

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Meeting to be held on Wednesday 29 November 2023 at 10.00am in
Committee Room 1, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA

ITEM		PAGE
1.	Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any)	
2.	Apologies	
3.	Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on Friday 22 September 2023 (Copy attached.)	1
4.	Audited Statement of Accounts 2022/2023 Report of the Director of Finance (copy attached).	7
5.	Dates and Times of Next Meetings The meeting schedule for 2023/2024 is as follows: - Friday 2 February 2024 at 1.30pm Friday 26 April 2024 at 1.30pm	

ELAINE WAUGH,
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

City Hall,
Sunderland

21 November 2023

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
Friday 22 September 2023

Present:

Mr Knowles in the Chair

Councillors Crosby, Foster, Stewart and Trueman.

In Attendance:

Paul Wilson (Director of Finance), Paul Davies (Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services), Mark Kirkham and Diane Harold (Mazars) and Gillian Kelly (Principal Democratic Services Officer).

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Cook and Councillor McDonough.

Minutes

8. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

The Director of Finance advised that training on treasury management would take place the following Monday for new members of the Committee and Cabinet Members.

Risk and Assurance Map Update 2023/2024

The Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services submitted a report which asked the Committee to consider: -

- the updated Risk and Assurance Map and supporting Strategic and Corporate Risk Profiles based on assurances gathered from a range of sources;
- work undertaken by the audit, risk and assurance service during the year to date; and
- the performance of Internal Audit.

The Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services directed Members to the Risk and Assurance Map and in doing so reminded the Committee that the Map and the Strategic and Corporate Risk Profiles had been agreed in April 2023 and had been updated following consultation with Chief Officers and relevant key officers. The Strategic Risk Areas summarised the risks to the priorities in the Council's City Plan and the Corporate Risk Areas were those which were due to the Council existing as an organisation. The changes to these were shown in red in appendices 2 and 3. Overall assurance was also provided in relation to Council owned companies and the Cumulative Assurance Position was Green or Amber for all Strategic and Corporate Risk Areas.

There had been no changes to the risk scores for Strategic Risk Areas but there had been updates to the wording in relation to: -

- R06 - *Unable to maximise the opportunities created by the Smart City Infrastructure.*
- R08 – *The Council is not able to fulfil its statutory responsibility for Children and Young People and also ensure families are supported to enable them to achieve their desired outcomes.* It was considered that this risk had an overlap with R09 *Families are not sufficiently resilient and resourceful to respond to challenges and achieve the best possible outcomes for their children* and these risks had now been combined into R08 with the risk description *The Council is not able to fulfil its statutory responsibility for Children and Young People and also ensure families are resilient to enable them to achieve their desired outcomes.*
- R013 – *Current model of social care cannot be sustained in the future, due to increasing pressures within the social care environment.*
- R014 – *Council resources and the input of residents are not fully optimised to tackle environmental issues in neighbourhoods.*
- R022 – *Aspirations to deliver the City Plan may be restricted by financial pressures.*
- Due to a number of pieces of Internal Audit work, the level of assurance provided by Internal Audit for *More and Better Housing* had moved from Amber to Green and assurance for *A lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all* was new and was Green.

There had been some changes to the Corporate Risk Areas in relation to Health and Safety as follows: -

- R36 – *Council officers do not fully understand H&S roles and responsibilities.* the score had been reduced from 8 (Amber) to 6 (Amber) due to an updated Health and Safety Policy and Strategy being agreed and improved access to documents on the Hub and SharePoint site.
- R37 – *The Council's key H&S risks are not identified, understood or agreed.* The score had been reduced from 8 (Amber) to 6 (Amber) due to increased

training received by senior officers and reporting to COG which had improved performance.

- R38 – *Appropriate action plans are not developed and agreed to manage the Council's key H&S risks.* The score had been reduced from 8 (Amber) to 6 (Amber) due to the introduction and progress with the rollout of the Health and Safety Management System across the Council.
- R39 – *Strategic approach to incident management does not adequately inform decision making.* The score had reduced from 6 (Amber) to 3 (Green) and reached its target score due to improved reporting to senior managers on a monthly basis and reporting to the Health and Safety Executive Forum.
- The assurance rating from the Business Continuity and Emergency Planning Lead in relation to R45 'Lack of awareness of content of business continuity plans' had changed from Amber to Green. This had resulted in the overall assurance rating for Business Continuity moving from Amber to Green which had been reflected in the Risk and Assurance Map.
- Due to a number of pieces of Internal Audit work, the level of assurance provided by Internal Audit for Procurement had changed from Amber to Green due to positive results from a recent audit and assurance for Information Governance/Security had also gone from Amber to Green and overall assurance rating on the Risk and Assurance Map had changed to Green.

Performance in relation to targets set for Internal Audit was shown at Appendix 5 with all Key Performance Indicators being on target.

Councillor Trueman referred to the recent equal pay claim and how this might have an impact on the Council's risk position. The Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services noted that this had been a risk in the past which had then been resolved when the claim was settled. The Director of Finance stated that there were processes in place but nothing formal had been received as yet by the Council; the position would be kept under review and dealt with as appropriate.

Councillor Crosby made reference to the recent issues with Grace House and the potential expense for Together for Children and the Director of Finance commented that these matters would come through Cabinet and the relevant scrutiny committee.

Mr Knowles was pleased to note that all indicators were moving in the right direction, however he highlighted that Business Continuity Management for Together for Children had moved from Green to Amber.

The Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services explained that Together for Children had business continuity plans for all areas and a member of staff in a co-ordinating role, however at the time of the audit the post was vacant and it was not clear who was going to take on the role. The audit therefore highlighted a time specific issue and once this was resolved the rating would move back to Green.

Having considered the Risk and Assurance Map, it was: -

9. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Audit Strategy Memorandum

The Council's external auditors, Mazars LLP, submitted their Audit Strategy Memorandum for the year ending 31 March 2023.

Mark Kirkham of Mazars presented the Audit Strategy Memorandum and in doing so highlighted that the document set out the auditor's responsibilities under the National Audit Office Code of Practice, the detail of the audit scope, approach and timeline.

