
| Department for Transport | 11.1 | 7.1 |
| Other Contributions | 29.5 | 41.9 |
| Total | 45.7 | 53.2 |

Notes to the Accounts

33. Related Parties

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties - bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Council or to be controlled or influenced by the Council.

Central Government

Central government has effective control over the general operations of the Council - it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. council tax bills). Grants received from government departments are shown in Note 32.

Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2021/2022 is shown in Note 27.

Members represent our interests within a range of organisations and some are also members of district, borough or parish councils within Staffordshire. Members make declarations under Sections 94 to 98 of the Local Government Act 1972 and under the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (England) Order 2001. Members also give details of their personal interests in council business to the Monitoring Officer. You can get more details from the Monitoring Officer, 2 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford, Staffordshire, ST16 2DH.

Pension Fund

We run the Staffordshire Pension Fund and have included the accounts of the pension fund in our accounts. Pension Fund transactions that relate specifically to Staffordshire County Council are disclosed in Note 40.

Other public bodies (subject to common control by Central Government)

The Council has pooled budget arrangements with NHS organisations as detailed in Note 26.

The Council acts as the accountable body for the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP), which supports projects that benefit the local economy and supports growth through the creation of jobs, housing and skills (apprenticeships). At 31 March 2022 the SSLEP held cash of £11.8m (£33.8m in 2020/2021).

The Council acts as accountable body for the Midlands Engine Partnership (ME). At 31 March 2022 the ME held cash of £4.1m (£6.4m in 2020/2021).

Notes to the Accounts

33. Related Parties (Cont'd)

Payments to the Environment Agency

| 2020/2021 | | 2021/2022 |
|------------------|---|------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| 0.3 | Environment Agency - Flood defence levy | 0.3 |
| 0.3 | Total | 0.3 |

Entrust Support Services Ltd

In 2013/2014 Entrust was established to provide education support services to schools throughout Staffordshire and other counties. The Council owns 49% of the shares in Entrust and Capita Business Services Limited (a subsidiary of Capita plc) owns 51% of the shares in Entrust. The company began trading on 1st April 2013.

Some members and officers of the Council are also Directors of Entrust, these are:

- Cllr Mike Sutherland, Chairman of Pensions Committee
- John Henderson, Chief Executive

During 2021/2022, the Council purchased services in the normal course of business from Entrust for £20.0 million (2020/2021 - £25 million); this includes services purchased by schools. Entrust bought services in the normal course of business from the Council for £2.4 million (2020/2021 - £2.3 million).

At the end of the year, Entrust owed the Council £0.7 million (2020/2021 - £0.6 million).

Penda Ltd

In 2015/16 the County Council entered into a partnership with Kier Ltd to provide property services and to manage the County Council's asset portfolio. This joint venture is called Penda Ltd. The County Council has invested £50,000 in the partnership.

Ian Turner and Wendy Woodward, who are officers of the Council, are also Directors of Penda Ltd.

There were no material transactions between the Council and Penda Ltd in 2021/2022.

Notes to the Accounts

33. Related Parties (Cont'd)

Nexus Trading Services Ltd

In 2017/18 Nexus began trading by providing social care services for older people and those with disabilities.

Some Members and Officers of the County Council are also Directors of Nexus and they are:

- Cllr Mark Deaville, Cabinet Member for Commercial
- Cllr Mark Winnington, Chairman of the Planning Committee
- Helen Riley, Deputy Chief Executive and Director for Families and Communities
- Dr. Richard Harling - Director for Health and Care
- Simon Ablewhite - Assistant County Treasurer

During 2021/2022, the Council purchased services in the normal course of business from Nexus for £8.3 million (2020/2021 £5.8 million). Nexus bought services in the normal course of business from the Council for £0.1 million (2020/2021 £0.2m).

At the end of the year, Nexus owed the Council £0 (2020/2021 £0.2m).

Notes to the Accounts

34. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below (including the value of assets acquired under finance leases and PFI/PPP contracts), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. The expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

| <u>2020/2021</u> | | <u>2021/2022</u> |
|------------------|---|------------------|
| Total £m | | Total £m |
| 706.2 | Opening Capital Financing Requirement | 696.8 |
| | Capital Investment | |
| 112.9 | Property, plant and equipment | 94.4 |
| 0.0 | Investment properties | 0.0 |
| 0.0 | Intangible assets | 0.0 |
| 21.5 | Revenue Expenditure funded from Capital under Statute | 17.0 |
| 134.4 | Total Capital Investment | 111.4 |
| | Financed From | |
| 29.2 | Minimum Revenue Provision | 35.4 |
| 64.0 | Capital Grants | 51.1 |
| 20.2 | Capital Receipts | 14.5 |
| 1.6 | Revenue | 0.5 |
| 5.2 | Other Contributions | 1.2 |
| 23.6 | Section 106 Contributions | 27.1 |
| 143.8 | Total | 129.8 |
| 696.8 | Closing Capital Financing Requirement | 678.4 |

Notes to the Accounts

34. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing (Cont'd)

| <u>2020/2021</u> | | <u>2021/2022</u> |
|---------------------|---|---------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| 706.2 | Opening Capital Financing Requirement (as above) | 696.8 |
| (12.4) | Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (Supported by government financial assistance) | (11.9) |
| 10.7 | Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (Unsupported by government financial assistance) | 7.5 |
| (0.1) | Assets acquired under finance leases | (5.6) |
| (7.6) | Assets acquired under PFI/PPP contracts | (8.4) |
| <u>696.8</u> | Closing Capital Financing Requirement | <u>678.4</u> |

Notes to the Accounts

35. Leases

Operating Leases

Council as Lessee

The Council has operating leases in place for various properties.

The future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

| 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| Restated * | | |
| 0.7 | Not later than one year | 1.0 |
| 1.8 | Later than one year and not later than five years | 3.0 |
| 0.9 | Later than five years | 5.7 |
| <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| 3.4 | | 9.7 |

The expenditure charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement during the year in relation to these leases was:

| 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| Restated * | | |
| 0.9 | Minimum lease payments | 1.0 |
| <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| 0.9 | | 1.0 |

* restated due to change in rent at Waterside Court

Notes to the Accounts

35. Leases (continued)

Finance Leases

Council as Lessee

The Council has one finance lease for the provision of office accommodation. A finance lease for the provision of residential dementia care has been terminated during 2021/2022

Assets acquired under finance leases are carried as Property, Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet at the following net amount:

| 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| 14.0 | Operational Land & Buildings | 7.3 |
| <hr/> 14.0 | | <hr/> 7.3 |

The finance lease for office accommodation has been paid for in full, and there is no future liability. As the finance lease for residential dementia care has now been terminated there are no future liabilities for finance leases.

| 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|
| £m | | £m |
| | Finance lease liabilities (net present value of minimum lease payments): | |
| 0.1 | Current | 0.0 |
| 5.5 | Non current | 0.0 |
| 5.2 | Finance costs payable in future years | 0.0 |
| <hr/> 10.8 | | <hr/> 0.0 |

Notes to the Accounts

35. Leases (Cont'd)

The minimum lease payments will be payable over the following periods:

| | Minimum Lease Payments | | Finance Lease Liabilities | |
|---|------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Not later than one year | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 |
| Later than one year and not later than five years | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 0.0 |
| Later than 5 years | 8.9 | 0.0 | 5.1 | 0.0 |
| | 10.8 | 0.0 | 5.6 | 0.0 |

Notes to the Accounts

36. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and Similar Contracts

We have four PFI schemes as follows:

1. Two Schools PFI Scheme

We signed a PFI contract with Total School Solutions Limited on 31 March 1999. The contract covered the refurbishment and extension of Cooper Perry Primary School and Sir Graham Balfour High School, Stafford.

The contract is for 25 years and is worth £49.6 million. It involves providing repairs and maintenance, energy, cleaning, caretaking and other services. The amount we paid in 2021/2022 was £1.7 million (2020/2021 £1.7 million), paid for from extra government grants and contributions from schools. Further payments we make under the contract are performance related. In other words, we take off amounts if the accommodation is not available on time or if the performance is below a given standard.

2. Streetlighting PFI Scheme

We have entered into a PFI contract under which street lighting and associated maintenance services are provided. The contract is for 25 years and is worth £174.9 million. The amount we paid in 2021/2022 was £14.9 million (2020/2021 £12.3 million), paid for by extra government grants and contributions from revenue.

3. Children's Homes PFI Scheme

We entered into a further PFI contract in 2005/2006 to design, pay for and maintain three children's homes. The contract is for 25 years and is worth £20.8 million. The amount we paid in 2021/2022 was £1.0 million (2020/2021 £1.0 million).

4. Waste to Energy PFI Scheme

We entered into a PFI contract for the construction of the Waste to Energy plant at Four Ashes. The contract is for 25 years and is worth £377.3 million. The amount we paid in 2021/2022 was £26.5 million (2020/2021 £26.7 million).

Valuation of PFI assets

The assets of each PFI scheme have been included in the Balance Sheet and in Note 12. However the note below splits out the assets for each scheme.

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Two Schools Scheme | 2.2 | 2.4 |
| Streetlighting Scheme | 52.3 | 53.2 |
| Children's Homes Scheme | 5.6 | 5.7 |
| Waste to Energy | 182.1 | 161.6 |
| Total value of assets | 242.2 | 222.9 |

Value of PFI liabilities

Each PFI scheme has a liability shown on the Balance Sheet. This reflects the amount of the contract which is still left to pay. The liability should reduce each year as more payments are made to the contractor. It may also increase as further additions are made to the assets. The Waste scheme has a third party financing liability which represents the deferred income due from the contractor, this will reduce over the contract period.

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Two Schools Scheme | (3.4) | (2.6) |
| Streetlighting Scheme | (4.0) | (3.7) |
| Children's Homes Scheme | (2.5) | (2.3) |
| Waste to Energy | (59.3) | (56.3) |
| PFI liabilities | (69.2) | (64.9) |
| Waste to Energy (Third Party financing) | (62.8) | (59.3) |
| Total value of liabilities | (132.0) | (124.2) |

Notes to the Accounts

36. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and Similar Contracts (Cont'd)

Details of payments due

The payments due to the contractors for the schemes can be split into amounts to reduce the liability, amounts of interest and amounts that relate to services provided. They can also be split over the remaining time of the contracts. The note below shows these splits with the amounts at current prices.

Two Schools Scheme

| | Payments to reduce liability | Interest | Service Charges | Total |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Due within one year | 0.5 | 0.3 | 1.0 | 1.8 |
| Due within 2 to 5 years | 2.1 | 0.7 | 4.3 | 7.1 |
| Total due | <u>2.6</u> | <u>1.0</u> | <u>5.3</u> | <u>8.9</u> |

Streetlighting Scheme

| | Payments to reduce liability | Interest | Service Charges | Payments for assets | Total |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Due within one year | 0.4 | 0.3 | 4.8 | 0.2 | 5.7 |
| Due within 2 to 5 years | 2.6 | 0.7 | 20.8 | 0.6 | 24.7 |
| Due within 6 to 10 years | 0.7 | 0.1 | 6.3 | 0.2 | 7.3 |
| Total due | <u>3.7</u> | <u>1.1</u> | <u>31.9</u> | <u>1.0</u> | <u>37.7</u> |

Notes to the Accounts

36. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and Similar Contracts (Cont'd)

Children's Homes Scheme

| | Payments to reduce liability | Interest | Service Charges | Total |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Due within one year | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 1.0 |
| Due within 2 to 5 years | 1.6 | 0.7 | 1.8 | 4.1 |
| Due within 6 to 10 years | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.7 |
| Total due | 2.3 | 1.0 | 2.5 | 5.8 |

Waste to Energy

| | Payments to reduce liability | Interest | Service Charges | Total |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Due within one year | 3.0 | 8.6 | 7.9 | 19.5 |
| Due within 2 to 5 years | 12.9 | 29.8 | 34.8 | 77.5 |
| Due within 6 to 10 years | 17.1 | 25.8 | 51.4 | 94.3 |
| Due within 11 to 15 years | 17.0 | 12.6 | 61.2 | 90.8 |
| Due within 16 to 20 years | 6.3 | 1.4 | 27.5 | 35.2 |
| Total due | 56.3 | 78.2 | 182.8 | 317.3 |

Notes to the Accounts

36. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and Similar Contracts (Cont'd)

The outstanding liability to the contractor for capital expenditure is as follows:

| | Two Schools Scheme | | Streetlighting Scheme | | Children's Homes Scheme | | Waste to Energy | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Balance outstanding at start of year | (3.8) | (3.4) | (4.4) | (4.0) | (2.8) | (2.5) | (62.3) | (59.3) |
| Payments during the year | 0.4 | 0.8 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| Capital expenditure incurred in the year | 0.0 | 0.0 | (2.4) | (2.6) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Balance outstanding at year end | (3.4) | (2.6) | (4.0) | (3.7) | (2.5) | (2.3) | (59.3) | (56.3) |

37. Impairment Losses

During 2021/2022 the Council recognised impairment losses to a number of properties totalling £55.5 million (£17.3 million in 2020/2021). The main reasons for the impairment losses were changes in market value of the properties and the transfer of school assets to newly created academies. The loss has initially been charged to any balances within the revaluation reserve (£41.7 million through the Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement) related to the asset that has been impaired. Any impairment value in excess of this (£13.8 million) has been charged across a range of service areas in the Net cost of services line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement depending on the occupation of the relevant property during 2021/2022.

Notes to the Accounts

38. Termination Benefits

The Council terminated the contracts of a number of employees in 2021/2022, incurring liabilities of £2.7 million, of which £0.3 million relates to Teachers (£1.1 million in 2020/2021, none of which related to Teachers).

39. Pension Schemes Accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes

Teachers employed by the Council are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by the Department of Education. The scheme provides teachers with specified benefits upon their retirement, and the Council contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

The scheme is technically a defined benefit scheme. However the scheme is unfunded and the Department for Education uses a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employer's contribution rate paid by local authorities. The Council is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and the performance of the scheme with sufficient reliability for accounting purposes. For the purposes of this Statement of Accounts, it is therefore accounted for on the same basis as a defined contribution scheme.

In 2021/2022, the Council paid £25.946 million to the Teachers' Pension Scheme in respect of teachers retirement benefits, representing 33.1% of pensionable pay. The corresponding figures for 2020/2021 were £27.852 million and 33%.

The Council is also responsible for all pension payments relating to added years benefits awarded, together with related increases. In 2021/2022 these amounted to £4.942 million (£5.079 million in 2020/2021) representing 6.3% of pensionable pay.

Notes to the Accounts

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Participation in Pension Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers, the Council makes contributions towards the cost of post employment benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Council has a commitment to make the payments and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Local Government Pension Scheme called the Staffordshire Pension Fund is a funded defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets. The scheme changed to a funded defined benefit Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme on the 1st April 2014. Pre 1st April 2014 service remains protected under the existing scheme regulations and continues to be linked to final salary.

In 2021/2022, the Council paid an employer's contribution of £24.1 million (£77.4 million in 2020/2021) into the Staffordshire Pension Fund. The fund's actuary decides how much we should contribute, based on the actuarial valuation carried out every three years.

The Council is responsible for all pension payments relating to added years benefits we have awarded, together with related increases. In 2021/2022 these payments amounted to £4.85 million (£5.06 million in 2020/2021), representing 3.0% of pensionable pay.

Transactions relating to post-employment benefits

We recognise the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge we are required to make against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year.

| | 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| <u>Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</u> | | |
| Cost of Services: | | |
| <i>Service cost compromising:</i> | | |
| Current service costs | 55.9 | 84.5 |
| Past service costs | 0.6 | 2.0 |
| (Gains) from settlements | (1.7) | (6.0) |
| <i>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</i> | | |
| Net interest expense | 17.8 | 20.1 |
| Total Post-employment Benefits charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services | 72.6 | 100.6 |

Notes to the Accounts

40 Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

| | 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|
| Other Post-employment Benefits charges to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | | |
| Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising; | | |
| Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense). | (462.8) | (240.3) |
| Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions | 40.7 | (17.8) |
| Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions | 658.9 | (215.5) |
| Other experience | (19.3) | 2.3 |
| Total Post-employment Benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement | 217.5 | (471.3) |
| Movement in Reserves Statement | | |
| Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the code | (72.6) | (100.7) |
| Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in year: | | |
| Employers' contributions payable to scheme | 82.7 | 33.2 |
| Contributions in respect of unfunded benefits | 9.6 | 9.3 |
| Effect of Business combinations and Disposals | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | 92.3 | 42.5 |
| Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions | (34.7) | 16.8 |
| | 57.6 | 59.3 |
| <u>Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet</u> | | |
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
| | £m | £m |
| Present value of the defined benefit obligation | (3,382.4) | (3,213.7) |
| Fair value of plan assets | 2,391.3 | 2,635.7 |
| Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions | (34.7) | (17.9) |
| Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation | (1,025.8) | (595.9) |
| <u>Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme assets:</u> | | |
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
| | £m | £m |
| 1 April | 1,872.1 | 2,391.3 |
| Interest income | 43.2 | 47.3 |
| Actuarial gains and (losses) | 462.8 | 240.3 |
| Assets distributed on settlements | (4.3) | (9.3) |
| Employer's contributions | 82.7 | 33.1 |
| Contributions from scheme members | 10.4 | 10.5 |
| Benefits paid | (75.6) | (77.5) |
| 31 March | 2,391.3 | 2,635.7 |

Notes to the Accounts

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

| | 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities:</u> | | |
| 1 April | 2,665.4 | 3,382.4 |
| Current service cost | 55.9 | 84.6 |
| Interest cost | 61.0 | 67.5 |
| Contribution by scheme members | 10.4 | 10.5 |
| Actuarial losses | 680.3 | (231.0) |
| Benefits paid | (85.2) | (86.9) |
| Past service costs (including curtailments) | 0.6 | 1.9 |
| Liabilities extinguished on settlements | (6.0) | (15.3) |
| 31 March | 3,382.4 | 3,213.7 |
| <u>Local Government Pension Scheme assets</u> | | |
| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
| | £m | £m |
| Cash and Cash Equivalents | 38.8 | 103.3 |
| Equity Instruments | | |
| <i>By industry type;</i> | | |
| Consumer | 92.7 | 88.7 |
| Manufacturing | 99.4 | 72.4 |
| Energy and utilities | 26.3 | 19.9 |
| Financial institutions | 84.1 | 94.4 |
| Health and care | 60.0 | 99.7 |
| Information technology | 102.0 | 114.7 |
| Other | 2.6 | 0.0 |
| Sub-total equity | 467.1 | 489.8 |
| Bonds: | | |
| Corporate Bonds (investment grade) | 164.6 | 154.8 |
| Property: | | |
| UK Property | 182.2 | 211.1 |
| Private Equity: | | |
| All | 113.3 | 130.6 |
| Other Investment Funds: | | |
| Equities | 1,144.7 | 1,252.1 |
| Bonds | 158.5 | 165.0 |
| Hedge Funds | 9.0 | 1.0 |
| Other | 113.1 | 128.0 |
| Sub-total Other Investment Funds | 1,425.3 | 1,546.1 |
| Total Assets | 2,391.3 | 2,635.7 |

Notes to the Accounts

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Discretionary benefits have been estimated by Hymans Robertson, an independent firm of actuaries, based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2021. The main assumptions they have for working out these costs are shown below:

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Mortality assumptions: | | |
| Longevity at 65 for current pensioners: | | |
| Men | 21.4 years | 21.2 years |
| Women | 24.0 years | 23.8 years |
| Longevity at 65 for future pensioners | | |
| Men | 22.5 years | 22.2 years |
| Women | 25.7 years | 25.5 years |
| Rate of increase in salaries | 3.3% | 3.6% |
| Rate of increase in pensions | 2.9% | 3.2% |
| Rate for discounting scheme liabilities | 2.0% | 2.7% |

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analysis below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period. They also assume that for each change in assumption, all other assumptions remain constant. In practice this is unlikely to occur and changes in some assumptions may be interrelated.

The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis below did not change from those used in the previous year. The opposite movement will have the same impact, in the opposite direction.

| Change in assumptions at 31 March 2022 | Approximate % increase to employer liability | Approximate monetary amount (£m) |
|---|---|---|
| 0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate | 2.0% | 58.9 |
| 1 year increase in member life expectancy | 4.0% | 128.5 |
| 0.1% increase in salaries | 0.0% | 4.7 |
| 0.1% increase in pensions | 2.0% | 53.9 |

The Staffordshire Pension Fund pays a compulsory lump-sum retirement benefit of three times the yearly pension. From 6 April 2006, new tax rules allowed a member of a pension scheme to take up to 25% of a pension as lump sum. Members of the Staffordshire Pension Fund can convert their remaining pension into a lump sum. The actuary has assumed that people retiring in the future will take 50% of the maximum tax-free lump sum for their service before April 2008 and 75% of the maximum tax-free lump sum for their service after April 2008. We will review the assumption regularly.

Notes to the Accounts

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

In the Balance Sheet we have included our assets in the Pension Fund at their fair value.

- Shares quoted on the relevant stock-market, valued on the basis of their bid value
- Shares not quoted on the stock markets, valued on the basis of a professional estimate
- Pooled investment vehicles, valued at the average of the bid and offer rates
- Property, valued at market value

We have split the change in the pensions payments we make into seven parts.

Current-service cost – the increase in payments as a result of years of service earned this year. We add this to the revenue accounts of the services the employees worked for.

Past-service cost – the increase in payments arising from decisions made in the current year and the effect of which relates to years of service earned in earlier years. We take this from the net cost of services as part of non-distributed costs.

Interest cost and expected return on assets – the interest cost is the increase in the value of the liabilities that arise because those liabilities are one year closer to being paid, because all members are one year older. The return on assets is the value of the return expected to be achieved on the fund's investments in the long term.

Gains and losses on settlements and curtailments – the result of action to relieve us of liabilities or events that reduce the expected future service or benefits of employees. We take this from the net cost of services as part of non-distributed costs.

Actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not matched the assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions. We do not charge these to revenue.

Contributions paid to the Pension Fund – cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund.

Projected defined benefit cost for the period to 31 March 2023

The contributions paid by the Council are set by the Fund Actuary at each triennial actuarial valuation (the most recent being as at 31 March 2020). The contributions payable over the period to 31 March 2023 are set out in the Rate and Adjustments certificate. Hymans Robertson estimate the Employer's contribution for the period to 31 March 2023 will be approximately £26.361m

Notes to the Accounts

41. Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises when we know about an issue at the Balance Sheet date but we do not know what the outcome will be until an event does or does not happen.

Entrust

Many Staffordshire maintained schools have contracts for services supplied by Entrust. There is a potential risk that were the company to fail, these contracts would be unfulfilled and a cost would remain with the schools.

Goodwin Case

The Goodwin tribunal was raised in the Teachers' scheme. It claimed members, or their survivors, were discriminated against due to their sexual orientation. The claim was because the teachers' scheme provides a survivor's pension which is less favourable for a widower or surviving male partner than for a widow or surviving female partner of a female scheme member. On 30 June 2020, the tribunal found in favour of the claimant and agreed there was discrimination.

Outcome

A group of members, namely females who have a male survivor, may have their survivor's pension uplifted to include any service accrued between 1978 and 1988. This could potentially result in an additional cost to the County Council.

In order to administer this all post-2005 deaths of female members would need to be investigated. In some circumstances, the Pension Fund may not have any data on survivors or their whereabouts which could prove to be a significant challenge.

The Actuary has undertaken an analysis of the impact of implementing a solution to correct the past underpayment of spouse's benefits. The impact is estimated to be between 0.1% and 0.2% of obligations for a typical Pension Fund. Given the amount of work involved, the uncertainty of the remedy and the estimated minimal impact, the Actuary has not included an impact of the Goodwin case in the pensions liability. No claims have so far been received by the Pension Fund in relation to this tribunal.

Adult Social Care Reform

In December 2021, the Government published its White Paper on reforming adult social care, this was followed by the Build Back Better publication in January 2022 which set out how the service provision is to be transformed.

At 31 March 2022, there exists an enormous amount of uncertainty around the reform of adult social care, the unknown elements consist of how many self-funders will approach the County Council for their care to be funded, how much Government funding will be received to use for this care provision and how the care provider market will be affected.

Notes to the Accounts

42. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Council complies with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, both revised in 2021.

In line with the Treasury Management Code, the Council publishes an annual Treasury Management Strategy before each financial year which sets out how risks will be managed. In addition we have written policies known as Treasury Management Practices which cover the procedures we follow to manage risks.

The main risks covered are listed below:

- 1. Security (credit) risk** - the possibility that counterparties fail to pay amounts due to the Council and a loss is made.
- 2. Liquidity risk** - the possibility that the Council might not have cash available to make payments on time.
- 3. Interest rate risk** - the possibility of a financial loss for the Council because short-term interest rates rise or fall.
- 4. Price risk** - the possibility of a financial loss for the Council as a result of changes in the value of market instruments.
- 5. Refinancing risk** - the possibility that the Council might need to renew financial instruments on maturity at disadvantageous interest rates or terms.

In managing these risks, the Council works hard to protect itself against unpredictable financial markets and protect the money it has available to pay for services. Within this it is important to recognise that no investment or loan portfolio, regardless of the economic conditions, can ever be risk free.

1. Security (credit) risk

Security (credit) risk arises from deposits with banks and other financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Council's customers.

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy complies with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing And Communities (DLUHC) Guidance on Local Government Investments; this emphasises that priority is given to security and then liquidity, rather than yield. The Council manages credit risk by ensuring that investments are only placed with organisations of high credit quality. This is implemented by using recommendations from Link Treasury Services, the Council's treasury management advisor; their creditworthiness service helps determine the counterparties with whom the Council invests.

When selecting high quality commercial entities for investment, a number of different measures are examined, such as credit ratings, credit default swaps and equity prices. These include banks and building societies, the UK Government, other local authorities and AAA rated Money Market Funds.

Investments are made subject to financial limits on both an investment category and individual basis. In the case of investment category limits, investments are not limited for the total amount invested in Money Market Funds or directly with banks. On an individual basis in 2021/22, for Money Market Funds the limit is the lower of 0.50% of Money Market Fund size or 25% of total Council investments and for banks, the lower of 5% of total Council investments or £30m per counterparty.

Independent advice was taken from Arlingclose in 2013 when the Council made the decision to make long-term investments with other local authorities that did not have a credit rating in their own right.

Notes to the Accounts

42 Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

The following table summarises the security risk exposure of the Council's investments at 31 March each year.

| Credit Rating | Long-Term | | | Short-Term | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2020 | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| AAA | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 85.3 | 247.5 | 304.9 |
| AA | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 32.0 |
| A | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.8 | 0.0 | 10 |
| Unrated local authorities | 30.4 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 64.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total investments | 30.4 | 30.4 | 30.4 | 153.2 | 247.5 | 346.9 |

Since April 2010, the Council's strategy of using cash in lieu of long-term borrowing has reduced this risk, as it holds considerably less short-term investments as a result (around £99 million of cash was used in lieu of borrowing as at 31 March 2022).

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies is difficult to assess generally; the risk of any failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual entity. Historical and recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of irrecoverability applies to all of the Council's deposits, but having considered all the evidence available at 31 March 2022, it is deemed unlikely that any losses would occur, hence no provision has been made in the accounts.

The following analysis summarises the Council's potential maximum exposure to credit risk on other financial assets, based on experience of default and uncollectability over the last five financial years, adjusted to reflect current market conditions.

| | Estimated maximum exposure to default at 31 March 2021 | Amounts at 31 March 2022 | Historical experience of default | Historical experience adjusted for market conditions at 31 March 2022 | Estimated maximum exposure to default at 31 March 2022 |
|--------------|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|
| | £m | £m | A % | B % | (A x C) £m |
| Customers | 22.3 | 66.3 | 41.1 | 41.1 | 27.3 |
| Total | 22.3 | | | | 27.3 |

No credit limits were exceeded during the reporting year and the Council does not expect any losses from non-performance by any of its counterparties.

£46.3 million of the £66.3 million balance owed to the Council by its customers is past its due date for payment. The remaining balance of £20 million is less than 28 days' old. The amount past its due date for payment can be analysed by age as follows:

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Less than three months | 8.7 | 4.8 |
| Three to six months | 6.3 | 2.4 |
| Six months to one year | 7.9 | 7.4 |
| More than one year | 32.2 | 31.7 |
| Total | 55.1 | 46.3 |

Notes to the Accounts

42 Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

2. Liquidity Risk

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available when needed.

The Council has access to borrowing at favourable rates from the Public Works Loan Board and other local authorities, and at higher rates from banks and building societies. There is no perceived risk that the Council will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments.

The Council has £51m (2021: £51m) of "Lender's option, borrower's option" (LOBO) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the rate payable; the Council will then have the option to accept the new rate or repay the loan without penalty. Due to current low interest rates, in the unlikely event that the lender exercises its option, the Council is likely to repay these loans. The maturity date is therefore uncertain.

3. Market Risk

Interest Rate Risk

The Council is exposed to risk in terms of its exposure to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments (for example when a fixed term loan is taken out with corresponding variable rate investments). Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council. A rise in interest rates would have the following effects;

- borrowings at variable rates - the interest expense will rise
- borrowings at fixed rates - the fair value of the liabilities will fall (this will not affect the balance sheet but will affect the fair value notes)
- investments at variable rates - the interest income will rise
- investments at fixed rates - the fair value of the assets will fall (this will not affect the balance sheet but will affect the fair value notes).

Investments measured at amortised cost and loans borrowed are not carried at fair value, so changes in their fair value will have no impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services

A large proportion of the loans the Council holds are long-term fixed rate loans. There is a risk that significant and long-lasting falls in interest rates mean that the Council is forced to pay interest in excess of market interest rates until the loans mature (the opposite would also be true in the case of interest rate increases).

Since April 2010 the Council has implemented a strategy of using cash in lieu of borrowing. This partly offsets the fixed rate loans exposure and reduces the impact of interest rate changes as this is a type of variable rate borrowing.

This risk is further offset by the long-term local authority investments made in 2013/14. These investments aim to hedge (or cancel out) a small part of the risk exposure that long-term fixed rate loans create.

Interest rate risk can be managed in a number of ways. If economic circumstances are favourable, the Council can repay fixed-rate loans early, increase the use of cash in lieu of borrowing; or reschedule loans by replacing existing loans with new loans at a lower rate.

Notes to the Accounts

42. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

At 31 March 2022, if interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be as follows:

| | £m |
|--|--------------|
| Increase in interest payable on variable rate borrowings | 1.0 |
| Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments | (3.5) |
| Impact on Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services | (2.5) |
| Decrease in fair value of fixed-rate investment assets * | (3.2) |
| Decrease in fair value of fixed rate borrowings liabilities* | (102.3) |

*No impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure

The impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as above but with the movements being reversed (in other words increases becoming decreases and vice versa).

Price Risk

The Council has an equity investment (shareholding) in Entrust. The value of this investment in the Balance Sheet was written down to nil in the year ended 31st March 2019. As such the Council has no current exposure to price risk with regards to this investment.

4. Refinancing Risk

The Council is exposed to the risk that it will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates.

The Council has measures in place to make sure it is not due to repay a large percentage of borrowing at the same time. This reduces the financial effect of needing to borrow again if interest rates are high. The Council's policy is to make sure that no more than 15% of loans are due for repayment within the same financial year. This is done by carefully planning when new loans are taken out and, if it is best to do so, making early repayments.

Using cash in lieu of borrowing increases refinancing risk as interest payments are not fixed. The use of LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans also increase this risk as their maturity date is uncertain because the lender has the option, at various intervals, to force an increase in the interest rates payable. This would almost certainly lead to the loan being repaid by the Council.

Notes to the Accounts

42. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

The repayment structure of financial liabilities is as follows:

| On 31 March 2021 | | | Financial Liabilities | On 31 March 2022 | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Principal | Future Interest | Total | | Principal | Future Interest | Total |
| £m | £m | £m | | £m | £m | £m |
| 132.1 | 91.9 | 224.0 | **PFI Schemes | 124.2 | 81.3 | 205.5 |
| 400.4 | 558.2 | 958.6 | PWLB | 396.5 | 538.7 | 935.2 |
| 41.7 | 1.7 | 43.4 | * LOBO - Depfa Bank | 41.8 | 1.5 | 43.3 |
| 10.1 | 0.3 | 10.4 | * LOBO - Dexia Bank | 10.1 | 0.3 | 10.4 |
| 5.6 | 5.2 | 10.8 | Finance leases | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 589.9 | 657.3 | 1,247.2 | Total | 572.6 | 621.8 | 1,194.4 |
| 47.6 | 31.4 | 79.0 | within one year | 51.7 | 30.6 | 82.3 |
| 30.8 | 29.9 | 60.7 | over 1 under 2 | 38.1 | 28.1 | 66.2 |
| 60.2 | 81.0 | 141.2 | over 2 under 5 | 60.5 | 76.6 | 137.1 |
| 53.4 | 115.1 | 168.5 | over 5 under 10 | 35.6 | 110.0 | 145.6 |
| 64.6 | 98.5 | 163.1 | over 10 under 15 | 63.5 | 93.4 | 156.9 |
| 21.1 | 80.3 | 101.4 | over 15 under 20 | 13.2 | 78.0 | 91.2 |
| 32.5 | 150.9 | 183.4 | over 20 under 30 | 85.1 | 149.1 | 234.2 |
| 279.7 | 70.2 | 349.9 | over 30 under 40 | 224.8 | 56.0 | 280.8 |
| | | 0.0 | over 40 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 589.9 | 657.3 | 1,247.2 | Total | 572.6 | 621.8 | 1,194.4 |

All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

* LOBO - Lender Option Borrower Option loan. The Council has 4 LOBOs which mature in 2048, 2066, 2067 and 2077. The lender has the option to alter the interest rates for each loan every two years. If the Council does not accept the rate the loan becomes payable. Therefore, the table above only includes future interest for the next two years.

** See Note 36 for individual scheme details

Using Cash in Lieu of Borrowing

As at the 31 March 2022, around £99 million of cash had been used in lieu of borrowing.

The impact of this strategy has been outlined in each of the specific risks above.

Notes to the Accounts

43. Education Endowments

We are responsible for managing 13 (13 in 2020/2021) individual trust funds which we have set up as a result of donations or money left to us from various sources. The purpose of most of the funds is to provide educational prizes, scholarships and special benefits of a kind we would not normally provide as a local education authority. We invest most funds in stocks and shares and, as they do not represent our assets, we do not include them in the Balance Sheet.

The funds are shown below.

| | 2020/2021 | | | 2021/2022 | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------|
| | Total income | Gross spending | Market value of fund | Total income | Gross spending | Market value of fund |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Rugeley Educational | 83 | 68 | 2,854 | 85 | 85 | 3,100 |
| Brewood Educational | 73 | 59 | 2,519 | 74 | 52 | 2,738 |
| Stafford Educational | 18 | 19 | 615 | 18 | 19 | 668 |
| Stafford Education Centre Charity | 152 | 155 | 5,220 | 156 | 169 | 5,670 |
| Alleyes – Stone | 2 | 4 | 61 | 2 | 11 | 66 |
| Alleyes – Uttoxeter | 2 | 12 | 37 | 2 | 0 | 41 |
| Tamworth High | 9 | 0 | 309 | 9 | 0 | 335 |
| Tamworth Youth Centre | 2 | 0 | 72 | 2 | 0 | 79 |
| Others | 23 | 10 | 610 | 17 | 16 | 653 |
| Total | 364 | 327 | 12,297 | 365 | 352 | 13,350 |

44. Trust Funds

We manage a number of small funds on behalf of other organisations. These are 10 mainly social services comforts funds which are available to people in residential homes and day centres, and 3 other funds. The funds do not represent our assets and we do not include them in the Balance Sheet.

| | Balance | Income Spending | | Balance |
|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|---------------|
| | 31 March 2021 | £000 | £000 | 31 March 2022 |
| | £000 | | | £000 |
| Trust funds | | | | |
| Social services comforts funds | 28 | 2 | (3) | 27 |
| Homestead and Lea House | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Glebelands | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Chairman's charity | 3 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| Total | 39 | 4 | (3) | 40 |

STAFFORDSHIRE PENSION FUND

Financial Statements

**1 April 2021
to
31 March 2022**

Pension Scheme registration number: 10011745

Pension Fund account

Staffordshire Pension Fund account for the year ended 31 March 2022

| | Notes | 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|--|-------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Dealing with members, employers and others directly involved in the Fund | | | |
| Contributions receivable | 7 | 278.9 | 180.1 |
| Transfers in | 8 | 9.7 | 11.7 |
| | | 288.6 | 191.8 |
| Benefits payable | 9 | (190.2) | (195.7) |
| Leavers | 10 | (15.4) | (10.3) |
| | | (205.6) | (206.0) |
| Net additions/(withdrawals) from dealings with fund members | | 83.0 | (14.2) |
| Management expenses | 11 | (22.9) | (25.7) |
| Net additions/(withdrawals) including fund management expenses | | 60.1 | (39.9) |
| Returns on investments | | | |
| Investment income | 12 | 58.7 | 68.6 |
| Taxes on income | 12 | (0.4) | (0.3) |
| Profit and losses on disposal of investments and changes in the value of investments | 13a | 1,289.5 | 652.3 |
| Net returns on investments | | 1,347.8 | 720.6 |
| Net increase in the net assets available for benefits during the year | | 1,407.9 | 680.7 |
| Opening net assets of the Fund | | 4,744.5 | 6,152.4 |
| Closing net assets of the Fund | | 6,152.4 | 6,833.1 |

Net assets statement

Net assets statement at 31 March 2022

| | Notes | 2020/2021 £m | 2021/2022 £m |
|---|--------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Long term investments | 13/13c | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Investment assets | | | |
| Equities | 13/13c | 1,193.8 | 1,269.5 |
| Pooled investment vehicles | 13/13c | 3,778.6 | 4,072.0 |
| Pooled Property Investment | 13/13c | 49.9 | 72.9 |
| Derivatives | 13/13c | 0 | 0 |
| Property | 13/13c | 418.5 | 472.7 |
| Other investment balances | 13c | 610.2 | 674.1 |
| Cash deposits | 13/13c | 96.9 | 264.4 |
| | | 6,147.9 | 6,825.6 |
| Investment liabilities | | | |
| Derivatives | 13/13c | 0 | 0 |
| Other investment balances | 13/13c | (2.9) | (3.3) |
| | | (2.9) | (3.3) |
| Net investment assets | 13/13c | 6,146.3 | 6,823.6 |
| Long term assets | 19 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Current assets | 19a | 19.4 | 21.8 |
| Long term Liabilities | 20 | (0.1) | (0.1) |
| Current liabilities | 20a | (13.2) | (12.2) |
| Net assets of the Fund available to fund benefits at the end of the reporting period | | 6,152.4 | 6,833.1 |

The financial statements summarise the transactions of the Fund and deal with the net assets available to us. They do not take account of obligations to pay pensions and benefits which fall due after the end of the financial year. The actuarial position on the scheme, which does take account of these obligations, is set out in the actuary's report on page 102.