The summary risk assessment had identified the following significant risks: -

- Management override of controls
- Valuation of property, plant and equipment and investment properties
- Valuation of the net defined benefits (liability)/asset valuation.

Diane Harold highlighted that there was an unusual situation in that there had previously been a net pensions liability of £380m on the balance sheet which was now an asset of £21m. The Director of Finance commented that this had been seen in other local authorities, not all were in an asset position liabilities had decreased hugely due to the triennial valuation.

Diane went on to say that there were plans in place to receive the required level of assurance, noting that there were five subsidiary and joint ventures to be assessed as components of the Group audit approach. Together for Children was the only significant component where extra assurance would be sought from their accountants, Robson Laidler. The other group components would be subject to a desktop analysis.

For the Value for Money assessment there had been no risk of significant weakness identified at this time. It was noted that the proposed audit fees had increased for 2022/2023 although this would be partly offset by the PSAA rebate. Overall materiality for the Council was £16.581m and triviality was £497,000.

Mr Knowles asked if the scope and significant risks identified by the external auditors aligned with the views of management and the Director of Finance stated that the areas reflected the complexities and challenges of the Council position and that the team carried out a lot of testing and worked closely with Mazars throughout.

Mark Kirkham highlighted that although there was no change in Government policy at the present time, consultation was taking place on the timetable for external auditors and local authorities.

The Director of Finance advised the Committee that usually the Statement of Accounts would be agreed at this meeting but it was now planned to arrange a meeting for late November to consider the conclusion of the Accounts. Mark added

that the audit team had been reconfigured and it was intended to complete the work by the end of November and report their findings during that month.

Following consideration of the report, it was: -

10. RESOLVED that the Audit Strategy Memorandum be noted.

Dates and Times of Next Meetings

11. RESOLVED that the following schedule of meetings be noted: -

Meeting to be arranged in November 2023

Friday 2 February 2024 at 1.30pm

Friday 26 April 2024 at 1.30pm

(Signed) M KNOWLES
In the Chair

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE 29TH NOVEMBER 2023

AUDITED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022/2023

Report of the Director of Finance

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with the Letters of Assurance required by the external auditor as part of the Statement of Accounts process and to present the Letter of Representation for 2022/2023.
- 1.2 To receive the Audit Completion Report from the Council's external auditor, Mazars LLP, concerning the financial statements for 2022/2023, which provides their opinion on both the Council's Statement of Accounts and its arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (Value for Money).
- 1.3 To provide an audited Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023, revised to take into account the auditor's findings, for approval by the Committee.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1 Members are recommended to:
 - 2.1.1 Note the contents of the Letter of Assurance from those charged with governance (Appendix A) and the Letter of Assurance from those charged with discharging management processes and responsibilities (Appendix B);
 - 2.1.2 Note the contents of the Letter of Representation (Appendix C);
 - 2.1.3 Note the contents of the Audit Completion Report (Appendix D) provided by Mazars LLP;
 - 2.1.4 Approve the revised Audited Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2023 (Appendix E); and
 - 2.1.5 Agree that, should any amendments to the Statement of Accounts be required after the meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee, these be agreed by the Director of Finance in conjunction with the Chair. Members of the Audit and Governance Committee will be notified of any agreed changes.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations set the statutory audit deadlines for local authorities to approve and publish their accounts for 2022/2023. The Council was required to publish its draft Statement of Accounts no later than 31 May and its audited Statement of Accounts no later than 30 September. Due to delays in the Council receiving pension valuation information for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for both financial years ended 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023 the Council was unable to publish the draft Accounts until the 6 July 2023. As required an Accounts Delay Notice was published on 31 May 2023 which set out the reasons as described above.
- 3.2 The Council's Section 151 Officer is required to prepare a Letter of Representation setting out the principles used in preparing the accounts and providing the external auditor with the necessary assurances required by regulation.
- 3.3 Mazars LLP are required to report to Members on the Statement of Accounts and certain other matters to Members prior to an opinion being provided on the Council's accounts.
- 3.4 Mazars LLP has audited the financial statements of the Council in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office and International Standards on Auditing (ISA) issued by the Auditing Practices Board.
- 3.5 Once the Audit and Governance Committee has noted the contents of this report, Mazars LLP can then formally provide an opinion on the Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023.
- 3.6 In line with auditing standards, Mazars LLP produces an Audit Completion Report, in which the auditor's opinion is that the financial statements present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2023 and the Group's expenditure and income for the year then ended. The Audit Completion Report 2022/2023 is included at Appendix D on the agenda. The Audit Completion Report is in addition to the Annual Audit Letter which will be issued in due course.
- 3.7 The audited Statement of Accounts 2022/2023 is set out at Appendix E on the agenda for approval.

4.0 KEY MESSAGES

- 4.1 The full communication is included in the Audit Completion Report, and in summary concludes that:

- Audit Opinion – At the time of issuing the report, and subject to satisfactory conclusion of the remaining audit work, Mazars anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion on the financial statements;
- Value for Money – There is still some work to be completed in this area however, Mazars anticipate concluding that the Council had proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources;
- Whole of Government Accounts – Mazars have received the National Audit Office’s group instructions in relation to the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) and will complete the required work in relation to this; and
- Wider Powers - No objections or questions have been received by the auditors from local electors during the audit.

5.0 AMENDMENTS TO THE ACCOUNTS

- 5.1 The auditors have identified a small number of misstatements in the accounts which are detailed in section 6 of the auditor’s Audit Completion Report at Appendix D.
- 5.2 Some minor points and presentational changes have also been reflected in the revised accounts. These are also summarised in section 6 of the Audit Completion Report.

6.0 SIGNIFICANT ITEMS OF AUDIT WORK STILL TO BE FINALISED

- 6.1 The only area of audit work still to be finalised is the receipt of the required assurance from the T&W Pension Fund auditors on the 2022/2023 Pension Fund accounts.
- 6.2 The Letter of Representation at Appendix C sets out the principles used in preparing the accounts and provides the external auditor with the necessary assurances. Once the outstanding work has been completed, any additional misstatements will be added to the Letter of Representation and circulated to Members.