The notes on pages 106 to 140 also form part of the Pension Fund financial statements.

Staffordshire Pension Fund (“the Fund”)

Actuarial Statement for 2021/22

This statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 57(1)(d) of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. It has been prepared at the request of the Administering Authority of the Fund for the purpose of complying with the aforementioned regulation.

Description of Funding Policy

The funding policy is set out in the Administering Authority's Funding Strategy Statement (FSS), dated February 2021. In summary, the key funding principles are as follows:

- to ensure the long-term solvency of the Fund using a prudent long term view. This will ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all members'/dependants' benefits as they fall due for payment;
- to ensure that employer contribution rates are reasonably stable where appropriate;
- to minimise the long-term cash contributions which employers need to pay to the Fund, by recognising the link between assets and liabilities and adopting an investment strategy which balances risk and return (this will also minimise the costs to be borne by Council Tax payers);
- to reflect the different characteristics of different employers in determining contribution rates. This involves the Fund having a clear and transparent funding strategy to demonstrate how each employer can best meet its own liabilities over future years; and
- to use reasonable measures to reduce the risk to other employers and ultimately to the Council Tax payer from an employer defaulting on its pension obligations.

The FSS sets out how the Administering Authority seeks to balance the conflicting aims of securing the solvency of the Fund and keeping employer contributions stable. For employers whose covenant was considered by the Administering Authority to be sufficiently strong, contributions have been stabilised to have a sufficiently high likelihood of achieving the funding target over 20 years. Asset-liability modelling has been carried out which demonstrate that if these contribution rates are paid and future contribution changes are constrained as set out in the FSS, there is at least a 68% likelihood that the Fund will achieve the funding target over 20 years.

Funding Position as at the last formal funding valuation

The most recent actuarial valuation carried out under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 was as at 31 March 2019. This valuation revealed that the Fund's assets, which at 31 March 2019 were valued at £5,131 million, were sufficient to meet 99% of the liabilities (i.e. the present value of promised retirement benefits) accrued up to that date. The resulting deficit at the 2019 valuation was £73 million.

Each employer had contribution requirements set at the valuation, with the aim of achieving full funding within a time horizon and probability measure as per the FSS. Individual employers' contributions for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2023 were set in accordance with the Fund's funding policy as set out in its FSS.

Principal Actuarial Assumptions and Method used to value the liabilities

Full details of the methods and assumptions used are described in the 2019 valuation report.

Method

The liabilities were assessed using an accrued benefits method which takes into account pensionable membership up to the valuation date; and makes an allowance for expected future salary growth to retirement or expected earlier date of leaving pensionable membership.

Assumptions

A market-related approach was taken to valuing the liabilities, for consistency with the valuation of the Fund assets at their market value.

The key financial assumptions adopted for the 2019 valuation were as follows:

| Financial assumptions | 31 March 2019 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Discount rate | 3.9% |
| Salary increase assumption | 2.7% |
| Benefit increase assumption (CPI) | 2.3% |

The key demographic assumption was the allowance made for longevity. The life expectancy assumptions are based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2018 model, an allowance for smoothing of recent mortality experience and a long term rate of 1.25% p.a. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are as follows:

| | Males | Females |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Current Pensioners | 21.2 years | 23.6 years |
| Future Pensioners* | 22.1 years | 25.0 years |

*Aged 45 at the 2019 Valuation.

Copies of the 2019 valuation report and Funding Strategy Statement are available on request from the Administering Authority to the Fund.

Experience over the period since 31 March 2019

Markets were severely disrupted by COVID 19 in March 2020, but over most of 2020/21 and 2021/22 they recovered strongly. However, due to the war in Ukraine, March 2022 markets were particularly volatile, which affects values as at the accounting date. All other things being equal, the funding level of the Fund as at 31 March 2022 is likely to be better than that reported at the previous formal valuation as at 31 March 2019.

It is important to note that the formal triennial funding valuation exercise is as at 31 March 2022 and this may show a different picture when the finalised position is disclosed in next year's annual report. In particular, changes in Fund membership, changes in anticipated real investment returns, and changes in demographic assumptions will affect the valuation results. The Funding Strategy Statement will also be reviewed as part of the triennial funding valuation exercise.

Laura McInroy FFA

29 April 2022

For and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

Pension Fund Accounts Reporting Requirement

Introduction

CIPFA's Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2021/22 requires Administering Authorities of LGPS funds that prepare pension fund accounts to disclose what IAS26 refers to as the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits. I have been instructed by the Administering Authority to provide the necessary information for the Staffordshire Pension Fund ("the Fund").

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is to be calculated similarly to the Defined Benefit Obligation under IAS19. There are three options for its disclosure in the pension fund accounts:

- showing the figure in the Net Assets Statement, in which case it requires the statement to disclose the resulting surplus or deficit;
- as a note to the accounts; or
- by reference to this information in an accompanying actuarial report.

If an actuarial valuation has not been prepared at the date of the financial statements, IAS26 requires the most recent valuation to be used as a base and the date of the valuation disclosed. The valuation should be carried out using assumptions in line with IAS19 and not the Fund's funding assumptions.

Present value of promised retirement benefits

| Year ended | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2021 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Active members (£m) | 3,858 | 3,853 |
| Deferred members (£m) | 2,088 | 2,247 |
| Pensioners (£m) | 2,577 | 2,776 |
| Total (£m) | 8,523 | 8,876 |

The promised retirement benefits at 31 March 2022 have been projected using a roll forward approximation from the latest formal funding valuation as at 31 March 2019. The approximation involved in the roll forward model means that the split of benefits between the three classes of member may not be reliable. However, I am satisfied that the total figure is a reasonable estimate of the actuarial present value of benefit promises.

The figures include both vested and non-vested benefits, although the latter is assumed to have a negligible value. Further, I have not made any allowance for unfunded benefits.

It should be noted the above figures are appropriate for the Administering Authority only for preparation of the pension fund accounts. They should not be used for any other purpose (i.e. comparing against liability measures on a funding basis or a cessation basis).

Assumptions

The assumptions used are those adopted for the Administering Authority's IAS19 report and are different as at 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2021. I estimate that the impact of the change in financial assumptions to 31 March 2022 is to decrease the actuarial present value by £680m. I estimate that the impact of the change in demographic assumptions is to decrease the actuarial present value by £46m.

Financial assumptions

| Year ended | 31 March 2022 | 31 March 2021 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | % p.a. | % p.a. |
| Pension Increase Rate (CPI) | 3.20% | 2.85% |
| Salary Increase Rate | 3.60% | 3.25% |
| Discount Rate | 2.70% | 2.00% |

Demographic assumptions

The longevity assumptions have changed since the previous IAS26 disclosure for the Fund.

Life expectancy is based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2021 model, with a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a.. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are summarised below:

| | Males | Females |
|--|------------|------------|
| Current pensioners | 21.2 years | 23.8 years |
| Future pensioners (assumed to be aged 45 at the latest valuation date) | 22.2 years | 25.5 years |

All other demographic assumptions are unchanged from last year and as per the latest funding valuation of the Fund.

Sensitivity Analysis

CIPFA guidance requires the disclosure of the sensitivity of the results to the methods and assumptions used. The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the obligations are set out below:

| Change in assumption at 31 March 2022 | Approximate % increase to promised retirement benefits | Approximate monetary amount (£m) |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 0.1% p.a. decrease in the Discount Rate | 2% | 174 |
| 1 year increase in member life expectancy | 4% | 341 |
| 0.1% p.a. increase in the Salary Increase Rate | 0% | 16 |
| 0.1% p.a. increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI) | 2% | 157 |

Professional notes

This paper accompanies the 'Accounting Covering Report – 31 March 2022' which identifies the appropriate reliances and limitations for the use of the figures in this paper, together with further details regarding the professional requirements and assumptions.

Laura McInroy FFA

29 April 2022

For and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

Notes to the accounts

1. Description of the Fund

The Staffordshire Pension Fund ('the Fund') is part of the LGPS and is administered by Staffordshire County Council. The council is the reporting entity for this pension fund.

The following description of the Fund is a summary only. For more detail, reference should be made to the Staffordshire Pension Fund Annual Report 2021/2022 and the underlying statutory powers underpinning the scheme.

a) General

The scheme is governed by the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 (as amended). The fund is administered in accordance with the following secondary legislation:

- the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended)
- the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016.

It is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme administered by Staffordshire County Council to provide pensions and other benefits for pensionable employees of Staffordshire County Council, the district councils in Staffordshire County and a range of other scheduled and admitted bodies within the county area. Teachers, police officers and firefighters are not included as they come within other national pension schemes.

Staffordshire County Council is legally responsible for the Staffordshire Pension Fund. Under the County Council's constitution, the Pensions Committee and Pensions Panel are delegated to look after the Fund. As a result of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013, a Local Pensions Board was also set up to aid effective governance.

b) Membership

Membership of the LGPS is voluntary and employees are free to choose whether to join the scheme, remain in the scheme or make their own personal arrangements outside the scheme.

Organisations participating in the Fund include the following:

- Scheduled bodies, which are local authorities and similar bodies whose staff are automatically entitled to be members of the Fund.
- Admitted bodies, which are other organisations that participate in the Fund under an admission agreement between the Fund and the relevant organisation. Admitted bodies include voluntary, charitable and similar bodies or private contractors undertaking a local authority function following outsourcing to the private sector.

There are over 450 employer organisations within the Fund (including the County Council itself), and over 114,000 individual members, as detailed in the following table.

Membership of the Fund

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| Pensionable employees | | |
| Staffordshire County Council | 8,561 | 8,020 |
| Other employers | 24,354 | 24,803 |
| Total | 32,915 | 32,823 |
| Pensioners | | |
| Staffordshire County Council | 18,097 | 18,502 |
| Other employers | 19,617 | 20,616 |
| Total | 37,714 | 39,118 |
| Deferred pensioners (people who no longer pay into the scheme) | | |
| Staffordshire County Council | 19,272 | 19,114 |
| Other employers | 22,715 | 23,590 |
| Total | 41,987 | 42,704 |
| Total number of members in the pension scheme | 112,916 | 114,645 |

c) Funding

Benefits are funded by contributions and investment earnings. Contributions are made by active members of the Fund in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. Employee contributions are matched by employers' contributions which are set based on triennial actuarial funding valuations. The last such valuation was at 31 March 2019.

d) Benefits

Prior to 1 April 2014, pension benefits under the LGPS were based on final pensionable pay and length of pensionable service.

From 1 April 2014, the scheme became a career average scheme, whereby members accrue benefits based on their pensionable pay in that year at an accrual rate of 1/49th. Accrued pension is updated annually in line with the Consumer Price Index.

There are a range of other benefits provided under the scheme including early retirement, disability pensions and death benefits as explained on the Staffordshire Pension Fund website at www.staffspf.org.uk.

2. Basis of preparation

The statement of accounts summarises the Fund's transactions for the 2021/2022 financial year and its position at year-end as at 31 March 2022. The financial statements follow the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/2022 (the Code) which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as amended for the UK public sector and issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

The accounts summarise the transactions of the Fund and report on the net assets available to pay pension benefits. The accounts do not take account of obligations to pay pensions and benefits which fall due after the end of the financial year nor do they take into account the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Staffordshire Pension Fund is an open scheme with a strong covenant from most of its participating employers and it is therefore able to take a long-term outlook when considering the general funding implications of external events.

To date the Fund has received no requests from scheduled and admitted bodies to defer pension contributions.

Due to the maturity of the scheme, the Fund has been operating a cash flow shortfall from its dealings with members for a few years. For the year ended 31 March 2022, the Fund reported a deficit of £15.6m. The Fund forecasts this shortfall will continue during the going concern period from April 2022 to 31 March 2024, with the cumulative shortfall forecast to be £154m.

However, the Fund does have investment income paid into the Fund, the amount for 2021/2022 was £68.7m (For details please refer to the Pension Fund Account, note 12) and the cumulative cash position at the 31 March 2022 was £247.2m. Even with a significant reduction in income in the going concern period, any shortfall would be adequately covered by the Fund's positive cashflow profile and cash holdings.

Ultimately, should the need arise, the Fund can disinvest from liquid investments (as at 31 March 2022 the Fund held £1,270m in listed equities) to ensure that it is able to remain liquid for a period of least 12 months from the date the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The Fund remains in a position to draw on its investments in the most appropriate order should short term liquidity be required, as the vast majority of investment assets currently held are highly liquid and convertible to cash at short notice. Recognising the increasing maturity of the Fund, with the increasing number of retired and deferred Fund members relative to active Fund members, the investment strategy of the Fund is increasingly considering investment in cash generating assets to address the increase in the operating cash flow shortfall over time.

Considering all of the above the Fund considers it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis for the period to 31 March 2024.

You can get more information on the Pension Fund, including the Fund Governance Statement, the Investment Strategy Statement and the Funding Strategy Statement on the Staffordshire Pension Fund website at www.staffspf.org.uk.

3. Accounting policies

When preparing the Pension Fund financial statements we have adopted the following significant accounting policies, which we have applied consistently.

Contributions

Normal contributions are accounted for on an accruals basis as follows:

- Employee contribution rates are set in accordance with LGPS regulations, using common percentage rates for all schemes which rise according to pensionable pay.
- Employer contributions are set at the percentage rate recommended by the fund actuary for the period to which they relate.

Employer deficit funding contributions are accounted for on the basis advised by the fund actuary in the rates and adjustment certificate issued to the relevant employing body. Additional employers' contributions in respect of ill-health and early retirements are accounted for in the year the event arose. Any amount due in the year but unpaid will be classed as a current financial asset. Amounts not due until future years are classed as long-term financial assets.

Transfer values

Transfers in and out relate to members who have either joined or left the fund. These are included on the basis of payments made or receipts received in the case of individual transfers and on an accrual basis for bulk transfers, which are considered material to the account.

Investment income

Investment income is recognised as follows:

- Interest income as it accrues.
- Dividend income on the date the shares are quoted ex-dividend.
- Property related income, which primarily consists of rental income, is received in advance and is accrued into the correct year.
- Changes in the net market value of investments (including investment properties) are recognised as income and comprise all realised and unrealised profits/losses during the year.
- Distributions from pooled funds are recognised at the date of issue.

Benefits payable

Pensions and lump-sum benefits payable include all amounts known to be due as at the end of the financial year. Any amounts due but unpaid are disclosed in the net assets statement as current liabilities, providing that payment has been approved.

Under pension fund rules, members may receive a lump-sum retirement grant on top of their annual pension. Lump-sum retirement grants are accounted for from the date of retirement.

Other benefits are accounted for on the date the member leaves the Fund or dies.

Taxation

The Fund is a registered public service scheme and as such is exempt from paying tax in the UK on interest received and on the proceeds of investments sold. The Fund may suffer withholding tax on overseas investments in the country of origin, where this is not recoverable it is accounted for as an expense when it arises.

Management expenses

All costs related to managing investments, administration, oversight and governance are reported in one line in the Fund Account called 'Management expenses'.

Investment management expenses, including performance-related fees, are accounted for on an accruals basis and are recognised before any VAT the Fund can recover.

Investment management expenses are charged directly to the fund as part of management expenses and are not included in, or netted off from, the reported return on investments (see note 11a).

The fees of external investment managers and the custodian are agreed in their respective mandates governing their appointments. They are broadly based on the market value of investments and can increase or decrease as the value of these investments change.

All administrative expenses and oversight and governance costs are accounted for on an accruals basis. All staff costs of the Pensions Administration team are charged to the Fund. Management, accommodation and other support service costs are charged to the Fund based on Staffordshire County Council policy.

Investments

All other investment assets are included in the financial statements on a fair value basis as at the reporting date. A financial asset is recognised in the net assets statement on the date the fund becomes party to the contractual acquisition of the asset. From this date any gains or losses arising from changes in the fair value of the asset are recognised in the fund account. The values of investments as shown in the net assets statement have been determined at fair value in accordance with the requirements of the Code and IFRS 13 (see Note 16). For the purposes of disclosing levels of fair value hierarchy, the fund has adopted the classification guidelines recommended in Practical Guidance on Investment Disclosures (PRAG/Investment Association, 2016)

Equities traded through the Stock Exchange Electronic Trading Service (SETS), are valued on the basis of the latest bid (buying) price.

Pooled investment vehicles are valued at the bid market price provided by the relevant fund managers, which reflects the market value of the underlying investments.

The value of bonds are recorded at the net market value based on their current market yields. The value does not include interest earned but not paid at the year end, which is included separately within accrued investment income.

UK directly held property investments are stated at their value on the open-market based on an annual independent valuation by Savills, as at 31 March 2022. This report has been prepared in accordance with Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' ("RICS") Valuation – Global Standards (incorporating the IVSC International Valuation Standards) effective from 31 January 2020 together with the UK National Supplement effective 14 January 2019, together the "Red Book".

The private equity, private debt and hedge fund valuations are valued based on the Fund's share of the net assets of the underlying funds using the latest financial statements provided by the respective fund managers. (see Note 15 for further details)

Foreign currency transactions

Dividends, interest and the purchase and sale of investments in foreign currencies have been accounted for at the spot rates at the date of transaction. Where forward foreign exchange contracts are in place for assets and liabilities in foreign currencies, the exchange rate set out in the contract is used. Other assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are given in Sterling (£) at the rates of exchange that apply at the end of the financial year.

Surpluses and deficits arising when converting currency are dealt with as part of the change in market value of investments.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises cash in hand and demand deposits. Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and are subject to minimal risk of changes in value.