7.0 FORMAL OPINION

- 7.1 In line with the reporting requirements set out in the Accounts and Audit Regulations, Mazars LLP would ideally have provided an opinion on the Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 by the end of September 2023 and the Council would have authorised the Accounts for issue and published them on its website. As this has not been possible, due to the requirement on audit firms to clear the backlog of audit work relating to previous years impacting on the timely delivery of the 2022/2023 audit, the Council has published the required notice to advise of the delay.

Mr M Kirkam
Mazars LLP
5th Floor
3 Wellington
Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

Date: 10 October 2023
Our ref:
Your ref: SUND98550/DZH19/MK

Dear Mark,

Audit of Sunderland City Council's single entity and group financial statements for the year end 31 March 2023 - understanding how those charged with governance gain assurance from management

I am writing with reference to your letter dated 20 September 2023, in relation to understanding how those charged with governance gain assurance over management processes and arrangements. Their assurances are provided below, representing Sunderland City Council's formal response from those charged with governance, which, for the purposes of the financial statements, is the Audit and Governance Committee.

As in previous years, the Audit and Governance Committee have considered the nature and extent of any significant internal and external operational, financial, compliance, fraud or other risks facing the Council which might have an impact on the financial statements. These risks have been addressed in both the planning process for the audit of the financial statements (where officers and auditors have discussed key risks faced by the Council) and, to the extent that it is necessary, in the production of the financial statements. The process to produce the Annual Governance Statement should also mean that all key risks which would relate to the financial statements have been fully and appropriately considered. In response to your letter please find responses to your specific questions below and the completed Appendix 1, as requested.

With regard to Joint Venture arrangements, the Council relies on the operational partner or appropriate governance structure in place to ensure there is appropriate internal and external operational financial control, and that compliance, fraud or other risks facing these entities which might have had an impact on the financial statements, are adequately addressed. This assurance is obtained consistent with the legal agreement in place.

Specific assurances:

1) How do you exercise oversight of management's processes in relation to:

- ***undertaking an assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated due to fraud or error (including the nature, extent and frequency of these assessments);***

This responsibility is exercised through the effective functioning of the Audit and Governance Committee, the constitution and operation of which follows CIPFA guidelines.

The Director of Finance (DoF) and the Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services (ADAPS) attend all meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee to discuss and review findings of Internal and External Audit reviews and the level of adequacy of management's response. The Audit and Governance Committee also considers the Annual Governance Statement and the actions taken and proposed in relation to improving governance and internal controls as necessary.

The Committee also reviews the Internal Audit Strategy and annual Internal Audit Plan and is able to comment on areas proposed for review. The Council's Strategic and Corporate Risks covers council owned companies as an entity and these are regularly reported and reviewed by the Committee. The Council's Internal Audit Plan ensures that fraud risk or related concerns are escalated to the appropriate level or to this committee if appropriate. Ad-hoc meetings between the Committee and the ADAPS take place where necessary. Roles and responsibilities of members and officers are clearly set out in Codes of Conduct, the Scheme of Delegation, Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (including the Fraud Response Plan) and in the Risk Management Policy and Strategy which also describe the relevant registers, declarations and escalation processes to be complied with.

A risk management assessment is carried out by each company and updated regularly (but at least annually) and this helps to ensure that all risks are identified and then addressed appropriately. The risks are regularly considered by management within each company. The risks identified by the companies are taken into account when formulating the annual plans of internal audit work, the results of which are also reported formally to the Audit and Governance committee.

The Audit and Governance Committee declares that it has no knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud that could affect the Council in relation to the 2022/23 financial statements.

- ***identifying and responding to risks of fraud in the Sunderland City Council and group entities, including any specific risks of fraud which management have identified or that have been brought to its attention, or classes of transactions, account balances, or disclosure for which a risk of fraud is likely to exist;***

The Council has an Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy which is regularly updated and approved by the committee. The committee reviews the Internal Audit Strategy, and Annual Internal Audit Plan, which includes the Counter Fraud Work Programme for the year. The Counter Fraud Work Programme is based on a Fraud Risk Assessment for the effective deployment of resources and includes both reactive and proactive work. The Committee receives regular updates on progress against the Counter Fraud Work Programme with any areas of suspected fraud identified, together with any necessary control measures to be implemented to mitigate the risk of further fraud. Updates are also presented on the implementation of the control improvements.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the Governance framework within the Council and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. Internal management control arrangements are in place which should identify and prevent fraud risks from occurring and detect them if they do occur. The Council engages in numerous fraud prevention and identification activity including corporate processes such as participating in the National Fraud Initiative as well as specific service based fraud identification activity. Should a fraud risk occur, the Council's Fraud Response Plan is followed to ensure concerns are raised at the appropriate level and investigated thoroughly.

Council owned companies have their own governance arrangements which include appropriate policies and procedures designed to protect the interests of the company in line with those of the Council. These include arrangements to manage the risks of and respond to the risk of fraud. Internal Audit work for each company is designed to assess the adequacy of these arrangements and includes tests to specifically identify potential fraudulent activity. Any fraud risks which do occur are considered and assessed with management.

- ***communicating to employees its view on business practice and ethical behaviour (for example by updating, communicating and monitoring against Sunderland City Council's code of conduct);***

Written procedures are in place covering financial and administrative matters which are communicated to staff through the induction process, through management and are available on the Council's intranet site. These documents are regularly updated and set out the standards of conduct that are expected, the policies and procedures which should be followed and what to do if staff have concerns that these arrangements are not being complied with. Internal Audit carries out a programme of work which includes assessing the level of compliance with the Council's key policies and procedures. Key procedures include:

- Codes of conduct;
- Whistle Blowing Policy;
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (including the Fraud Response Plan);
- Corporate Health and Safety Policy;
- Corporate Procurement Strategy;
- Treasury Management Strategy;
- Budget management scheme.

The Counter Fraud Strategy which supports the delivery of the aims of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out in detail the approach which has been adopted by the Council in tackling fraud across the broad spectrum of the Council and Council funded services. This is currently under review; an updated version will be brought back to the Committee during 2023/24.

The key elements of the Strategy include:

In order to effectively tackle fraud, it is important that a holistic approach is adopted, focused on preventing fraud occurring in the first place, seeking it out and correcting it where it does exist, and delivering swift and effective punishments to those who attack the Council, whilst deterring others from considering the same course of action.

Under the Integrated Risk and Assurance Framework established within the Council, managers are clearly responsible for establishing appropriate controls and for ensuring they are working in practice. The Framework also aims to co-ordinate all assurance activity, including that in relation to fraud and to ensure arrangements are working effectively across the Council. This includes the co-ordination of fraud prevention, detection and investigation arrangements.

The Audit, Risk and Assurance service has the expertise in relation to the design of control systems that aim to manage the risk of fraud. Risk and Assurance provides advice and guidance in relation to governance and control matters, including fraud, at the earliest stage to ensure appropriate controls are designed into arrangements as they are being established.

The Internal Audit Team maintains the fraud risk assessment for the Council and undertakes compliance work aimed at detecting fraud and providing assurance on the effectiveness of the controls in place. Internal Audit will also review the effectiveness of management in establishing fraud prevention controls and monitoring compliance with them. This team also undertakes investigations of suspected fraud and corruption.

The service aims to embed a collaborative approach to tackling fraud with an agreed approach to be adopted across the whole Council and its activities and includes counter fraud work undertaken in any service of the Council, schools, partnerships within which the Council is involved, third parties providing services to or on behalf of the Council and other organisations receiving or holding Council funds.

The Audit and Governance Committee met four times to consider the business of 2022/23 with a Risk and Assurance Map for 2022/23 being presented to the April 2022 remaining three meetings as part of the Integrated Assurance Framework. The Update reports set out the work done to identify fraud and the results of this work and the updated position regarding each risk area identified in the Risk and Assurance Map.

Private meetings are held between the ADAPS, the External Auditor and members of the Audit and Governance Committee to discuss the detail of any significant investigations into suspected cases of fraud and corruption where appropriate.

Council owned companies have their own governance arrangements which include appropriate policies and procedures designed to protect the interests of the company in line with those of the Council. Internal audit work undertaken within Council owned companies is designed to ensure compliance against these policies and procedures, including the management of fraud risks. The results of this work are considered by management within each company.

The Risk and Assurance Map Update report which is presented to the Audit and Governance Committee includes assurances in relation to each Council owned company. This includes assurances gathered through the integrated Assurance Framework. Internal Audit carries out counter fraud testing in each company which is included within the assurance view from Internal Audit.

During 2022/23, I was not made aware of any significant breaches of control.

- ***communicating to you the process for identifying and responding to fraud and error.***

The Internal Audit Plan includes proactive work aimed at detecting fraud based on the fraud risk assessment which is updated annually. The details of work undertaken, and the results are included in the Risk and Assurance Map Update report which is presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis. The Annual Governance Review also provides details of the counter fraud activity undertaken and any significant fraud issues identified. The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out the procedures to be followed when potential fraud is identified through the Fraud Response Plan.

This process covers both council and subsidiary companies.

2) How do you oversee management processes for identifying and responding to the risk of fraud and possible breaches of internal control? Are you aware of any breaches of internal control during 2022/23?

I am made aware of management processes for identifying and responding to the risk of fraud and possible breaches of internal control through receiving reports as the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee and discussions with key officers.

I am aware that arrangements are set out in the Council's Fraud Response Plan, part of the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy. This sets out how concerns should be reported and who to, what people who suspect fraud should and should not do and what the person who receives the concerns should and should not do. The Fraud Investigation Plan sets out how investigations of concerns should be carried out.

During 2022/23, I was not made aware of any significant breaches of internal control.

3) How do you gain assurance that all relevant laws and regulations have been complied with? Are you aware of any instances of non-compliance during 2022/23?

I am not aware of any non-compliance within the Council during 2022/23. The Committee is aware that reports to Cabinet and Council are reviewed for their legality to ensure Council expenditure, services and actions are within the law. A legal representative attends all Cabinet, Council and "quasi-judicial" meetings and other Committee meetings where appropriate. As such the Council has appropriate legal arrangements in place headed by the Monitoring Officer, which gives this Committee reassurance that legal advice is sought where appropriate.

Solicitors are required to keep up to date with new and emerging legislation which affects local government. To assist in this role, the team subscribe to an electronic legal update

service and various legal publications and regularly attend relevant training courses. As a member of the Lawyers in Local Government Group and actively participating in the regional branch of this group, information is shared with other local authorities both regarding new legislation and case law and the approach and application of existing legal requirements.

In respect of new legislation or developments in case law, briefing notes or reports are prepared as appropriate and policies and procedures developed in conjunction with officers from the relevant Council Directorates.

Regular team meetings are held within Legal Services both at service area level and senior management team level, at which any concerns regarding the Council's compliance with legal requirements could be raised and addressed.

In addition I am further reassured by the fact that the Council's Assistant Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer carries out a self-assessment of the legal service which covers the Council's corporate legality arrangements that informs the Annual Governance Statement and has confirmed that there were no issues to raise and this provides me with the assurance that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure that it remains within the law as it carries out its business, paying due regard to relevant legislation, statutory requirements and case law. Furthermore, the Director of Finance has also confirmed in his Controls and Assurance Statement that there were no issues or concerns to raise in this area and as such has given full assurance regarding the Council's arrangements to ensure legality.

I am not aware of any non-compliance within the Council during 2022/23.

4) Are there any actual or potential litigation or claims that would affect the financial statements?

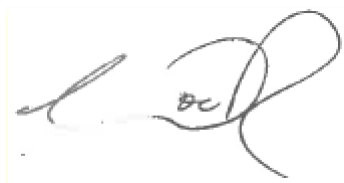
On behalf of the Audit and Governance Committee I declare that it has no knowledge of and is not on notice of any non-compliance with laws and regulations that could impact on the 2022/23 financial statements.