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place prior to the year-end giving rise to a possible financial obligation whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by the occurrence of future events. Contingent liabilities can also arise in circumstances where a provision would be made, except that it is not possible at the balance sheet date to measure the value of the financial obligation reliably.

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place giving rise to a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by the occurrence of future events.

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the net assets statement but are disclosed by way of narrative in the notes.

Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is assessed on a triennial basis by the scheme actuary in accordance with the requirements of IAS 19 and relevant actuarial standards.

As permitted under the Code, the Fund has opted to disclose the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits by way of an accompanying actuarial report.

4. Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

Pension Fund liability

The pension fund liability is calculated every three years by the appointed actuary, Hymans Robertson. The methodology used is in line with accepted guidelines and in accordance with IAS 19, the assumptions underpinning the valuation are given in the Actuarial Statement. The estimate is subject to significant variances based on change to the underlying assumptions (See Note 18).

Property

Savills have made no allowance for any Capital Gains Tax or other taxation liability that might arise upon a sale of the property, nor have they allowed for any adjustment to any of the properties' income streams to take into account any tax liabilities that may arise. Their valuation is exclusive of VAT (if applicable). They have excluded from their valuation any additional value attributable to goodwill, or to fixtures and fittings which are only of value in situ to the present occupiers.

No allowance has been made for rights, obligations or liabilities arising in relation to fixed plant and machinery, and it has been assumed that all fixed plant and machinery and the installation thereof complies with the relevant EEC legislation.

Investment in LGPS Central Limited

The Cost approach and considering Fair Value at Initial Recognition provide viable approaches to valuing this shareholding, and they both generate consistent valuations at historic cost less any adjustment for impairment. Consequently this will be the approach for valuing this holding until any change in circumstances creates an alternative approach. This is consistent with the approach of other Pension Funds to their valuation of pool company holdings.

The valuation of the shareholding in LGPS Central is £1,315,000

Investments in Russia and Belarus

Staffordshire Pension Fund estimated that less than 0.1% of its c£6.8bn investment portfolio, at 31 January 2022, was invested in Russian companies, principally through the Fund's allocation to global equity index funds. There were no investments in companies in Belarus.

At their meeting on 1 March 2022, the Staffordshire Pensions Panel agreed that a letter would be sent to the Fund's Investment Managers discouraging any further investments in Russia and Belarus. Since then, the Russian market has been effectively closed to foreign investors and FTSE, and many other index providers, have deleted Russian investments from their indices at zero value, which has reduced the Fund's relatively small exposure to Russia even further. Fund Officers are discussing the options for unwinding any remaining residual exposure (estimated to be less than 0.05% of Fund assets) with the relevant Investment Managers. LGPS Central Limited, as the Fund's asset pool provider, have also requested managers refrain from making any further investments in Russia and Belarus and have recently issued a press release on the matter. [LGPS Central Press Release](#)

The Fund and its Investment Managers will continue to monitor the situation during this period of uncertainty.

5. Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date and the amounts reported for the revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

The items in the net assets statement at 31 March 2022 for which there is a significant risk of adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are shown in the following table.

| Item | Uncertainty | Effect if actual results differ from assumptions |
|---|---|--|
| Private equity | Private equity funds are valued in accordance with each investment managers valuation policy. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation. | The total private equity investments in the financial statements are £339.8m. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts. |
| Private debt | Private debt funds are valued in accordance with each investment managers valuation policy. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation. | The total value of private debt funds in the financial statements is £299.7m. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts. |
| Hedge funds | Hedge funds are valued at the sum of the fair values provided by the administrators of the underlying funds plus adjustments that the Funds directors or independent administrators judge necessary. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation. | The total value of Hedge funds in the financial statements is £2.5m. |
| Freehold/leasehold property and pooled property funds | Valuation techniques are used to determine the carrying amount of pooled property funds and directly held freehold and leasehold property. Where possible these valuation techniques are based on observable data, but where this is not possible management uses the best available data. Changes in the valuation assumptions used, together with significant changes in rental growth, vacancy levels or the discount rate could affect the fair value of property. UK directly held property investments are stated at their value on the open-market based on an annual independent valuation by Savills, as at 31 March 2021. This report has been prepared in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards (incorporating the IVSC International Valuation Standards) effective from 31 January 2020 together with the UK National Supplement effective 14 January 2019, together the “Red Book”. | The total value of all property in the financial statements is £545.6m. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts. |

See table at Note 17 for a full list of possible market movements.

6. Events after the reporting period

The Fund is not aware of any post reporting period events impacting on the statement of accounts.

7. Contributions receivable

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Employers | | |
| Normal | 117.7 | 140.2 |
| Actuarial strain | 8.5 | 2.2 |
| Deficit recovery contributions | 116.2 | 0.0 |
| Scheme members | | |
| Normal | 36.5 | 37.7 |
| Total | 278.9 | 180.1 |

Contributions receivable can be analysed by type of member body as follows:

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Staffordshire County Council | 88.9 | 38.8 |
| Scheduled bodies | 178.7 | 115.0 |
| Admitted bodies | 11.3 | 26.3 |
| Total | 278.9 | 180.1 |

8. Transfers in

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|--|------------|-------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Individual transfers in from other schemes | 9.7 | 11.7 |
| Group transfers in from other schemes | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 9.7 | 11.7 |

9. Benefits payable

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Pensions | 157.4 | 161.6 |
| Commutations and lump-sum retirement benefits | 27.7 | 30.5 |
| Lump-sum death benefits | 5.1 | 3.6 |
| Total | 190.2 | 195.7 |

Benefits payable can be analysed by type of member body as follows:

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Staffordshire County Council | 72.5 | 74.5 |
| Scheduled bodies | 100.4 | 100.8 |
| Admitted bodies | 17.3 | 20.4 |
| Total | 190.2 | 195.7 |

10. Payments to and on account of leavers

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Individual transfers to other schemes | 13.3 | 9.8 |
| Group transfers to other schemes | 1.7 | 0.0 |
| Payments for members joining / (leaving) state scheme | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Refunds to members leaving service | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| Total | 15.4 | 10.3 |

11. Management expenses

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|---|-------------|-------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Administration expenses | 2.4 | 3.0 |
| Investment management expenses (see note 11a) | 18.9 | 20.9 |
| Oversight and governance costs | 1.6 | 1.8 |
| Total | 22.9 | 25.7 |

Included within oversight and governance costs are the Fund's external audit costs of £0.04m for 2021/2022 (£0.09m for 2020/2021).

11a. Investment management expenses

A breakdown of the costs we had to pay in connection with the investment of the Fund is set out below:

| | Total | Management Fees | Performance Related Fees | Transaction Costs |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| 2021/2022 | | | | |
| Equities | 4.1 | 3.2 | | 0.9 |
| Pooled Investments | 3.0 | 3.0 | | |
| Property | 4.8 | 4.8 | | |
| Private Equity | 4.1 | 4.1 | | |
| Other | 4.8 | 4.8 | | |
| | 20.8 | | | |
| Custody Fees | 0.1 | | | |
| | 20.9 | | | |

| | Total | Management Fees | Performance Related Fees | Transaction Costs |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| 2020/2021 | | | | |
| Equities | 2.9 | 2.2 | | 0.7 |
| Pooled Investments | 2.4 | 2.4 | | |
| Property | 3.7 | 3.7 | | |
| Private Equity | 5.3 | 5.3 | | |
| Other | 4.5 | 4.5 | | |
| | 18.8 | | | |
| Custody Fees | 0.1 | | | |
| | 18.9 | | | |

The Fund was also charged indirectly through the bid-offer spread (the difference between bid prices and offer prices) on investments.

12. Investment income

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Bonds | (0.3) | 0.0 |
| Dividends from equities | 22.6 | 20.9 |
| Infrastructure | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| Income from pooled investment vehicles | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| Rents from property | 20.4 | 20.5 |
| Interest on cash deposits | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| Stock lending | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Private Debt | 14.8 | 25.5 |
| Other | 0.4 | 0.3 |
| | 58.7 | 68.6 |
| Withholding tax we cannot recover | (0.4) | (0.3) |
| Total | 58.3 | 68.3 |

12a. Directly held property fund account

A summary of the income and expenses associated with the Fund's directly held property is provided below:

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Rental income | 20.4 | 20.6 |
| Direct operating expenses | (3.1) | (3.9) |
| Net income | 17.3 | 16.7 |

No contingent rents have been recognised as income during the period.

13. Pension Fund investments 2021/2022

| | 31 March 2021 £m | 31 March 2022 £m |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|
| Long term investments | | |
| Equities | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| Investment assets | | |
| Bonds | 0 | 0 |
| Equities | 1,193.8 | 1,269.5 |
| Pooled investment vehicles | 3,778.6 | 4,072.0 |
| Pooled Property Investments | 49.9 | 72.9 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Property (see Note 13e) | 418.5 | 472.7 |
| Private equity | 290.0 | 339.8 |
| Private debt | 288.7 | 299.7 |
| Hedge funds | 23.2 | 2.5 |
| Infrastructure | 2.0 | 25.4 |
| Cash | 96.9 | 264.4 |
| Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax | 1.4 | 1.9 |
| Amount receivable for sales of investments | 4.9 | 4.8 |
| Total Investment assets | 6,147.9 | 6,825.6 |
| Investment liabilities | | |
| Derivatives | 0 | 0 |
| Amounts payable for purchases of investments | (2.9) | (3.3) |
| Total Investment liabilities | (2.9) | (3.3) |
| Net Investment assets | 6,146.3 | 6,823.6 |

All companies operating unit trusts or managed funds are registered in the United Kingdom.

13a. Investment reconciliation

| Period 2021/2022 | Value at 1 April 2021 £m | Purchases at cost £m | Sales proceeds £m | Change in market value £m | Value at 31 March 2022 £m |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Equities | 1,195.1 | 1,357.1 | (1,416.6) | 135.2 | 1,270.8 |
| Pooled investment vehicles | 3,778.6 | 93.6 | (169.0) | 368.8 | 4,072.0 |
| Pooled Property Investments | 49.9 | 21.2 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 72.9 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 925.2 | (924.8) | (0.4) | 0.0 |
| Infrastructure | 2.0 | 26.9 | (3.9) | 0.4 | 25.4 |
| Property | 418.5 | 27.3 | (19.5) | 46.4 | 472.7 |
| Other | 601.9 | 112.1 | (163.6) | 91.6 | 642.0 |
| | 6,046.0 | 2,563.4 | (2,697.4) | 643.9 | 6,555.8 |
| External cash deposits (central cash) | 62.7 | | | | 245.4 |
| Investment manager cash | 34.2 | | | 8.4 | 19.0 |
| | 6,142.9 | | | 652.3 | 6,820.2 |
| Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax | 1.4 | | | | 1.9 |
| Amount receivable for sales of investments | 4.9 | | | | 4.8 |
| Amounts payable for purchases of investments | (2.9) | | | | (3.3) |
| Net Investment assets | 6,146.3 | | | | 6,823.6 |

The previous years data is provided below:

| Period 2020/2021 | Value at 1 April 2020 £m | Purchases at cost £m | Sales proceeds £m | Change in market value £m | Value at 31 March 2021 £m |
|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Equities | 858.8 | 475.7 | (470.8) | 331.4 | 1,195.1 |
| Pooled investment vehicles | 2,796.8 | 125.0 | 0.0 | 856.8 | 3,778.6 |
| Pooled Property Investments | 50.7 | 3.0 | 0.0 | (3.8) | 49.9 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 354.8 | (354.8) | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Infrastructure | 0.0 | 2.5 | 0.0 | (0.5) | 2.0 |
| Property | 415.3 | 17.1 | 0.0 | (13.9) | 418.5 |
| Other | 531.8 | 97.8 | (136.9) | 109.2 | 601.9 |
| | 4,653.4 | 1,075.9 | (962.5) | 1,279.1 | 6,046.0 |
| External cash deposits (central cash) | 62.9 | | | | 62.7 |
| Investment manager cash | 17.4 | | | 10.4 | 34.2 |
| | 4,733.7 | | | 1,289.5 | 6,142.9 |
| Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax | 1.2 | | | | 1.4 |
| Amount receivable for sales of investments | 2.5 | | | | 4.9 |
| Amounts payable for purchases of investments | 2.8) | | | | (2.9) |
| Net Investment assets | 5,131.3 | | | | 4,734.6 |

The Fund holds the following pooled investments that exceed 5% of the total value of net assets at 31 March 2022 (also at 31 March 2021):

| Fund | Market Value 31 March 21 (£000) | % of total fund | Market Value 31 March 22 (£000) | % of total fund |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| LGIM Passive UK Equity | 366,382 | 6.0 | 414,791 | 6.1 |
| LGIM Passive Global Equity | 1,771,395 | 28.8 | 1,819,396 | 26.6 |
| LGIM Passive index-linked gilts | 407,695 | 6.6 | 427,489 | 6.3 |
| LGPS Central Active Global Equity | 675,394 | 11.0 | 763,242 | 11.2 |
| LGPS Central Active corporate Bonds | 423,061 | 6.9 | 401,257 | 5.9 |
| Total Value of Investments | 3,643,927 | | 3,826,175 | |

As at 31 March 2022 (also at 31 March 2021) the Fund was committed to the following contractual commitments:

- £98.1m of contractual commitments for private equity investments (£127.4m)
- Investment in a UK pooled property fund of £19.8m (£0.7m)
- £172.6m of private debt investments (£146.1m)

13b. Investments analysed by Manager

The market value and percentage of assets held by each of the investment managers at the end of the financial year is shown below:

| | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 | |
|---|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | £m | % | £m | % |
| Investments managed by LGPS Central Limited | | | | |
| LGPS Central Limited Global Equity Active Multi Manager Fund | 675.4 | 11% | 763.2 | 11% |
| LGPS Central Limited Global Active Inv Grade Corp Bond Multi Manager Fund | 423.1 | 7% | 401.3 | 6% |
| LGPS Central Global Multi Factor Equity Index Fund | 128.0 | 2% | 245.8 | 4% |
| LGPS Central Limited | 1.3 | 0% | 1.3 | 0% |
| | 1,227.8 | 20% | 1,411.6 | 21% |
| Investments managed outside of LGPS Central Limited | | | | |
| Standard Life Investments (UK equity) | 332.6 | 5% | 0.0 | 0% |
| JP Morgan Asset Management (global equity) | 583.8 | 10% | 657.8 | 10% |
| Longview Partners (global equity) | 309.5 | 5% | 359.4 | 5% |
| Impax Asset Management (Equity) | 0.0 | 0% | 266.3 | 4% |
| Legal & General Investment Management (passive UK index-linked gilts) | 407.7 | 7% | 427.5 | 6% |
| Legal & General Investment Management (passive all world equity) | 2,137.8 | 35% | 2,234.2 | 33% |
| Blackrock Infrastructure Fund (Infrastructure) | 2.0 | 0% | 5.1 | 0% |
| Equitix Fund VI (Infrastructure) | 0.0 | 0% | 19.7 | 0% |
| Pantheon Global Fund IV (Infrastructure) | 0.0 | 0% | 0.6 | 0% |
| Colliers International UK Plc (property) | 468.5 | 8% | 546.2 | 8% |
| HarbourVest Partners (private equity) | 196.2 | 3% | 227.1 | 3% |
| Knightsbridge Advisors (private equity) | 31.9 | 1% | 38.6 | 1% |
| Partners Group (private equity) | 38.6 | 1% | 37.3 | 1% |
| Lazard Technology Partners (private equity) | 1.0 | 0% | 0.6 | 0% |
| Capital Dynamics (private equity) | 18.7 | 0% | 29.5 | 1% |
| LGPS Central (private equity) | 3.5 | 0% | 6.7 | 0% |
| Hayfin Capital Management (private debt) | 115.9 | 2% | 104.6 | 2% |
| Highbridge Capital Management (private debt) | 79.3 | 1% | 90.7 | 1% |
| LGPS Central (private debt) | 0.0 | 0% | 6.7 | 0% |
| Barings (private debt) | 0.0 | 0% | 14.2 | 0% |
| Alcentra Limited (private debt) | 93.4 | 2% | 83.4 | 1% |
| Goldman Sachs Asset Management (hedge funds) | 23.2 | 0% | 2.5 | 0% |
| Director of Finance and Resources (central cash) | 71.4 | 1% | 249.9 | 4% |
| | 4,915.1 | 80% | 5,408.6 | 79% |
| | 6,142.9 | 100% | 6,820.2 | 100% |

13c. Analysis of Investments

| | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 | |
|---|----------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| | £m | % | £m | % |
| Long term investments | | | | |
| UK equities unquoted | 1.3 | 0% | 1.3 | 0% |
| Investment assets | | | | |
| Equities | | | | |
| UK quoted | 362.9 | 6% | 79.2 | 1% |
| Global quoted | 830.9 | 12% | 1,190.3 | 18% |
| | 1,193.8 | 18% | 1,269.5 | 19% |
| Pooled investment vehicles | | | | |
| <u>Unit Trusts</u> | | | | |
| Standard Life UK Equity | 6.6 | 0% | 0.0 | 0% |
| <u>Unitised Insurance Policies</u> | | | | |
| LGIM UK Equity | 366.4 | 6% | 414.8 | 6% |
| LGIM UK Index Linked Gilts | 407.7 | 8% | 427.5 | 6% |
| LGIM Global Equity | 1,771.4 | 27% | 1,819.4 | 27% |
| <u>Other Managed Funds</u> | | | | |
| LGPSC Global Equity Fund | 675.4 | 10% | 763.2 | 11% |
| LGPSC Corporate Bond Fund | 423.1 | 8% | 401.3 | 6% |
| LGPSC Factor Based Investment | 128.0 | 0% | 245.8 | 4% |
| | 3,778.6 | 59% | 4,072.0 | 60% |
| Derivatives (see note 14) | | | | |
| Forward foreign currency | 0.0 | 0% | 0.0 | 0% |
| Futures | 0.0 | 0% | 0.0 | 0% |
| | 0.0 | 0% | 0.0 | 0% |
| Property | | | | |
| UK directly held property | 418.5 | 9% | 472.7 | 7% |
| UK pooled property funds | 49.9 | 1% | 72.9 | 1% |
| | 468.4 | 10% | 545.6 | 8% |
| Other | | | | |
| Private equity | 290.0 | 4% | 339.7 | 5% |
| Private debt | 288.7 | 5% | 299.7 | 4% |
| Hedge funds | 23.2 | 2% | 2.5 | 0% |
| Infrastructure Fund | 2.0 | 0% | 25.5 | 0% |
| | 603.9 | 11% | 667.4 | 9% |
| Cash | | | | |
| External deposits | 62.7 | 1% | 245.4 | 4% |
| Investment manager cash (Sterling £) | 17.9 | 0% | 3.2 | 0% |
| Investment manager cash (non Sterling £) | 16.3 | 0% | 15.8 | 0% |
| | 96.9 | 1% | 264.4 | 4% |
| | 6,142.9 | 100% | 6,820.2 | 100% |
| Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax | 1.4 | | 1.9 | |
| Amount receivable for sales of investments | 4.9 | | 4.8 | |
| Total Investment assets | 6,149.2 | | 6,826.9 | |

Investment liabilities

Derivatives (see note 14)

| | | |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Forward foreign currency | 0 | 0 |
| Futures | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>0</u> | <u>0</u> |
| Amounts payable for purchases of investments | (2.9) | (3.3) |
| Total Investment liabilities | <u>(2.9)</u> | <u>(3.3)</u> |
| Net Investment assets | 6,146.3 | 6,823.6 |

13d. Stock lending

The Fund lends stock in return for payment. The table below summarises the value of the stock lent out by the Fund at the end of the last two years.