5) Have you carried out a preliminary assessment of the going concern assumption and if so, have you identified any events which may cast significant doubt on Sunderland City Council's ability to continue as a going concern, or that of any of its group entity?

The Council by its very nature is a going concern and the Committee has no reason to believe that any events would impact on this position. The fact the Council group shows a net worth of £859m and has assets (excluding Long Term Pension Asset) worth over £1,494m, with cash backed reserves of over £213m would support our view. The Council is also well managed and prudent in its approach to all financial matters, which is reflected in the strong Balance Sheet position.

The process outlined above in respect of the Council is followed closely by both Together for Children, Sunderland Care and Support and Siglion LLP.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Cook', enclosed in a thin yellow rectangular border.

Geoff Cook

Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee

No.	Questions for those charged with governance	Those charged with governance response
1	<p>Are you aware of any instances of actual, suspected or alleged fraud, either within the Council as a whole, or within group entities during the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023?</p>	<p>I am not aware of any suspected or alleged fraud for the period.</p>
2	<p>Do you suspect fraud may be occurring within Sunderland City Council or within group entities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you identified any specific fraud risks within Sunderland City Council or group entities? ➤ Do you have any concerns that there are areas within Sunderland City Council or group entities that are at risk of fraud? ➤ Are there particular locations within Sunderland City Council or group entities where fraud is more likely to occur? 	<p>A fraud risk assessment is in place and is regularly updated which covers all appropriate parts of the Council. This covers areas of fraud risks, sets out the individual risks, a score for the risks and tests that are carried out to identify potential fraud taking place. A programme of proactive counter fraud work is undertaken every year by Internal Audit which includes group entities and did not identify any areas of concern.</p> <p>The Council also takes part in the Audit Commission's NFI programme which also covers group entities and has not identified any areas of concern.</p>
3	<p>Are you satisfied that internal controls, including segregation of duties, exist and work effectively?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If not where are the risk areas? ➤ What other controls are in place to help prevent, deter or detect fraud? 	<p>Internal controls regarding segregation of duties are in place and the results of Internal Audit work have not highlighted any material concerns. An adequate opinion on the system of internal control has been reported to the Audit and Governance Committee for the year. The Council has an Anti Fraud and Corruption policy and supporting documents in place which is available to all staff on the Council intranet. Other controls in place include a robust budget management framework which includes detailed support for Financial Management, verification checks in key systems such as payroll, BACS payments, Accounts Payable which are aimed at identifying fraud or errors. The majority of payments are through the Supplier Relationship Management system which ensures authorisation of payments by an approved authorised officer. There continues to be work undertaken across the Council and group entities to raise awareness of Information Governance issues and encourage staff to keep information secure.</p>

4	<p>How do you encourage staff to report their concerns about fraud?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What concerns about fraud are staff expected to report? 	<p>This is undertaken by officers of the Council. A Whistle Blowing policy is in place and is on the Council's intranet which gives details of how staff can raise concerns. Group entities also have their own arrangements. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns about any areas where controls are not being complied with, where there is significant non-compliance with policies and procedures or where there are concerns regarding corruption or potential financial loss.</p>
5	<p>From a fraud and corruption perspective, what are considered to be high risk posts within Sunderland City Council and its group entities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are the risks relating to these posts identified, assessed and managed? 	<p>The Internal Audit Fraud Risk Assessments identifies potential fraud risks in specific areas which would cover any specific risks in relation to individual posts. Counter fraud checks would be designed to test these risks to identify any potential fraudulent activity.</p>
6	<p>Are you aware of any related party relationships or transactions that could give rise to instances of fraud?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do you mitigate the risks associated with fraud related to related party relationships and transactions? 	<p>No</p> <p>The Council and its group entities has robust procedures in place to ensure all related party transactions are identified and then where appropriate are fully disclosed in the relevant Statement of Accounts. The Council has an established approach for Partnership arrangements including maintaining a guidance document and check list. Internal processes carried out as part of the closing of accounts timetable also has specific tasks and detailed analysis of all member and chief officer interests and related party transactions which are reviewed and collated to form notes in the statement of accounts. Relevant member interests are also documented and held by democratic services for scrutiny and help to inform the process. The procedures for the identification and assessment of group accounts process also helps to inform this area in addition to the other processes and policies in place. Reviews by senior management also help inform the control process.</p>
7	<p>Are you aware of any entries made in the accounting records of Sunderland City Council or group entities that you believe or suspect are false or intentionally misleading?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are there particular balances where fraud is more likely to occur? ➤ Are you aware of any assets, liabilities or transactions that you believe were 	<p>No.</p>

	<p>improperly included or omitted from the accounts of Sunderland City Council or group entities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Could a false accounting entry escape detection? If so, how? ➤ Are there any external fraud risk factors, such as benefits payments or collection of tax revenues, which are high risk of fraud? 	<p>Internal controls and internal check mitigate the risk as does appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in compiling the accounts for both the Council and group entities. Where external support is brought in to assist with production of group entity accounts these are suitably qualified and experienced.</p> <p>All areas are subject to a risk review and reports from internal and external audit help identify and report their findings in areas where risk is high. The SAP system makes false accounting unlikely because of the way it is designed and is fed by the bank reconciliation and feeder systems and that have separate controls and reconciliation processes in place to maintain the integrity of the financial system. Monthly bank reconciliations are carried out and reviewed by senior management along with balance sheet and suspense account reviews. Strong and robust budgetary control and financial practices are in place across the Council. Areas that are identified as high risk are reviewed more regularly by internal audit as part of their risk based approach to auditing. Legal and financial review is carried out across the whole Council spectrum of activity.</p>
8	<p>Are you aware of any organisational, or management pressure to meet financial or operating targets?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are you aware of any inappropriate organisational or management pressure being applied, or incentives offered, to you or colleagues to meet financial or operating targets? 	<p>No – The Medium Term Financial Plan, the budget planning process and the annual budget along with agreed cash limits approach are reviewed and monitored during the year to review progress and adherence to agreed budget levels agreed by members and executive directors within the Council. Actual performance and any actions necessary are reviewed by management and reported to members who receive formal Cabinet quarterly reports during the year. Consequently, there are no inappropriate pressures or incentives being applied in either the Council or its group entities.</p>

9	<p>What arrangements has the Council put in place in response to the Bribery Act 2010?</p>	<p>Arrangements were in place before the introduction of the Bribery Act and continue to be applied, e.g. existence and promotion of the anti - fraud and corruption policy, whistle blowing policy, codes of conduct, financial procedure rules, procurement procedure rules, disciplinary procedures; the existence of effective audit service. In response to the introduction of the Bribery Act 2010 these arrangements were reviewed in light of the Act to ensure they continued to be 'adequate procedures'. The Council's senior management team reaffirmed its commitment its zero tolerance to bribery. An assessment was made of the risk to the Council regarding bribery. Procurement arrangements, i.e. procurement procedure rules, were reviewed to ensure appropriate due diligence is carried out in respect of suppliers seeking to contract with the Council and contract terms and conditions address the subject of bribery.</p>
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Mr M Kirkam
Mazars LLP
5th Floor
3 Wellington
Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

Date: 10 October 2023
Our ref:
Your ref: SUND98550/DZH19/MK

Dear Mark,

Audit of Sunderland City Council's Single Entity and Group Financial Statements for the year end 31 March 2023 - Understanding your management processes and arrangements

I refer to your letter dated 20 September 2023 in respect of the above management arrangements and processes in place within the Council and the wider group. The assurances are provided below, representing Sunderland City Council's formal response from management in this respect.

I, as section 151 officer of the Council and group entities that are council subsidiaries, on behalf of management, have considered the nature and extent of any significant internal and external operational, financial, compliance, fraud or other risks facing the Council which might have had an impact on the financial statements. These risks have been addressed in both the planning process for the audit of the financial statements (where myself and other senior officers, along with yourselves, have identified and discussed key risks faced by the Council) and, to the extent that it is necessary, in the production of the financial statements. The processes and arrangements in place and adhered to by senior management in the production of the Annual Governance Statement also shows that all key risks which would relate to the financial statements have been fully and appropriately considered. In response to your letter please find responses to your specific questions and I have also attached the completed Appendix 1, as requested.

With regard to Joint Venture arrangements, the Council relies on the operational partner or appropriate governance structure in place to ensure there is appropriate internal and external operational financial control, and that compliance, fraud or other risks facing these entities which might have had an impact on the financial statements, are adequately addressed. This assurance is obtained consistent with the legal agreement in place.

Specific assurances:

1) What are management processes in relation to:

- ***undertaking an assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated due to fraud or error (including the nature, extent and frequency of these assessments);***

Sunderland City Council

A risk management assessment is carried out and updated regularly (but at least annually) and this helps to ensure that all risks are identified and then addressed appropriately. The review of risks is also reported formally to the Audit and Governance Committee throughout the year.

I, along with the Chief Officers Group, ensure that arrangements are in place within the Council that achieve the effective and efficient use of resources, have policies and procedures in place so that the Council is effectively managed and that internal control mechanisms are put in place and operating effectively within the Council to help mitigate against all identified risks and therefore that the financial statements are not materially misstated each year.

I, as the Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer, along with the Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services (ADAPS) attend meetings of the Audit and Governance Committee to discuss and review findings of all Internal and External Audit reviews and ensure members are kept informed through the regular reporting mechanisms in place. The Committee receives and approves the accounts on behalf of the Council and as such is kept informed of all issues and risks that could impact upon the financial statements and operates within the guidelines recommended by CIPFA. Management also considers and informs the Annual Governance Statement and the actions set out in order to further improve governance arrangements, the achievement of value for money in its use of resources and to improve the internal control environment as required.

Management also receives the independent Internal Audit Strategy and annual internal audit plan and is able to comment on areas proposed for review. The Council's Strategic and Corporate Risks are regularly reported and reviewed by the Management and the Council's internal audit plan ensures that fraud risk or related concerns are escalated through to the appropriate level, as required. Ad-hoc meetings between the Committee and the ADAPS and/or myself can also take place where necessary to discuss matters as they arise. Roles and responsibilities of members and officers are clearly set out in Codes of Conduct, the Scheme of Delegation, and Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (including the Fraud Response Plan) which also describe the relevant registers, declarations and escalation processes to be complied with.

Group Entities (council-owned companies)

I, along with appropriate senior officers and Boards of Directors from group entities, ensure that arrangements are in place that achieve the effective and efficient use of resources, have policies and procedures in place so that the group entities are effectively managed and that internal control mechanisms are put in place and operating effectively to help mitigate against all identified risks and therefore that the financial statements are not materially misstated each year.

A risk management assessment is carried out by each company and updated regularly (but at least annually) and this helps to ensure that all risks are identified and then addressed appropriately. The risks are regularly considered by management within each company. The risks identified by the companies are taken into account when formulating the annual plans of internal audit work, the results of which are also reported formally to the Council's Audit and Governance Committee throughout the year.

I can confirm on behalf of management that I have no knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud that could affect the Council or group entities in relation to the 2022/23 financial statements.

- ***identifying and responding to risks of fraud in the Sunderland City Council and group entities, including any specific risks of fraud which management have identified or that have been brought to its attention, or classes of transactions, account balances, or disclosure for which a risk of fraud is likely to exist;***

Sunderland City Council

The Council has an Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy which is regularly updated and is also approved by the Audit and Governance Committee. Regular reviews and achievement of the annually reviewed audit plan is reported separately to the Audit and Governance Committee. The Internal Audit Strategy and annual internal audit plan, which includes the Counter Fraud Work Programme for the year is established independently by the ADAPS in accordance with best practice.

The Counter Fraud Work Programme is based on a Fraud Risk Assessment for the effective deployment of resources and includes both reactive and proactive work. I receive regular updates of any areas of suspected fraud identified, together with any necessary control measures to be implemented to mitigate the risk of further fraud, through the Risk and Assurance Map Update Reports. Updates are also presented on the implementation of the control improvements and all findings are reported to members as appropriate.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the Governance framework within the Council and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. Internal management control arrangements are in place which should identify and prevent fraud risks from occurring and detect them if they do occur. The Council engages in numerous fraud prevention and identification activity including corporate processes such as participating in the National Fraud Initiative as well as specific service-based fraud identification activity. Should a fraud risk occur then the Council's Fraud Response Plan is followed to ensure concerns are raised at the appropriate level and investigated thoroughly.