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Equities - UK | 0.0 | 2.2 |
| Equities – Global | 80.7 | 78.1 |
| | <u>80.7</u> | <u>80.3</u> |

Securities released to a third party under the stock-lending agreement with Northern Trust are included in the net assets statement to reflect the Fund's continuing economic interest in those securities.

Collateral holdings, supporting the loans, are not identified as individual loans but are kept in a pooled structure. As security for the stocks on loan, as at 31 March 2022 the Fund held £86.3 million (£86.2 million at 31 March 2021) of collateral in the form of government obligations (such as Gilts) and equities.

Income received from stock-lending activities was £0.1 million for the year ending 31 March 2022, (£0.2 million for year ending 31 March 2021). This is included within the investment income figure shown on the Pension Fund account.

13e. Directly held property net asset account

The Fund had investments in property of £545.6m at 31 March 2022 (£468.4m at 31 March 2021), of which £472.7m was in directly held property (£418.5m at 31 March 2021). The account below reconciles the movement in the Fund's investments in directly held property.

The Fund is required to classify its directly held property into a hierarchy by reference to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values (See note 15 for more information on the hierarchy). The Fund has classified its directly held property as Level 3, as fair values are based on significant unobservable inputs and estimated using valuation techniques.

Directly held property investments are valued independently for the Fund as at 31 March 2022. The valuations are prepared in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards incorporating the IVSC International Valuation Standards, the UK National Supplement, together with the 'Red Book'.

Transaction costs for directly held property in 2021/2022 were £3.9m (£3.1m in 2020/2021).

| | 2020/2021 | 2021/2022 |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Balance at start of year | 415.3 | 418.5 |
| Purchases at cost | 17.1 | 26.8 |
| New construction | | 0.3 |
| Subsequent expenditure | | 0.2 |
| Sale proceeds | (0.0) | (19.5) |
| Change in market value | (13.9) | 46.4 |
| Balance at 31 March | 418.5 | 472.7 |

14. Derivative contracts

The holding of derivative contracts is to hedge exposures and reduce risk for the Fund. The use of derivative contracts is managed in line with the investment management agreement between the Fund and the various investment managers who use them.

Forward foreign currency contracts

To maintain appropriate diversification a significant proportion of the Fund's quoted equity holdings is in overseas stock markets. To reduce the volatility associated with fluctuating currency rates, the Fund hedges a proportion of the US and Australian Dollar within the portfolios managed by Longview and JP Morgan. The open contracts at 31 March are analysed in Sterling (£) below against other major currencies.

| | 01 April 2021 | Cost Purchase Settled only | Proceed Sales Settled only | Change in Market Value | 31 March 2022 |
|-------|--------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Total | 0 | (924.8) | 925.2 | (0.4) | 0 |

| | 31 March 2021 | | 31 March 2022 | |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | Assets | Liabilities | Assets | Liabilities |
| | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Euro | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| United States Dollar | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |

15. Fair value - basis of valuation

The basis of the valuation of each asset class of investment is set out below. All assets have been valued using fair value techniques which represent the highest and best price available at the reporting date. There have been no changes in the valuation techniques used during the year.

| Description of asset | Valuation hierarchy | Basis of valuation | Observable and unobservable inputs | Key sensitivities affecting the valuations provided |
|---|---------------------|---|---|--|
| Market quoted investments (equities and bonds) | Level 1 | Published bid market price ruling on the final day of the accounting period | Not required | Not required |
| Quoted bonds | Level 1 | Bonds are valued at a market value based on current yields | Not required | Not required |
| Futures | Level 1 | Published exchange prices at the year-end | Not required | Not Required |
| Pooled investment vehicles | Level 2 | Fair value based on the weekly market quoted prices of the respective underlying securities | Not required | Not required |
| Forward foreign currency contracts | Level 2 | Market forward exchange rates at the year end | Exchange rate risk | Not Required |
| Unquoted Equities | Level 3 | Comparable valuation of similar companies in accordance with International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (EBITDA) multiple - Revenue multiple - Discount for lack of Marketability - Control premium | Valuations could be affected by post balance sheet events, changes to expected cashflows, or by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts |
| Freehold and leasehold properties | Level 3 | Valued at fair value by Savills in accordance with International Valuation Standards and RICS Valuation Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing lease terms rentals - Independent market research - Covenant strength for existing tenants - Assumed vacancy levels - Estimated rental growth - Discount rate | Significant changes in rental growth, vacancy levels or the discount rate could affect valuations as could more general changes to market prices |
| Pooled property funds | Level 3 | The Funds ownership share in property limited partnerships is applied to the partnership net assets. The net assets are based on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing lease terms rentals - Independent market research - Covenant strength for existing tenants - Assumed vacancy levels | Significant changes in rental growth, vacancy levels or the discount rate could affect valuations as could more general changes to market prices |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|--|---|--|
| | | the fair value of the underlying investment properties in accordance with International Valuation Standards and RICS Valuation Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Estimated rental growth - Discount rate | |
| Infrastructure | Level 3 | At the price or net asset value advised by the manager using the latest financial information available from the respective manager, adjusted for drawdowns and distributions to the final date of the accounting period, if the latest financial information is not produced at that date | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EBITDA multiple - Revenue multiple - Discount for lack of marketability - Discounted cash flows | Valuations could be impacted by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the year end, by changes to expected cash flows, and any differences between the audited and unaudited accounts |
| Private equity | Level 3 | Comparable valuation of similar companies in accordance with International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines 2012 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EBITDA multiple - Revenue multiple - Discount for lack of marketability - Control Premium | Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the Pension Fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cash flows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts (see Note 4) |
| Private debt | Level 3 | Valued at fair value in accordance with International Valuation Standards and investment managers valuation policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comparable valuation of similar assets - EBITDA multiple - Revenue multiple - Discounted cash flows - Enterprise value estimation | Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the Pension Fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cash flows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts |
| Hedge funds | Level 3 | Closing bid price and offer prices are published | NAV-based pricing set on a forward pricing basis | Valuations are effected by any changes to the value of the financial instrument being hedged. |

Sensitivity of assets valued at Level 3

In consultation with the Fund's investment advisor, the Fund has determined that the valuation methods described above are likely to be accurate to within the following ranges and has set out below the consequent potential impact on the closing value of investments held at 31 March 2022.

| Asset type | Assessed valuation range % | 31 March 2022 £m | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| UK equities unquoted | 20% | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.1 |
| Freehold and leasehold properties | 15% | 472.7 | 543.6 | 401.8 |
| Pooled property funds | 15% | 72.9 | 83.9 | 62.0 |
| Private equity | 31% | 339.7 | 445.1 | 234.4 |
| Private debt | 9% | 299.7 | 326.7 | 272.7 |
| Infrastructure | 15% | 25.4 | 29.3 | 21.6 |
| Hedge funds | 8% | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.3 |
| | | 1,214.3 | 1,432.8 | 995.9 |

15a. Fair value hierarchy

Asset and liability valuations have been classified into three levels, according to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values. The three levels are detailed below:

Level 1 - Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities. Products classified as Level 1 are quoted equities and bonds.

Level 2 - Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e. as prices) or indirectly (i.e. derived from prices). Level 2 products include pooled investment vehicles, as they are not traded in a market that is considered to be active and where the asset value can be determined by observed values for the underlying assets.

Level 3 - Inputs for assets or liabilities that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs). Examples include private equity, private debt and hedge funds, which are valued using valuation techniques that require significant judgement.

The following table provides an analysis by the three levels based on the level at which the fair value is observable.

| 31 March 2022 | Level 1 £m | Level 2 £m | Level 3 £m | Total £m |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Financial assets | | | | |
| Designated as fair value through profit and loss | 1,269.5 | 4,072.0 | 741.7 | 6,083.2 |
| Non-financial assets at fair value through profit and loss (See note 13e) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 472.7 | 472.7 |
| Financial liabilities | | | | |
| Designated as fair value through profit and loss | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | 1,269.5 | 4,072.0 | 1,214.4 | 6,555.9 |

The previous years data is provided below:

| 31 March 2021 | Level 1 £m | Level 2 £m | Level 3 £m | Total £m |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Financial assets | | | | |
| Designated as fair value through profit and loss | 1,193.8 | 3,778.6 | 655.0 | 5,627.4 |
| Non-financial assets at fair value through profit and loss (See note 13e) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 418.6 | 418.6 |
| Financial liabilities | | | | |
| Designated as fair value through profit and loss | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1,193.8 | 3,778.6 | 1,073.6 | 6,046.0 |

15b. Reconciliation of fair value measurements within level 3

| Period 2021/2022 | Market Value 1 April 2021 £m | Purchases during the year and derivative payments £m | Sales during the year and derivative receipts £m | Unrealised gains / (Losses) £m | Realised gains / (Losses) £m | Market Value 31 March 2022 £m |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| UK equities unquoted | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| Freehold and leasehold properties | 418.5 | 27.3 | (19.5) | 45.4 | 1.0 | 472.7 |
| Pooled property funds | 49.9 | 21.2 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 0.0 | 72.9 |
| Private equity | 290.0 | 39.4 | (75.2) | 35.9 | 49.7 | 339.7 |
| Private debt | 288.7 | 72.7 | (66.8) | 5.1 | 0.0 | 299.7 |
| Infrastructure | 2.0 | 26.9 | (3.8) | 0.3 | 0.0 | 25.4 |
| Hedge funds | 23.2 | 0.0 | (21.6) | (14.2) | 15.1 | 2.5 |
| | 1,073.6 | 187.5 | (187.0) | 74.4 | 65.8 | 1,214.3 |

The previous years data is provided below:

| Period 2020/2021 | Market Value 1 April 2020 £m | Purchases during the year and derivative payments £m | Sales during the year and derivative receipts £m | Unrealised gains / (Losses) £m | Realised gains / (Losses) £m | Market Value 31 March 2021 £m |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| UK equities unquoted | 1.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 |
| Freehold and leasehold properties | 415.3 | 17.1 | 0.0 | (12.5) | (1.3) | 418.5 |
| Pooled property funds | 50.7 | 3.0 | 0.0 | (3.8) | 0.0 | 49.9 |
| Private equity | 197.1 | 32.5 | (33.7) | 73.9 | 20.1 | 290.0 |
| Private debt | 250.5 | 65.2 | (36.8) | 9.8 | 0.0 | 288.7 |
| Infrastructure | 0 | 2.5 | 0.0 | (0.5) | 0.0 | 2.0 |
| Hedge funds | 84.2 | 0.0 | (66.4) | 2.8 | 2.6 | 23.2 |
| | 999.1 | 120.3 | (136.9) | 69.7 | 21.4 | 1,073.6 |

16. Classification of financial instruments

The net assets of the Fund disclosed in the Net assets statement and in notes 13a to 13e, 19, 19a, 20 and 20a are made up of the following categories of financial instruments. No financial instruments were reclassified during 2021/2022.

The analysis within notes 16, 16b and 17 on financial instruments does not include the Pension Fund's directly held property. This is treated under a different accounting standard (IAS 40 Investment Property) and is disclosed in note 13e - Directly held property net asset account and note 12a - Directly held property fund account.

| | Designated as fair value through profit and loss | Financial Assets at amortised cost | Financial liabilities at amortised cost | Total |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------|
| 31 March 2022 | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Financial assets | | | | |
| Equities | 1,270.8 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1,270.8 |
| Pooled investment vehicles | 4,072.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4,072.0 |
| UK pooled property funds | 72.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 72.9 |
| Cash | 0.0 | 266.5 | 0.0 | 266.5 |
| Other investment balances | 667.8 | 6.3 | 0.0 | 674.1 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Long term assets | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Current assets | 0.0 | 19.6 | 0.0 | 19.6 |
| | 6,083.6 | 292.4 | 0.0 | 6,376.1 |
| Financial liabilities | | | | |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Other investment balances | 0.0 | 0.0 | (3.4) | (3.4) |
| Long term Liabilities | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.0) | (0.0) |
| Current liabilities | 0.0 | 0.0 | (12.2) | (12.2) |
| | 0.0 | 0.0 | (15.6) | (15.6) |
| | 6,083.6 | 292.4 | (15.6) | 6,360.4 |

16. Classification of financial instruments (continued)

The previous years data is provided below:

| | Designated as fair value through profit and loss | Financial Assets at amortised cost | Financial liabilities at amortised cost | Total |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|----------------|
| 31 March 2021 | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Financial assets | | | | |
| Equities | 1,195.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1,195.1 |
| Pooled investment vehicles | 3,778.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3,778.6 |
| UK pooled property funds | 49.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 49.9 |
| Cash | 0.0 | 97.5 | 0.0 | 97.5 |
| Other investment balances | 603.9 | 6.3 | 0.0 | 610.2 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Long term assets | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Current assets | 0.0 | 18.8 | 0.0 | 18.8 |
| | 5,627.4 | 122.6 | 0.0 | 5,750.0 |
| Financial liabilities | | | | |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Other investment balances | 0.0 | 0.0 | (2.9) | (2.9) |
| Long term Liabilities | 0.0 | 0.0 | (0.1) | (0.1) |
| Current liabilities | 0.0 | 0.0 | (9.2) | (9.2) |
| | 0.0 | 0.0 | (12.2) | (12.2) |
| | 5,627.4 | 122.6 | (12.2) | 5,733.8 |

16b. Net gains on financial instruments

The gains recognised in the accounts in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

| | 31 March 2021 £m | 31 March 2022 £m |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| Financial assets | | |
| Designated as fair value through profit and loss | 1,293.0 | 597.5 |
| Amortised cost | 10.4 | 8.4 |
| | 1,303.4 | 605.9 |

17. Nature and extent of risks arising from financial instruments

The primary objective of the Fund is to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all Pension liabilities as they fall due for payment. The Fund aims to do this by adopting an investment strategy that balances risk and return.

The majority of the Fund is invested through external investment managers. Each has an investment management agreement in place which sets out the relevant benchmark, performance target, asset allocation ranges and any restrictions.

Risks are managed through diversification; by investing across asset classes, across managers and styles and ensuring managers maintain a diversified portfolio of investments within their mandate. The majority of the Fund is invested in liquid investments.

Market risk

Market risk is the risk of loss from fluctuations in market prices, interest rates or currencies. The Fund is exposed through its investment portfolio to all these market risks.

Market risk also represents the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate caused by factors other than those mentioned above. These changes can be caused by factors specific to the individual instrument or those affecting the market in general and will affect each asset class the Fund holds in different ways.

A high proportion of the Fund is invested in equities and therefore fluctuation in equity prices is the largest risk the Fund faces. The Fund relies on the fact that it has positive cash flows and a strong employer covenant to underpin its investment in equities and maintains its high exposure to equities over the long-term as they are expected to deliver higher returns.

The Fund manages market risk through a diversified investment portfolio and instructing individual investment managers to diversify investments within their own individual portfolios in line with their investment strategies and mandate guidelines. The Pensions Panel and Pensions Committee regularly receive reports which monitor such risks.

Market risk – sensitivity analysis

In consultation with the Fund's investment advisor the following movements in market prices have been judged as possible for the 2022/2023 financial year. The potential market movement figures also allow for interest rate and currency rate fluctuations.

| Asset type | Possible market movements |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| UK equity | +/- 20% |
| Global equity | +/- 20% |
| Private equity | +/- 31% |
| Private debt | +/- 9% |
| UK fixed interest bonds | +/- 7% |
| UK index-linked bonds | +/- 7% |
| Corporate bonds | +/- 8% |
| Cash | +/- 0% |
| UK Commercial property | +/- 15% |
| Hedge funds | +/- 8% |
| Infrastructure | +/- 15% |

This movement in the market prices would increase or decrease the net assets at 31 March 2022 to the amounts shown below:

| Asset type | 31 March 2022 £m | Percentage change (+/-) % | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|---|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| UK equities unquoted | 1.3 | 20% | 1.6 | 1.1 |
| UK corporate bonds | 0.0 | 8% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Global corporate bonds | 0.0 | 8% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| UK equities | 79.2 | 20% | 95.0 | 63.3 |
| Global equities | 1,190.3 | 20% | 1,428.4 | 952.3 |
| UK pooled investments | 414.8 | 20% | 497.7 | 331.8 |
| UK index-linked pooled investments | 427.5 | 7% | 457.4 | 397.6 |
| Overseas pooled investments | 3,229.7 | 20% | 3,875.7 | 2,583.8 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| UK pooled property funds | 72.9 | 15% | 83.9 | 62.0 |
| Private equity | 339.7 | 31% | 445.1 | 234.4 |
| Private debt | 299.7 | 9% | 326.7 | 272.7 |
| Infrastructure | 25.5 | 15% | 29.3 | 21.6 |
| Hedge funds | 2.5 | 8% | 2.7 | 2.3 |
| Cash | 264.4 | 0% | 264.4 | 264.4 |
| Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax | 1.9 | 0% | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| Amount receivable for sales of | 4.8 | 0% | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| Amounts payable for purchases of investments | (3.4) | 0% | (3.4) | (3.4) |
| Long term assets | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Current assets | 21.8 | 0% | 21.8 | 21.8 |
| Long term Liabilities | (0.0) | | (0.0) | (0.0) |
| Current liabilities | (12.2) | 0% | (12.2) | (12.2) |
| | 6,360.4 | | 7,520.7 | 5,200.2 |

The previous years data is provided below:

| Asset type | 31 March 2021 £m | Percentage change (+/-) % | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| UK equities unquoted | 1.3 | 17% | 1.5 | 1.1 |
| UK corporate bonds | 0.0 | 8% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Global corporate bonds | 0.0 | 8% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| UK equities | 362.9 | 17% | 424.6 | 301.2 |
| Global equities | 830.8 | 17% | 972.1 | 689.6 |
| UK pooled investments | 373.0 | 17% | 436.4 | 309.6 |
| UK index-linked pooled investments | 407.7 | 7% | 436.2 | 379.2 |
| Overseas pooled investments | 2,997.9 | 17% | 3,507.5 | 2,488.3 |
| Derivatives | 0.0 | 0% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| UK pooled property funds | 49.9 | 14% | 56.9 | 42.9 |
| Private equity | 290.0 | 28% | 371.2 | 208.8 |
| Private debt | 288.7 | 5% | 303.1 | 274.2 |
| Infrastructure | 2.0 | 21% | 2.4 | 1.6 |
| Hedge funds | 23.2 | 10% | 25.5 | 20.9 |
| Cash | 96.9 | 0% | 96.9 | 96.9 |
| Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax | 1.4 | 0% | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Amount receivable for sales of | 4.9 | 0% | 4.9 | 4.9 |
| Amounts payable for purchases of investments | (2.9) | 0% | (2.9) | (2.9) |
| Long term assets | 0.0 | | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Current assets | 18.8 | 0% | 18.8 | 18.8 |
| Long term Liabilities | (0.1) | | (0.1) | (0.1) |
| Current liabilities | (12.6) | 0% | (12.6) | (12.6) |
| | 5,733.8 | | 6,643.9 | 4,823.7 |

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

Changes in market interest rates would affect the value of the Fund's bonds. The amount of income the Fund generates from its cash holdings would also be affected.

The Fund's direct exposure to interest rate movements as at 31 March 2022 is set out below. These disclosures present interest rate risk based on the underlying financial assets at fair value.

Interest rate risk - sensitivity analysis

The Fund recognises that interest rates can vary and can affect both income to the Fund and the value of the net assets available to pay benefits. Medium to long-term average rates are expected to move less than 100 basis points from one year to the next and experience suggests that such movements are likely.

The analysis that follows assumes that all other variables, in particular exchange rates, remain constant, and shows the effect in the year on the net assets available to pay benefits of a +/- 100 basis points (i.e.1%) change in interest rates:

| Asset type | 31 March 2022 £m | Percentage change (+/-) % | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | 245.4 | 0% | 245.4 | 245.4 |
| Cash balances | 2.2 | 0% | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Bonds | 0.0 | 1% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | 247.6 | | 247.6 | 247.6 |

| Asset type | 31 March 2021 £m | Percentage change (+/-) % | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cash and cash equivalents | 62.7 | 0% | 62.7 | 62.7 |
| Cash balances | 0.6 | 0% | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Bonds | 0.0 | 1% | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| | 63.3 | | 63.3 | 63.3 |

Foreign currency risk

Foreign currency risk represents the risk that the fair value of financial instruments when expressed in Sterling (£) will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates.

A high proportion of the Fund's equity portfolio is held in global stock markets. Any short term volatility associated with fluctuating currencies is balanced by the long term nature of investments in equity markets.

Foreign currency risk - sensitivity analysis

Following consultation with the Fund's investment advisors, the Fund considers the likely volatility associated with foreign exchange movements to be 10%.

On the assumption that all other variables, in particular interest rates, remain constant, a 10% strengthening/weakening of the pound against the various currencies in which the Fund holds investments would increase/decrease the net assets available to pay benefits as follows:

| Asset type | 31 March 2022 £m | Percentage change (+/-) % | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Global equities | 1,190.3 | 10% | 1,309.3 | 1,071.3 |
| Overseas pooled investments | 3,229.7 | 10% | 3,552.7 | 2,906.8 |
| Private equity | 339.7 | 10% | 373.7 | 305.8 |
| Private debt | 299.7 | 10% | 329.7 | 269.7 |
| Infrastructure | 25.5 | 10% | 28.0 | 22.9 |
| Hedge funds | 2.5 | 10% | 2.8 | 2.3 |
| | 5,087.4 | | 5,596.2 | 4,578.7 |

| Asset type | 31 March 2021 £m | Percentage change (+/-) % | Value on increase £m | Value on decrease £m |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Global equities | 830.8 | 10% | 913.9 | 747.7 |
| Overseas pooled investments | 2,997.9 | 10% | 3,297.7 | 2,698.1 |
| Private equity | 390.0 | 10% | 319.0 | 261.0 |
| Private debt | 288.7 | 10% | 317.6 | 259.8 |
| Infrastructure | 2.0 | 10% | 2.2 | 1.8 |
| Hedge funds | 23.2 | 10% | 25.5 | 20.9 |
| | 4,432.6 | | 4,875.9 | 3,989.3 |

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that the counterparty to a financial instrument will fail to meet an obligation and cause the Fund to incur a financial loss. The biggest exposure the Fund has is through its investment in corporate bonds and private debt.

The Fund is also exposed to credit risk through other investment managers that hold assets and the custodian. The Fund minimises credit risk through the careful selection and monitoring of high quality counterparties. Assets and cash held by the custodian are held in individual accounts in the Pension Fund's name, clearly segregated from the assets of other clients and the custodian.

Through the stock lending programme, operated by the Fund's custodian, the Fund is exposed to the collateral provided by the borrower against the securities lent. To manage this risk the collateral permitted is restricted to government obligations (such as Gilts) and equities. Collateral is held in excess of the securities lent.

Foreign exchange contracts are subject to credit risk in relation to the counterparties of the contracts. The maximum credit risk exposure on foreign currency contracts is the full amount of the foreign currency the Fund pays when settlement occurs, should the counterparty fail to pay the amount which it is committed to pay the Fund.

Another source of credit risk for the Fund is the cash it holds to meet short-term commitments. The cash is managed by the Staffordshire County Council Treasury and Pensions Fund team in line with the Pension Fund's Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the permitted counterparties and limits.

| Summary | Rating | 31 March 2021 £m | 31 March 2022 £m |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bank current account | | | |
| Lloyds Bank (see notes 19a & 20a) | A+ | 0.6 | 2.2 |
| Loan | | | |
| LGPS Central | N/A | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Money market funds | | | |
| Aberdeen Ultra Short Duration Sterling Fund (formerly Standard Life Investments Short Duration Managed Liquidity Fund) | AAA | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| Federated (PR) Short-Term GBP Prime Fund Class 3 | AAA | 8.0 | 38.0 |
| Goldman Sachs Sterling Liquid Reserve Institutional Inc | AAA | 0.5 | 38.7 |
| Aviva Investors Sterling Liquidity Fund 3 | AAA | 14.5 | 48.0 |
| Morgan Stanley Sterling Liquidity Inst | AAA | 8.0 | 43.0 |
| HSBC Global Sterling H | AAA | 1.0 | 47.0 |
| Royal London Cash Plus Fund | AAA | 10.0 | 10.0 |
| | | 62.7 | 245.4 |
| | | 63.3 | 247.6 |

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk represents the risk that the Fund will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. To manage this risk the Fund holds an allocation of its assets in cash, the majority of which Staffordshire County Council Treasury and Pensions Fund team have same day access to. This is to ensure short term commitments can be met.

The majority of the stocks held by the Fund's investment managers are quoted on major stock markets and may be realised quickly if required. Less liquid investments such as property, private equity, hedge funds and private debt currently make up a smaller proportion of the Fund's assets.

In the short-term the Fund can borrow money on the money markets to cover any shortfall that may arise. Overall there is very little risk that the Fund will not be able to raise cash to meet its commitments.

18. Funding Arrangements

In line with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulation 2013, the fund's actuary undertakes a funding valuation every three years for the purpose of setting employer rates for the forthcoming triennial period. The last such valuation took place as at 31 March 2019.

The key elements of the funding policy are:

- 1) to ensure the long-term solvency of the fund. i.e. that sufficient funds are available to meet all pension liabilities as they fall due for payment
- 2) to ensure that employer contribution rates are as stable as possible
- 3) to minimise the long-term cost of the scheme by recognising the link between assets and liabilities and adopting an investment strategy that balances risk and return
- 4) to reflect the different characteristics of employing bodies in determining contribution rates where it is reasonable to do so, and
- 5) to use reasonable measures to reduce the risk to other employers and ultimately to the council tax payer from an employer defaulting on its pension obligation.

The aim is to achieve 100% solvency over a period of 20 years and to provide stability in employer contribution rates by spreading any increases in rates over a period of time. Solvency is achieved when the funds held, plus future expected investment returns and future contributions, are sufficient to meet expected future pension benefits payable.

At the 2019 actuarial valuation, the fund was assessed as 99% funded (78% at the March 2016 valuation). This corresponded to a deficit of £73m (2016 valuation: £1,059m) at that time. Contribution increases will be phased in over the three-year period ending 31 March 2020 for both scheme employers and admitted bodies. The primary contribution rate (ie the rate which all employers in the fund pay) is as follows.

| Year | Employers' contribution rate |
|---------|------------------------------|
| 2019/20 | 18.3% |
| 2020/21 | 19.7% |
| 2021/22 | 19.7% |
| 2022/23 | 19.7% |

In addition to the primary contribution rate, most employers will also pay a secondary contribution rate depending on the demographic and actuarial factors particular to each employer. Full details of the contribution rates payable can be found in the 2019 actuarial valuation report and the funding strategy statement on the fund's website. www.staffspf.org.uk

The principal assumptions are included in the Actuarial Statement.

Financial Assumptions

| | 2016 | 2019 |
|--|------|------|
| | % | % |
| Investment Return | 3.8 | 3.9 |
| Benefit increases and CARE revaluation | 2.1 | 2.3 |
| Salary increases | 2.6 | 2.7 |

Demographic Assumptions

The assumed life expectancy from age 65 is as follows:

| Life expectancy from age 65 | | 31 March 2019 | 31 March 2022 |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------------|---------------|
| Retiring today | Males | 21.2 | 21.2 |
| | Females | 23.6 | 23.8 |
| Retiring in 20 years | Males | 22.1 | 22.2 |
| | Females | 25.0 | 25.5 |

Experience over the period since 31 March 2019

Markets were severely disrupted by COVID-19 in March 2020, but over most of 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 they recovered strongly. However, due to the war in Ukraine, March 2022 markets were particularly volatile, which affects values as at the accounting date. All other things being equal, the funding level of the Fund as at 31 March 2022 is likely to be better than that reported at the previous formal valuation as at 31 March 2019.

It is important to note that the formal triennial funding valuation exercise is at 31 March 2022 and this may show a different picture when the finalised position is disclosed in next year's annual report. In particular, changes in Fund membership, changes in anticipated real investment returns and changes in demographic assumptions will affect the valuation results. The Funding Strategy Statement will also be reviewed as part of the triennial funding valuation exercise.

19. Long term assets

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Contributions due – employers | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Total | 0.0 | 0.0 |

19a. Current assets

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Short term debtors | | |
| Contributions due - employers | 9.5 | 10.6 |
| Contributions due - members | 2.5 | 2.9 |
| Cash balances | 0.6 | 2.2 |
| Other | 6.8 | 6.1 |
| Total | 19.4 | 21.8 |

20. Long term liabilities

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|--|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Income received in advance (see note 23) | (0.1) | (0.1) |
| Total | (0.1) | (0.1) |

20a. Current liabilities

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Cash overdrawn | (0.0) | (0.0) |
| Investment management expenses | (1.3) | (1.0) |
| Income received in advance | (1.9) | (2.1) |
| Benefits payable | (4.1) | (3.8) |
| Other | (5.9) | (5.3) |
| Total | (13.2) | (12.2) |

21. Additional voluntary contributions

As well as joining the Fund, scheme members can pay into an additional voluntary contribution (AVC) scheme run by external providers. Contributions are paid directly from scheme members to the providers.

The contributions are not included within the Fund accounts, in line with regulation 4(1)(b) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2017. The table below shows the activity for each AVC provider in the year.

| | Scottish Widows £m | Equitable Life £m | Standard Life £m |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Opening value | 0.9 | 0.3 | 1.9 |
| Income | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.3 |
| Expenditure | (0.1) | (0.0) | (0.1) |
| Change in market value | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 |
| Closing value | 0.9 | 0.3 | 2.2 |

22. Related-party disclosure

- Staffordshire Pension Fund is administered by Staffordshire County Council. During the reporting period the County Council incurred costs of £2.2m (£2.0m in 2020/2021) in relation to the administration of the Pension Fund. The County Council was subsequently reimbursed by the Fund for these expenses.
- The Pension Fund holds a proportion of its assets in cash to meet short term commitments. This cash is managed by the Staffordshire County Council Treasury and Pension Fund team in line with the Fund's Annual Investment Strategy, which sets out the permitted counterparties and limits. At 31 March 2021 the Fund held £247.6m in cash (£63.3m at 31 March 2021).
- The County Council are the largest employer and they have fully paid for all their contributions.

LGPS Central Limited

- LGPS Central Limited has been established to manage investment assets on behalf of nine Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) funds across the Midlands. It is jointly owned in equal shares by the eight administering authorities participating in the LGPS Central Pool, of which Staffordshire County Council, as the administering authority for Staffordshire Pension Fund, is one of the shareholders.
- The Fund had £1.315m invested in share capital and £0.685m in a loan to LGPS Central at 31 March 2022 (31 March 2021, £1.315m and £0.685m, respectively) and was owed interest of £0.032m on the loan to LGPSC on the same date (31 March 2021, £0.032m).
- During 2021/2022 the Fund invested a further £93.6m in the global multi factor equity index fund.
- The Fund incurred £1.050m in respect of Governance, Operator Running and Product Development costs in connection with LGPS Central Limited in 2021/2022 (£1.026m in 2020/2021).

22a. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Fund are the Staffordshire County Council County Treasurer (Section 151 Officer), Director of Corporate Services, and the Head of Treasury and Pensions. Total remuneration payable to key personnel in respect of the Pension Fund is set out below:

| | 31 March 2021 | 31 March 2022 |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £m | £m |
| Short Term Benefits | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Post-employment Benefits | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| | 0.2 | 0.2 |

23. Deferred liability

A cash transfer of £0.188m was made to the Fund in 2011/2012 by the Environment Agency. The transfer was in respect of Pre-1974 Water Company Pensions increase recharges and represents income received in advance. £0.013m has been transferred to the revenue account in 2021/2022 and £0.013m will be released per year until 2025/2026. At 31 March 2022 the remaining balance was £0.050m as per the long term liabilities in note 20.

24. Accounting Standards issued but not yet adopted

At the balance sheet date the following interpretations, new standards and amendments to existing standards have been published but not yet adopted by the Code:

- IFRS 16 Leases will require local authorities that are lessees to recognise most leases on their balance sheets as right-of-use assets with corresponding lease liabilities. The CIPFA LASAAC Local Authority Accounting Code Board has agreed to defer the implementation of IFRS16 until 1st April 2022 for Local Government.

Glossary

Accounting Period

The period of time covered by the accounts. This is normally 12 months beginning on 1 April.

Accrual

An amount included in the final accounts to cover income or spending during an accounting period for goods or work done, but for which we have not received or made a payment by the end of that accounting period.

Actuarial Strain

This is a charge paid, or due to be paid to the pension fund for paying pensions early.

Actuarial Valuation

This is when an actuary checks what the pension scheme's assets are worth and compares them with what the scheme owes. They then work out how much the contributions from employers must be so that there will be enough money in the scheme when people get their pensions.

Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)

This is an extra amount (contribution) a member can pay to their own pension scheme to increase their future pension benefits.

Admitted Bodies

Organisations which carry out public functions or receive public finance (or both), and are members of our fund (for example, housing associations).

Agency Services

When one organisation (the agent) provides services on behalf of another organisation that will pay for those services.

Amortisation

A charge we make each year in the income and expenditure account to reduce the value of an asset to zero over a period of years.

Balances

The total general balances we have available, including any income built up, which allows us to work without borrowing until we receive the first precept payments in the early part of the financial year. Balances form part of our reserves.

Balance Sheet

This is a summary of all our assets and liabilities, bringing together all our accounts except the pension fund and various trust funds, whose assets we cannot use.

Benchmarks

These are investment performance standards that we expect our investment managers to achieve and against which we measure their investment return.

Bid-Market Price

The price a buyer pays for a stock.

Billing Authority

The local authority responsible for collecting council tax. In shire areas the billing authority is the District Council.

Budget

A statement of our financial plans for a certain period of time. We prepare and approve a budget before the start of the financial year. We prepare our budget on an 'outturn basis', which means that increases for pay and prices during the financial year are contained within the total budget figure.

Budget Requirement

The amount of spending paid for using the council tax and government grant.

Capital Adjustment Account

This mainly represents the balance of the gains or losses arising when we revalue non-current assets to neutralise any effect on the taxpayer.

Capital Charge

A charge to reflect the cost of non-current assets used to provide services.

Glossary

Capital Direction

An instruction from the Government saying what spending can be treated as capital expenditure. This means that instead of having to be counted as revenue, we can pay for it using borrowed money or capital receipts.

Capital Expenditure

Spending to buy significant non-current assets that we will use or benefit from for more than a year (for example, land and buildings).

Capital Financing Requirement

Our need to borrow to pay for capital expenditure.

Capital Programme

Our plan of capital projects and spending over future years, including buying land and buildings, putting up new buildings and work, design fees and buying vehicles and major items of equipment.

Capital Receipts

The proceeds from selling an asset (for example, land or buildings) which we may use to pay for new capital spending or to repay loans we owe.

Capitalised

Spending on assets which carry a future benefit.

Centrally-Controlled Items

Budgets not under the control of chief officers. They include spending relating to property, insurance, repairs and maintenance, interest earned on funds and repaying money borrowed.

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This is the professional organisation for accountants working in the public service.

Collateral Holdings

Assets pledged to a lender until the loan is repaid. If the borrower does not pay off the loan, the lender has the legal right to seize the asset and sell it to pay off the loan.

Collection Fund

A fund run by each billing authority into which council tax money is paid.

Combined Code

This represents best practice in corporate governance, as recommended by various reports on the subject.

Community Assets

Assets that we plan to hold onto indefinitely, that have no set useful life and that may have restrictions on being sold. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings.

Commutations

When a member of the fund gives up part of their pension in exchange for a lump sum.

Contingency

The money we set aside for unexpected spend.

Contingent Liabilities

An amount we could owe when we send the accounts for approval. We will include the liability in the balance sheet if we can estimate it reasonably accurately. Otherwise we would add the liability as a note to the accounts.

Contributors

Employees of authorities who contribute to the pension fund.

Corporate Governance

Issues relating to the way in which a company makes sure that it is giving most importance to the interests of its shareholders and how shareholders can influence how the company is managed.

Glossary

County Fund

Our main revenue fund into which the precept, National Non-Domestic Rates, government grants and other income are paid, and from which we pay the costs of providing services.

Credit Approvals

Authorisations the Government gives to local authorities. They allow the local authorities to pay for capital spending by borrowing or other credit arrangements such as leasing.

Creditors

Amounts we owe for work done, goods received or services provided which have not been paid for by the end of the financial year.

Credit Ceiling

This is a measure of the difference between our total liabilities for capital expenditure paid for using credit and the provision that has been made to meet those liabilities.

Curtailment Costs

Curtailment costs arise when many employees transfer out of the scheme at the same time, such as when an organisation transfers its members to another scheme.

Custody

Where a financial institution holds and manages the assets of the fund.

Debtors

Amounts owed to us for work done or services supplied which have not been paid by the end of the financial year.