Group Entities (council-owned companies)

Council-owned companies have their own governance arrangements which include appropriate policies and procedures designed to protect the interests of the company in line with those of the Council. These include arrangements to manage the risks of and respond to the risk of fraud. Internal Audit work for each company is designed to assess the adequacy of these arrangements and includes tests to specifically identify potential fraudulent activity. Any fraud risks which do occur are considered and assessed with management.

- ***communicating to employees its view on business practice and ethical behaviour (for example by updating, communicating and monitoring against Sunderland City Council's code of conduct);***

Sunderland City Council

Written procedures are in place covering financial and administrative matters which are communicated to staff through the induction process, through management and are available on the Council's intranet site. These documents are regularly updated and set out the standards of conduct that are expected, the policies and procedures which should be followed and what to do if staff have concerns that these arrangements are not being complied with. Internal Audit carries out a programme of work which includes assessing the level of compliance against the Council's key policies and procedures. Key procedures include:

- Codes of conduct;
- Whistle Blowing Policy;
- Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy (including the Fraud Response Plan);
- Corporate Health and Safety Statement of Intent;
- Corporate Procurement Strategy;
- Treasury Management Strategy;
- The Council's budget management scheme.

The Counter Fraud Strategy which supports the delivery of the aims of the Council's Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out in detail the approach that has been adopted by the Council in tackling fraud across the broad spectrum of the Council and Council funded services. This is currently under review, an updated version will be brought back to the Committee during 2023/24.

The key elements of this Strategy include:

In order to effectively tackle fraud it is important that a holistic approach is adopted, focused on preventing fraud occurring in the first place, seeking it out and correcting it where it does exist, and delivering swift and effective punishments to those who attack the Council, whilst deterring others from considering the same course of action.

Under the Integrated Risk and Assurance Framework established within the Council, managers are clearly responsible for establishing appropriate controls and for ensuring they are working in practice. The Framework also aims to co-ordinate all assurance activity, including that in relation to fraud and to ensure arrangements are working effectively across the Council. This includes the co-ordination of fraud prevention, detection and investigation arrangements.

The Audit, Risk and Assurance service has the expertise in relation to the design of control systems that aim to manage the risk of fraud. Risk and Assurance

provides advice and guidance in relation to governance and control matters, including fraud, at the earliest stage to ensure appropriate controls are designed into arrangements as they are being established.

The Internal Audit Team maintains the fraud risk assessment for the Council and undertakes compliance work aimed at detecting fraud and providing assurance on the effectiveness of the controls in place. Internal Audit will also review the effectiveness of management in establishing fraud prevention controls and monitoring compliance with them. This team also undertakes investigations of suspected fraud and corruption.

The service aims to embed a collaborative approach to tackling fraud with an agreed approach to be adopted across the whole Council and its activities and includes counter fraud work undertaken in any service of the Council, schools, partnerships within which the Council is involved, third parties providing services to or on behalf of the Council and other organisations receiving or holding Council funds.

The Audit and Governance Committee met four times to consider the business of 2022/23 with a Risk and Assurance Map for 2022/23 being presented to the April 2022 meeting and a Risk and Assurance Update report being submitted to the remaining three meetings as part of the Integrated Risk and Assurance Framework. The Update reports set out the work done to identify fraud and the results of this work and the updated position regarding each risk area identified in the Risk and Assurance Map.

Private meetings are held between the ADBPS, the External Auditor and members of the Audit and Governance Committee to discuss the detail of any significant investigations into suspected cases of fraud and corruption where appropriate.

Group Entities (council-owned companies)

Council-owned companies have their own governance arrangements which include appropriate policies and procedures designed to protect the interests of the company in line with those of the Council. Internal audit work undertaken within Council-owned companies is designed to ensure compliance against these policies and procedures, including the management of fraud risks. The results of this work are considered by management within each company.

The Risk and Assurance Map Update report which is presented to the Audit and Governance Committee includes assurances in relation to each Council-owned company. This includes assurances gathered through the Integrated Risk and Assurance Framework. Internal Audit carry out counter fraud testing in each company which is included within the assurance view from Internal Audit.

- ***communicating to those charged with governance the processes for identifying and responding to fraud and error.***

The Internal Audit Plan includes proactive work aimed at detecting fraud based on the fraud risk assessment which is updated annually. The details of work undertaken and the results are included in the Risk and Assurance Map update report which is presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on a quarterly basis. The Annual Governance Review also provides details of the counter fraud activity undertaken and any significant fraud issues identified. The Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out the procedures to be followed when potential fraud is identified through the Fraud Response Plan.

This process covers both the Council and subsidiary companies.

2) How does management gain assurance that all relevant laws and regulations have been complied with? Have there been any instances of non-compliance during 2022/23?

Sunderland City Council

Reports to Cabinet and Council are reviewed for their legality to ensure Council expenditure, services and actions are within the law. A legal representative attends all Cabinet, Council and “quasi-judicial” meetings and also other committee meetings where appropriate. As such we have, as senior management, appropriate legal arrangements in place headed by the Monitoring Officer, which gives reassurance that legal advice is sought where appropriate.

Solicitors are required to keep up to date with new and emerging legislation which affects local government. To assist in this role, the team subscribe to an electronic legal update service and various legal publications and regularly attend relevant training courses. As a member of the Lawyers in Local Government Group and actively participating in the regional branch of this group, information is shared with other local authorities both regarding new legislation and case law and the approach and application of existing legal requirements.

In respect of new legislation or developments in case law, briefing notes or reports are prepared as appropriate and policies and procedures developed in conjunction with officers from the relevant Council departments.

Regular team meetings are held within Legal Services both at service area level and senior management team level, at which any concerns regarding the Council's compliance with legal requirements could be raised and addressed.