Deferred Liabilities

Liabilities which by arrangement are payable beyond the next year at some point in the future or paid off with a yearly amount over a period of time.

Deficit

A situation where spending is more than income.

Depreciation

The loss of value of a non-current asset as it ages, wears out, is used, or comes to the end of its life.

Discontinued Operations

Any operation which meets all of the following conditions.

- a The operation is completed:
 - during a relevant period or within three months of the start of the next period; or
 - on the date on which we approve the accounts;whichever is earlier.

- b All activities have permanently stopped.

- c The assets, liabilities, income and spending of operations and activities are clearly separated for financial reporting purposes.

Fees and Charges

As well as income from council tax payers and the Government, we can charge for a number of services including providing school meals, meals-on-wheels, hiring out school halls and sporting facilities.

Financial Instrument

A contract that provides a financial asset for one organisation and, at the same time, another organisation owes us the same amount. Usually for us this is for long-term loans used to raise funds for capital investment.

Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

A non-cash reserve where we can balance the different rates at which gains and losses in financial instruments are recognised.

Financial Regulations

A written code of procedures we have approved, aimed at providing a framework for sound financial management.

Glossary

Fixed-interest Investments

Investments, mainly in stocks issued by the Government, which provide a fixed rate of interest.

Futures Contracts

A legally-binding agreement to buy or sell a certain amount of a financial product at an agreed price and on an agreed date in the future.

Hedge Fund

This is an investment fund that uses a number of types of investments to make a consistent and steady return. It aims to make money whether markets are falling or rising.

Impairment

Where an asset's value has been reduced for reasons other than normal wear and tear. The asset's value in the accounts has to be reduced to reflect this impairment.

Index-linked Securities

Investments in stock where the rate of interest and capital value are linked to the rate of inflation.

Infrastructure Asset

A non-current asset that cannot be taken away or transferred, and which we can only continue to benefit from by actually using it. Examples of infrastructure are roads, bridges and footpaths.

Investment Management Expenses

All expenses relating to managing the pension fund's investments.

Investment Managers

Firms we appoint to deal with the pension fund's investments on a day-to-day basis.

Leasing

A way of paying for capital spending where we pay a rental charge for a certain period of time. There are two main types of leasing arrangements.

a) Finance leases, which transfer all the risks and rewards of owning a non-current asset to the person taking out the lease. These assets are included in the non-current assets in the balance sheet.

b) Operating leases, where the leasing company owns the asset and the yearly rental is charged direct to the income and expenditure account.

Local Education Authority (LEA)

The part of the county council responsible for schools in Staffordshire.

Minimum Revenue Provision

The minimum amount we must charge to the income and expenditure account each year and set aside for paying off credit. The MRP policy is approved by Council annually.

Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

A three-year financial-planning process designed to make best use of our aims within our available resources.

National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR)

This is the charge on non-domestic properties. It is the same for all businesses in England and is set each year by the Government. We pay the amounts we collect to the Government, and we then receive a share of the total paid to the Government.

Non-Current Assets

Assets that give us benefits for more than one year.

Payments in Advance

Amounts actually paid in an accounting period before the period they relate to.

Pension Administrative Expenses

All expenses relating to managing the pension scheme, including working out length of service and benefits and paying pensions.

Glossary

Performance Measurement

Measuring the investment performance of a pension fund. This often leads to comparisons with other funds and market indexes.

Plant

Items of mechanical or electrical equipment which perform specific construction or maintenance tasks, such as equipment used to maintain grass verges on roads.

Pooled Investments

When assets of more than one investor are combined.

Portfolio

A list of all the investments an investor owns.

Post Balance Sheet Events

Those events, both favourable and unfavourable, which happen between the date the balance sheet is produced and the date the statement of accounts is approved.

Precept

We get part of our income from charges on the district councils in our areas. A charge, based on the 'council tax base' of the district council, is made on each district's 'collection fund'.

Provision

An amount we set aside to provide for something we will need to pay, but where we do not know the exact amount and the date on which it will arise.

Provision for Credit Liabilities (PCL)

An amount we must set aside to repay finance leases and for other limited purposes.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

A government agency that provides longer-term loans to local authorities.

Realised Gain, Realised Loss

The profit or loss resulting from selling investments during the year.

Receipts and Payments

Amounts we actually pay or receive in a given accounting period, no matter for what period they are due.

Receipt in Advance

Amounts actually received in an accounting period before the period they relate to.

Refunds of Contributions

The amount employees will receive if they stop their pensionable employment within the first three months of working for us (two years in the past).

Reserves

'Earmarked reserves' are amounts set aside for a specific purpose in one financial year and carried forward to meet spending in future years. 'General reserves' are balances generally available to support revenue or capital spending.

Revenue Budget

The estimate of yearly income and spending requirements, which sets out the financial implications of our policies and the basis of the yearly charge we will make.

Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)

A contribution towards paying for capital spending from the revenue account rather than by borrowing.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

A general government grant to support local authority spending, and fixed each year in relation to the formula spending share (FSS).

Running Expenses

The day-to-day costs we pay in providing services, not including salaries and expenses, capital financing charges and revenue contribution to capital outlay.

Glossary

Scheduled Bodies

Organisations whose membership of the fund is laid down in law.

Securities

Investing in shares of companies and in fixed-interest or index-linked stocks.

Specific Grants

Government grants to local authorities to help with particular projects or services.

Standing Orders

The set of rules we follow which set the procedures we use to carry out our business.

Stock Lending

Lending some securities, such as stocks and shares, corporate bonds and government securities from one investor to another approved investor, in return for a fee.

Tactical Asset Allocation

Using futures to:

- make sure that the fund's assets are invested in the relevant area and in line with the targets set for each type of asset and each country; and
- take views on the markets and currencies we expect to perform the best.

Time-Weighted Return

The total capital and revenue returns on a fund. We give this as a percentage of the opening values of the fund in each investment period. It also takes account of any new money received in that investment period.

Transfer Values

The amount that is available from one pension to buy benefits in another pension when employees join or leave the scheme.

Trust Funds

Funds we handle for such purposes as prizes, charities, special projects and on behalf of people under the age of 16.

Withholding Tax

A tax on the income from dividends. We may be able to recover some of this.

Work in Progress

The cost of work done on a project that is not yet finished and the cost has not been charged to the appropriate account at that date.

Staffordshire County Council Audit Progress report

Year ended 31 March 2021

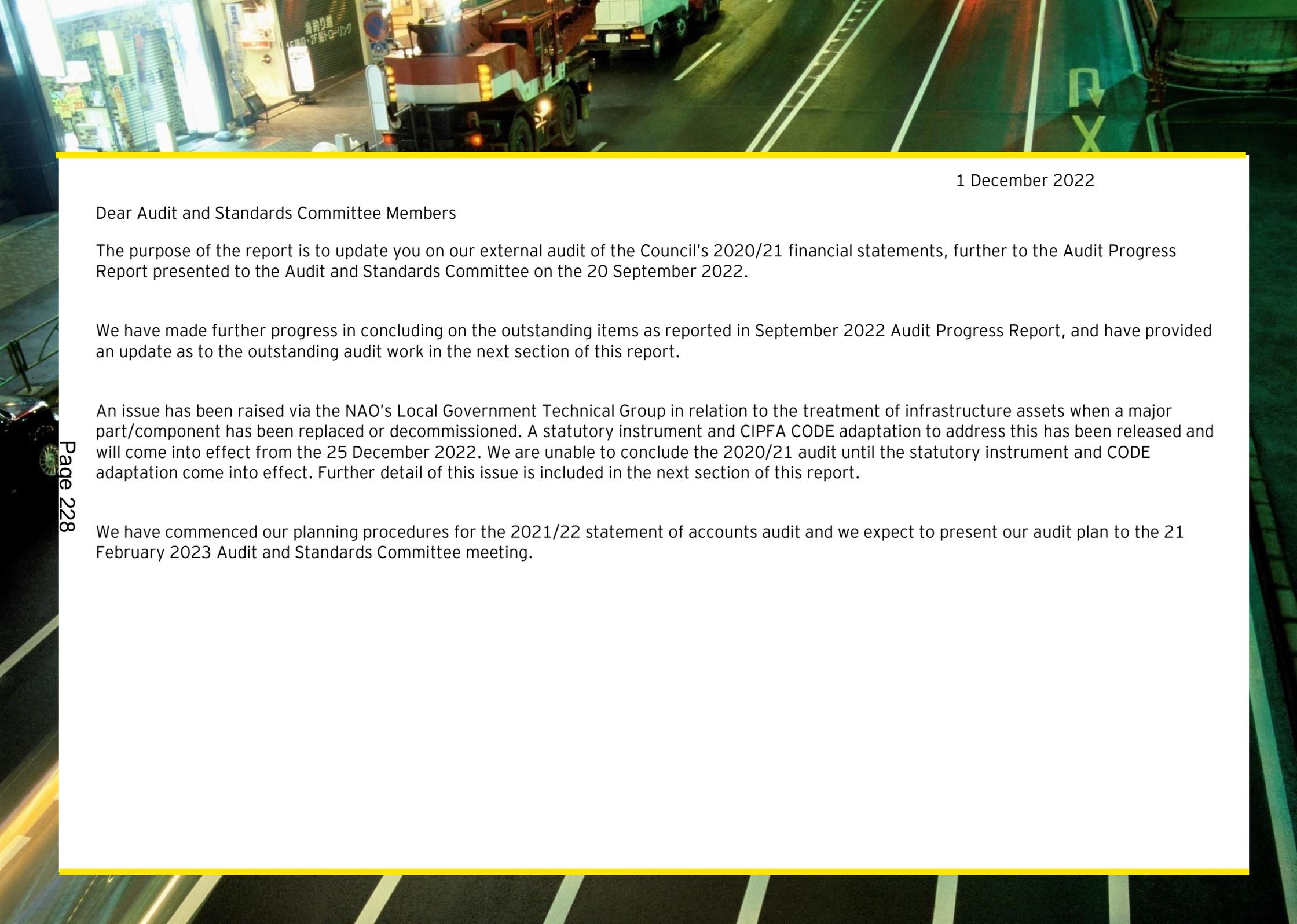
December 2022

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Agenda Item 7

The EY logo consists of the letters 'EY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A yellow triangle is positioned above the 'Y', pointing downwards towards the letter.

Building a better
working world



1 December 2022

Dear Audit and Standards Committee Members

The purpose of the report is to update you on our external audit of the Council's 2020/21 financial statements, further to the Audit Progress Report presented to the Audit and Standards Committee on the 20 September 2022.

We have made further progress in concluding on the outstanding items as reported in September 2022 Audit Progress Report, and have provided an update as to the outstanding audit work in the next section of this report.

An issue has been raised via the NAO's Local Government Technical Group in relation to the treatment of infrastructure assets when a major part/component has been replaced or decommissioned. A statutory instrument and CIPFA CODE adaptation to address this has been released and will come into effect from the 25 December 2022. We are unable to conclude the 2020/21 audit until the statutory instrument and CODE adaptation come into effect. Further detail of this issue is included in the next section of this report.

We have commenced our planning procedures for the 2021/22 statement of accounts audit and we expect to present our audit plan to the 21 February 2023 Audit and Standards Committee meeting.

Executive Summary

Status of the audit

In September 2022 we reported to the Committee that we had substantially completed our audit. The remaining outstanding work at the time of this report is:

- ▶ Review of an updated Going Concern Assessment which considers the groups going concern position for 12 months post anticipated opinion date.
- ▶ Completion of audit closure and review procedures.
- ▶ Whole of Government Accounts procedures outstanding as auditor guidance has yet to be issued.

Note, we reported in September 2022 that we had outstanding audit work regarding the testing of expenditure within the Council Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, our outstanding audit procedures have now been completed.

Infrastructure Assets:

In addition to the above planned procedures, an issue was raised via the NAO's Local Government Technical Group that some local authorities are not writing out the gross cost and accumulated depreciation on highways infrastructure assets when a major part/component has been replaced or decommissioned.

Staffordshire County Council holds material infrastructure on its balance sheet of £1,178.9 million as at the 31 March 2021 with material annual capital expenditure of £82.3 million in 2020/21 (£77.8 million in 2019/20). Our current understanding is that a significant proportion of this annual spend is likely to be on the replacement of infrastructure assets and that historically no write off of the gross cost and accumulated depreciation has been made. Therefore the impact on the council is likely to be material on a cumulative basis and material in any given financial year.

A statutory instrument to address this issue was released by DLUHC on the 30 November 2022 which will come into effect from the 25 December 2022. The Council will have the option to apply this instrument to its accounting of infrastructure assets. In addition CIPFA released an adaptation to the Code of Practice on the 28 November 2022. CIPFA are also planning to issue a technical bulletin to provide further guidance early January 2023.



Executive Summary

Status of the audit

Closing Procedures:

- ▶ Review of the final version of the financial statements;
- ▶ Completion of subsequent events review;
- ▶ Receipt of the signed management representation letter; and
- ▶ Final Manager and Engagement Partner reviews.

| |
|-------------------------------|
| Local Members Interest |
|-------------------------------|

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

Audit and Standards Committee - Tuesday 13 December 2022

Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 - Update

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that:

- a. Members note progress against the 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan and the amendments to the original plan, including those audits which have been cancelled since its approval on 26th April 2022.
- b. Members note progress on the implementation of high-level recommendations.

Report of the County Treasurer & Section 151 Officer

Report

Background

1. The annual audit plan approved by the Committee in April 2022 continues to be reviewed to ensure that areas included originally remain relevant and reflect the risk profile of the organisation. In relation to this, the first half of the year has been dominated by a range of grant verification exercises (COVID 19 related grants and other) including the Infection Control fund; the Contain Outbreak Management fund; the Community Testing fund; the Test and Trace fund as well as other grant work relating to Disabled Facilities Grant funding; Green Homes funding; Local Transport Capital funding; the Getting Building Scheme, the Community Renewal Fund and Bus Services Operators Grant. The Internal Audit Team has also maintained its work on key corporate transformation and directorate projects by continuing to provide a project assurance role for the new recruitment Applicant Tracking IT System, the SharePoint EDRMS Implementation Project; the Highways Transformation Programme; the Customer Journey Project as well as continuing to sit on the Digital Leadership Group, and the Viv Up Payroll benefits Platform Project Team as well as supporting the Net To Gross Project Team within Health & Care. In addition, the Internal Audit Service continues to focus on other key risk areas such as Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND); Cyber Security; Children's and Families reviewing the new district model and panels and decision-making as well as Adult Social

Care Reforms and supporting the preparation of CQC inspections from 2023/24 to provide audit support and assurance throughout the 2022/23 financial year.

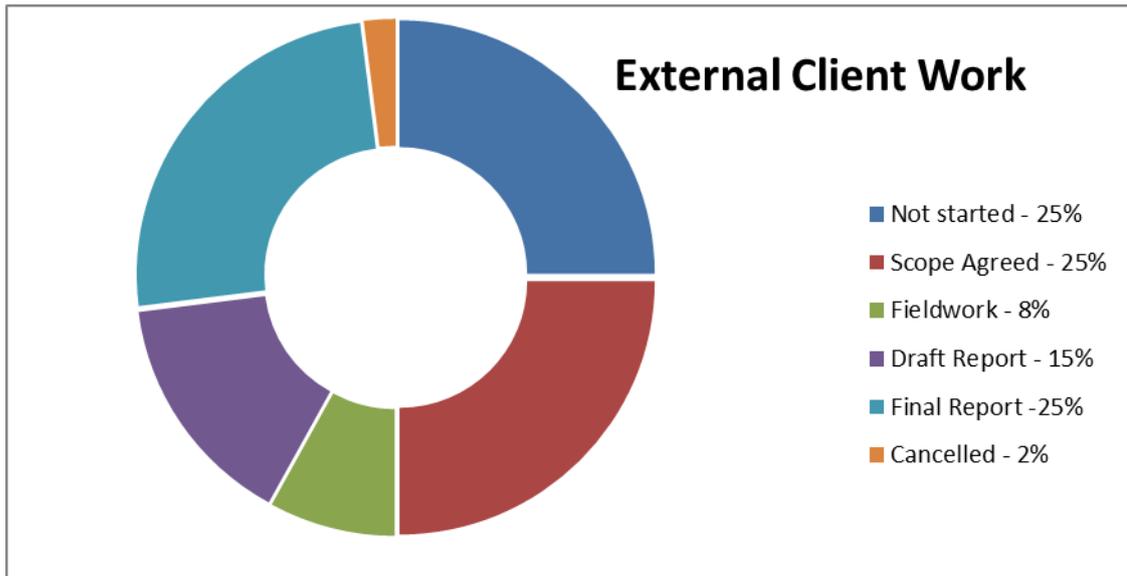
2. Thirteen additional audits have been requested in year, covering further grant verification exercises; COVID 19 related activities as well as requests for additional work on the resettlement of Ukrainian Refugees; the Council's traded company Nexxus, the new Legal Services System (Civica) and the EDRMS system. As a result of this additional work, the Internal Audit Management team continues to monitor its impact on the delivery of the approved Internal Audit Plan and regular reconciliations of resources to Audit Plan delivery are undertaken. To bring the 2022/23 Internal Audit Plan back into balance and having taken into account the additional work carried out, six audit reviews have been cancelled so far this year. The six confirmed cancellations are detailed in **Appendix 1** of this report. Where possible, some elements of the cancelled audits are included in those reviews still going ahead. In other cases, the auditable area will be reconsidered as part of next year's annual audit planning process. Currently, the above amendments to the Internal Audit Plan will not impair the Internal Audit Service from making its annual audit opinion on the Council's control environment at the end of 2022/23.
3. At this stage in the year the section remains on schedule to meet its key performance targets. The response rates from the Customer Satisfaction Surveys received in-year have continued to be satisfactory, together with a number of positive comments received for work completed. In addition, the Internal Audit Service continue to use existing framework agreements to procure Internal Audit Support in year. Several audits have been allocated to providers, which have commenced already with the remaining reviews planned to commence in quarter 4 of 2022/23.
4. Overall, delivery against the 2022/23 audit plan is summarised below. Previously the Audit & Standards Committee agreed that only the reports of the high-risk reviews, limited assurance audits and major special investigations would be considered as part of the agenda, where relevant other reports would be emailed to Members for information.

| Area | Plan | Not Started | Terms of Reference Agreed | Fieldwork Ongoing | Draft Report Issued | Final Report Issued | Cancelled | Total |
|-----------------------|------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------|
| Systems Audits | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Planned Audits | 115 | 54 | 16 | 21 | 9 | 9 | 6 | 115 |
| Additional Work | 13 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| Total Systems | 128 | 56 | 16 | 27 | 14 | 9 | 6 | 128 |
| Compliance Audits | | | | | | | | |
| Schools including themed Payroll | 20 | 6 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| Educational Endowment Funds | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Complex Needs Units | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Residential LD Homes | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Other Compliance - Adults | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Total Compliance | 38 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 38 |
| Strategic Fraud | 10 | 4 | n/a | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 10 |
| Developing an Anti-Fraud Culture | 5 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Pro-active Counter Fraud Work | 17 | 11 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 17 |
| Special Investigations/ Exercises | 23 | n/a | n/a | 3 | 0 | 20 | n/a | 23 |
| Total Fraud | 55 | 18 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 23 | 0 | 55 |
| Overall Totals | 221 | 85 | 24 | 47 | 14 | 45 | 6 | 221 |

5. Delivery of the work for the External Clients is important in ensuring that the section meets its income targets for the year. Performance to date is detailed below and each audit is on course to be fully delivered by the end of the audit year. **Figure 1** below shows the current status of our external client work which relates to both Academies and South Staffordshire Council.

Figure 1



6. The implementation of all recommendations made is monitored via the new Pentana recommendation tracking portal. The portal is the web-based system of Pentana that is accessible to business users (auditees). The portal allows auditees to search and view recommendations that have been assigned to them, provide regular updates directly against their recommendations in real-time as well as giving WLT/SLT leads greater oversight of recommendations raised and implemented across all their areas of responsibility.
7. As part of the recommendation tracking process, auditees who are assigned recommendations are provided with two notifications. The first notification is for any recommendations that they have been assigned to where its implementation date is within the next 30 days. This is to act as a reminder to auditees and will either prompt them to implement the recommendation or provide an update on the progress they have made, in the portal. The second reminder is a monthly reminder of recommendations that have past their implementation date and remain unimplemented for their attention and action.
8. As part of stage two of the implementation of the Pentana system, a cleansing exercise commenced at the beginning of 2022/23 to actively pursue all outstanding recommendations prior to the migration of 'relevant' outstanding recommendations onto the portal. The objective was to ensure that the new system was not cluttered up with recommendations that were no longer relevant.
9. As of 1st December 2021, there were four hundred outstanding recommendations. Throughout 2022/23, the team have actively pursued those four hundred outstanding recommendations and have closed a

significant number having confirmed they have either (i) been implemented; or (ii) been superseded by new systems and processes or by later audit reviews carried out. On 1st November 2022, 94 'relevant' outstanding older recommendations were migrated over to the Portal for on-going tracking.

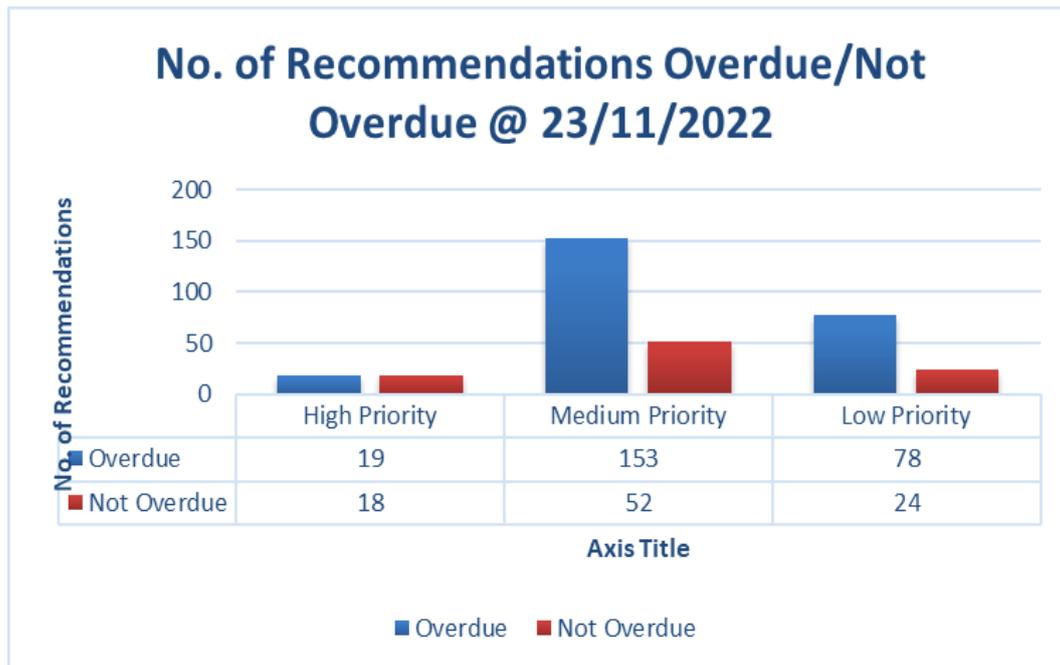
10. Included within the new Pentana recommendation tracking portal as of 23rd November 2022, **714** recommendations have been input for on-going tracking which relate to all 2021/22 completed final audit reviews plus the ninety-four older relevant recommendations referred to above:

| Area | Total | Implemented | Risk Accepted | Superseded | Not Implemented | |
|--------------|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | | | | | Not Overdue | Overdue * |
| Corporate | 494 | 230 | 9 | 7 | 85 | 163 |
| Schools | 220 | 124 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 87 |
| Total | 714 | 354 | 9 | 7 | 94 | 250 |
| % | | 50% | 1% | 1% | 13% | 35% |

* overdue - the agreed action date has been reached and the recommendation remains outstanding

11. In respect of schools' recommendations, in 2021/22, school audits continued to be conducted outside of the new audit management system Pentana, as the approach was taken to roll out the use of the new system incrementally commencing with systems audit reviews. This meant that audit recommendations raised during 2021/22 school compliance audits have only recently been migrated over into the Pentana and tracked. This is being actively addressed by the Schools Audit Team who are making contact with the relevant schools to ensure that up to date responses are captured for all overdue recommendations.
12. Figure 2 below shows the number of high, medium, and low-level priority recommendations which have not yet been implemented (outstanding), and their current status as either overdue or not overdue (for both Corporate and School sites).

Figure 2



13. Previously, those high-priority level recommendations which have not been implemented by the target implementation date together with an explanation of the delay by the appropriate officer have been reported to the Audit & Standards Committee. It should be noted that of the nineteen high-priority level recommendations that are recorded as overdue, two relate to corporate areas with the remaining seventeen high-priority level recommendations relating to schools. As stated in paragraph 11 of this report, school recommendations have only recently (November 2022) been loaded on to the portal and as such the School Audit Team is actively chasing up to date responses to all overdue recommendations.

14. The number of high-priority level recommendations relating to corporate areas has reduced significantly over time when compared to previous years, due in part to the involvement of the Audit & Standards Committee as well as the implementation of the previous electronic recommendation tracking system which was first introduced in May 2016. For corporate areas, progress in implementing those outstanding agreed recommendations has been monitored and it is pleasing to note that there are only two high-priority level recommendations that have not been fully implemented by their due date. These two overdue high-level recommendations are detailed at **Appendix 2** to this report, for completeness.

15. All recommendations (corporate and schools) will continue to be tracked until their full implementation.

Equalities Implications

16. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

17. Whilst there are no direct implications arising from this report, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 specifically require that a relevant body must “maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper internal audit practices”.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

18. The net budget of the Internal Audit Section for 2022/23 is £1,027,510 of which £223,150 relates to payments to external providers.

Risk Implications

19. Internal Audit objectively examines, evaluates, and reports on the adequacy of the control environment as a contribution to the proper, economic, efficient, and effective use of resources. Where relevant, the results of individual reviews will link into the Annual Governance Statement, providing assurance on the operation of key controls. Internal Audit will continue to align its work with the Corporate Risk Register.

Climate Change Implications

20. There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

2022/23 Internal Audit Strategy & Plan
Performance Monitoring Sheets 2022/23
Recommendation Tracking System Reports
Client Satisfaction Survey results 2022/23

Appendix 1 – Cancelled Audit Reviews in 2022/23

Appendix 2 - High Level Recommendations That Are Overdue - Corporate

Contact Details

Assistant Director: Lisa Andrews, **Head of Internal Audit & Adults & Children's Financial Services**

Report Author: Deborah Harris
Job Title: **Chief Internal Auditor**
Telephone No.: 01785 276406
E-Mail Address: deborah.harris@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Details of Audits Contained in the Audit Plan Approved in April 2022 which have been cancelled.

| Ref | Auditable Area | Reason for Cancellation |
|------------|--|--|
| 1 | County Deal - Staffordshire Leaders Board | <p>The Assistant Director, Strategy & Transformation confirmed that due to the recent and on-going changes in central government, locally the Council has delayed starting specific preparations on a County Deal. In addition, it is unclear at this time if central government will have the bandwidth to offer any other areas outside the initial nine announced last year, a 'deal' within this parliament.</p> <p>The Staffordshire Leaders Board will be reviewed as part of the Partnership audit review and therefore some audit coverage will be given to this area in 2022/23.</p> <p>Internal Audit review to be re-considered as part of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan.</p> |
| 2 | Levelling Up Fund | <p>The Strategic Finance Business Partner confirmed that two bids have been submitted by the Council, however, due to the volatility in central government a decision as to successful schemes has been delayed to December 2023 at the earliest, therefore no audit support will be required in 2022/23.</p> <p>Internal Audit review to be re-considered as part of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan, dependent on whether the bids submitted are successful</p> |
| 3 | ESIF - Closure of ERDF Schemes | <p>The Head of Funding, Business and Enterprise confirmed that the three remaining ERDF Schemes have been extended, and now end in Quarter 2 2023. This audit is therefore no longer required to be carried out in 2022/23 and will be re-considered as part of the 2023/24 annual audit planning process.</p> |

| Ref | Auditable Area | Reason for Cancellation |
|-----|---|--|
| 4 | Prevention of Homelessness - 16- & 17-year-olds | <p>This audit has been requested to be cancelled in 2022/23 due to a lack of resources as well as already being subject to external inspection. The Head of Service is leaving, and an Ofsted inspection has already recently taken place which included Homelessness and a positive assurance opinion was awarded. A further Ofsted inspection is also due to review the end-to-end processes for children in our care which may also include a review of homelessness cases.</p> <p>Internal Audit review to be re-considered as part of the 2023/24 annual Internal Audit planning process.</p> |
| 5 | Quality Assurance (QA) - Assessments | <p>Discussions with both the Assistant Director for Adult Social Work and Safeguarding and the Principal Social Worker and Safeguarding Lead has confirmed that the QA process will form part of the Adult Social Care Pathway which is to be subject to separate review in 2022/23. Audit time has been reallocated to complete a CQC Framework Self-Assessment.</p> <p>The Quality Assurance review will be re-considered as part of the 2023/24 Annual Internal Audit Planning process.</p> |
| 6 | Local Transport Authority - Bus Recovery Fund (LTA BRG) | <p>This audit is no longer required. The scheme has been extended to the end of the financial year 2022/23 and therefore the required grant verification will be completed at the end of the scheme as part of the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan.</p> |

Corporate Areas Only: High Level Recommendations That Are Overdue - Recommendation Tracking

| No. | Audit Subject | Date reported to Cttee | Recommendations | Target Date for Implementation | Current Status | Actual Date of Implementation | Date presented to Cttee to Clear |
|-----|--|------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | Building Resilient Families & Communities - Compliance | N/A | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The exceptions identified should be investigated and addressed appropriately. 2. Managers should ensure that checks performed during the family closure process verify BRFC compliance adequately and ensure that family details and all appropriate outcomes met have been recorded. 3. Officers should ensure that family file records include the details of all relevant family members on the involvement within Capita One. 4. Officers should ensure that family documentation is received from a provider when a family is closed. | 31.10.22 | <p>Management agreed to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exceptions investigated and addressed (completed in April/May as part of the audit process). Implemented 2. Remind managers and practitioners of the importance of accurate reporting. 3. As part of development of case management system, build in matching of criteria from the start to end of involvement. 4. Review data cleansing process. 5. Review audit forms. Continue with audit programme and include additional focus on closure recording requirements. | N/A | N/A |

| No. | Audit Subject | Date reported to Cttee | Recommendations | Target Date for Implementation | Current Status | Actual Date of Implementation | Date presented to Cttee to Clear |
|-----|--|------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | | | <p>It should be noted that IA undertake work annually in this area and as such, the implementation of this recommendation will be followed- up as part of 2022/23 IA work which is due to commence imminently.</p> <p>Status: Partially Implemented</p> | | |
| | Infrastructure + Asset Data Management | 20.09.22 | Arrangements should be made to update the PMS as soon as possible to ensure the asset inventory is updated. | 01.10.22 | <p>Management Agreed to:</p> <p>Make a decision on whether to update PMS system (accepting that updating the network in the system would still mean condition data has not been captured for up to 10 years) or identify new method of collecting condition data in a different system.</p> <p>It should be noted that a progress report on all recommendations made as part of the Infrastructure + asset Data management assurance review is due to be presented to the Audit</p> | N/a | N/a |

| No. | Audit Subject | Date reported to Cttee | Recommendations | Target Date for Implementation | Current Status | Actual Date of Implementation | Date presented to Cttee to Clear |
|-----|---------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | | | & Standards at the April 2023 meeting. Status: Not Yet Implemented | | |

Audit and Standards Committee Forward Plan 2022/2023

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please get in touch with Lisa Andrews, Head of Audit & Financial Services, 01785 276402 or Lisa.Andrews@Staffordshire.gov.uk

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| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|-----------------|---|--------|----------------|
| 26 April 2022 | | | | |
| Annual Report on Information Governance Report of the Director of Corporate Services Lead Officer: Tracy Thorley/Natalie Morrisey | | | | |
| Internal Audit Plan 2022/23 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (Part 2 items). | As required | | | |
| Special Guardianship Payments Arrangements – progress report | | | | |

Agenda Item 9

| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|--------------------------|---|--------|------------------------|
| Lead Officer – Nicola Hope | | | | |
| Review of Joint Funding & Billing CCG's Continuing Healthcare - Progress Report Lead Officer – Karen Webb | Deferred to July 2022 | | | |
| SEND Services – Further Progress Report. Lead Officer – Tim Moss | | | | |
| 05 July 2022 | | | | |
| Appointment of Members to Standards Panel 2022/23. Lead Officer: Chris Ebberley | | | | |
| Annual Report of the work of the Audit & Standards Committee. Report of the Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| External Audit Plan 2021/22 Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from February 2022 | | | Defer to December 2022 |
| Staffordshire Pension Fund Audit Plan 2021/22 Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from February 2022 | | | Defer to December 2022 |
| Code of Corporate Governance –2022 Update Report of the Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Internal Audit Outturn Report 2021/22 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Code of Conduct for Members – Annual Report on the Management of Complaints Report of Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Julie Plant | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution - Procurement Regulations – Proposed | As required | | | |

| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|-----------------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Addition. Lead Officer: Julie Plant | | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | As required | As required | | |
| Appendix 2 – Counter Fraud Outturn Report 2021/22 Lead Officers: Debbie Harris & Dave Fletcher | | | | |
| Joint Funding & Billing CCG’s Continuing Healthcare - Progress Report on the Implementation of previous audit recommendations Lead Officer – Karen Webb | Moved from April 2022 | | | |
| 20 September 2022 | | | | |
| Annual Audit Letter – 2020/21 Lead Officer: External Auditor (EY) | EY to provide update | | | |
| Staffordshire Pension Fund Audit Plan 2021/22 Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from February 2022 | | | |
| Future Local Public Audit Arrangements – Update. Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | Deferred to December 2022 meeting | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |

| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | As required | | | |
| Agency Staffing Contracts Audit Review - Progress Report on the implementation of Recommendations Lead Officers: Sarah Getley/ Cherie Cuthbertson & Paul Timmins | | | | |
| 01 November 2022 | | | | |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing Performance Annual Report Report of Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Becky Lee | B/fwd. from December 2022 meeting | | | |
| National Fraud Initiative - Update Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required (KL to advise) | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | As required | | | |
| Accelerated Progress Plan – Progress Report Lead Officer: Halit Hulusi | | | | |
| 13 December 2022 | | | | |
| Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 Report of the Director of Corporate Services | | | | |

| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|---|---|--------|----------------|
| Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Training on Statement of Accounts Lead Officer: Rachel Spain | | | | |
| Statement of Accounts 2021/22 Presentation and Report of County Treasurer Lead Officer: Rachel Spain | | | | |
| External Audit Plan 2021/22 – Verbal Update Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from February 2022 | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required (KL to advise) | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (Part 2 items). | | | | |
| 21 February 2023 | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required (KL to advise) | | | |
| Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260) 2021/22 a) Staffordshire County Council Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from December 2022 | | | |
| Report to those charged with Governance (ISA 260) 2021/22 b) Staffordshire Pension Fund Report of Ernst & Young | Moved from December 2022 | | | |
| Future Local Public Audit Arrangements – Update. Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | Moved from September 2022 meeting | | | |

| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|-------------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | | | | |
| 21 March 2023 | | | | |
| External Audit Plan 2022/23 Report of Ernst & Young | | | | |
| Staffordshire Pension Fund Audit Planning Report 2022/23 Report of Ernst & Young | | | | |
| Review of the Effectiveness of the Audit & Standards Committee. Report of the Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Internal Audit Charter 2023/24 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required (KL to advise) | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | | | | |
| 24 April 2023 | | | | |

| Item and lead officer | Date of meeting | Links with Council strategic commissioning priorities | Detail | Action/Outcome |
|--|-------------------------------|---|--------|----------------|
| Annual Report of the work of the Audit & Standards Committee Report of the Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Strategic Risk Management - Risk Management Policy Statement & Strategy. Report of the Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| Annual Report on Information Governance Report of the Director for Corporate Services Lead Officer: Tracy Thorley/ Natalie Morrisey | | | | |
| Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 Report of the County Treasurer Lead Officer: Debbie Harris | | | | |
| Proposed changes to the Constitution | As required (KL to advise) | | | |
| Forward Plan for the Audit and Standards Committee Lead Officer: Lisa Andrews | | | | |
| PART TWO EXEMPT Internal Audit Special Investigation/limited/ Top Risk Areas reports (<i>Part 2 items</i>). | | | | |
| Infrastructure+ Asset Data Management – Progress report on implementation of Internal Audit recommendations. Lead Officers: David Walters/Scott Denny | | | | |
| Settlement Agreements - Progress report on implementation of Internal Audit recommendations Lead Officer: Sarah Getley | | | | |

Membership

| | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Mike</i> | <i>Worthington</i> | Bernard Peters |
| <i>(Chair)</i> | | James Salisbury |
| <i>Carolyn</i> | <i>Trowbridge</i> | Janice Silvester-Hill |
| <i>(Vice Chair)</i> | | Conor Wileman |
| Arshad Afsar | | Ian Wilkes |
| Richard Ford | | Graham Hutton |
| Ross Ward | | Ann Edgeller |
| Bernard Williams | | |
| Philippa Haden | | |
| Phil Hewitt | | |

Calendar of Future Committee Meetings

(All meetings at 10.00 a.m. unless otherwise stated)

26 April 2022
05 July 2022
20 September 2022
01 November 2022
13 December 2022
21 February 2023
21 March 2023
24 April 2023

Meetings usually take place at County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford ST16 2LH