I am further reassured by the fact that the Council's Assistant Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer has carried out a self assessment of the service which covers the Council's corporate legality arrangements that informs the Annual Governance Statement and has confirmed that there were no issues to raise. This provides me with the assurance that the Council has arrangements in place to ensure that it remains within the law as it carries out its business, paying due regard to relevant legislation, statutory requirements and case law. Furthermore I have confirmed in my Controls and Assurance Statement that there were no issues or concerns to raise in this area and this provides full assurance regarding the Council's arrangements to ensure legality.

I am not aware of any non-compliance within the Council during 2022/23.

Group Entities (council-owned companies)

Council-owned companies work closely with council officers. A Service Level Agreement is in operation with council-owned companies to ensure that any queries raised by these companies are appropriately responded to. In addition, in respect of Together for Children, an in-house legal team deals with child protection and safeguarding cases. There is close liaison between officers of the companies and the Council providing ample opportunity and mechanisms for any areas of concern to be flagged within the Council.

3) Are there any actual or potential litigation or claims that would affect the financial statements?

On behalf of Management, I confirm that I have no knowledge of, and the Council (or its entities) is not on notice of any non-compliance with laws and regulations that could impact on the 2022/23 financial statements. All contingent liabilities are discussed and identified and or updated and reviewed annually in order to reflect the known position as at the balance sheet date.

4) What controls do you have in place to identify, authorise, approve; account for and disclose, related party transactions and relationships? For any new related parties (i.e. any not already disclosed in your year end 31 March 2022 audited financial statements) please provide a list of them, explain the nature of these, and whether you have entered into any transactions with these related parties during the year to 31 March 2023.

Sunderland City Council

On behalf of Management, I confirm that I have no knowledge of any such related party transactions that require further disclosure from those previously declared.

The Council has robust procedures in place to identify and record any related party transactions in respect of its members and chief officers included within the statement of accounts which has taken place during the year and is informed by the robust formal year end process of signed declarations outlining all detailed related party transactions and relationships which apply to all individual Councillors and Chief Officers. Various sources of information held and recorded by the Council also help to inform the procedures in place including; Register of Councillor declared interests; its formal Committee protocols (under which members must declare certain interests in items at meetings and in some cases leave the meeting while that item is discussed and voted upon); the Council's Constitution; and the detailed policies and procedure rules and financial regulations of the Council that are required to be observed which are also in place to ensure any related party transactions are identified, fully disclosed and recorded, properly considered and accounted for as necessary.

Group Entities (council controlled companies)

On behalf of Management, I can confirm that I have no knowledge of any such related party transactions that require further disclosure from those previously declared.

The process outlined above in respect of the Council, is followed closely by both Together for Children and Sunderland Care and Support. With regard Siglion LLP all board members must declare at meetings they attend any interests of a personal or prejudicial nature.

Yours sincerely,



Paul Wilson

Director of Finance

No.	Questions for management	Management response
1	<p>Are you aware of any instances of actual, suspected or alleged fraud, either within Sunderland City Council as a whole or within group entities during the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023?</p>	<p>I am not aware of any instances of suspected or alleged fraud in the period</p>
2	<p>Do you suspect fraud may be occurring within Sunderland City Council or within group entities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have you identified any specific fraud risks within Sunderland City Council or group entities? ➤ Do you have any concerns that there are areas within Sunderland City Council or group entities that are at risk of fraud? ➤ Are there particular locations within Sunderland City Council or group entities where fraud is more likely to occur? 	<p>A fraud risk assessment is in place and is regularly updated which covers all appropriate parts of the Council. This covers areas of fraud risks, sets out the individual risks, a score for the risks and tests that are carried out to identify potential fraud taking place. A programme of proactive counter fraud work is undertaken every year by Internal Audit which includes group entities and did not identify any areas of concern.</p> <p>The Council also takes part in the Audit Commission's NFI programme which also covers group entities and has not identified any areas of concern.</p>
3	<p>Are you satisfied that internal controls, including segregation of duties, exist and work effectively?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If not where are the risk areas? ➤ What other controls are in place to help prevent, deter or detect fraud? 	<p>Internal controls regarding segregation of duties are in place and the results of Internal Audit work have not highlighted any material concerns. An adequate opinion on the system of internal control has been reported to the Audit and Governance Committee for the year. The Council has an Anti Fraud and Corruption policy and supporting documents in place which is available to all staff on the Council intranet. Other controls in place include a robust budget management framework which includes detailed support for Financial Management, verification checks in key systems such as payroll, BACS payments, Accounts Payable which are aimed at identifying fraud or errors. The majority of payments are through the Supplier Relationship Management system which ensures authorisation of payments by an approved authorised officer. There continues to be work undertaken across the Council and group entities to raise awareness of Information Governance issues and encourage staff to keep information secure.</p>

No.	Questions for management	Management response
4	<p>How do you encourage staff to report their concerns about fraud?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What concerns about fraud are staff expected to report? 	<p>This is undertaken by officers of the Council. A Whistle Blowing policy is in place and is on the Council's intranet which gives details of how staff can raise concerns. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns about any areas where controls are not being complied with, where there is significant non-compliance with policies and procedures or where there are concerns regarding corruption or potential financial loss.</p>
5	<p>From a fraud and corruption perspective, what are considered to be high risk posts within the Council and group entities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How are the risks relating to these posts identified, assessed and managed? 	<p>The Internal Audit Fraud Risk Assessments identify potential fraud risks in specific areas which would cover any specific risks in relation to individual posts. Counter fraud checks would be designed to test these risks to identify any potential fraudulent activity.</p>
6	<p>Are you aware of any related party relationships or transactions that could give rise to instances of fraud?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How do you mitigate the risks associated with fraud related to related party relationships and transactions? 	<p>No</p> <p>The Council and its group entities has robust procedures in place to ensure all related party transactions are identified and then where appropriate are fully disclosed in the relevant Statement of Accounts. The Council has an established approach for Partnership arrangements including maintaining a guidance document and check list. Internal processes carried out as part of the closing of accounts timetable also has specific tasks and detailed analysis of all member and chief officer interests and related party transactions which are reviewed and collated to form notes in the statement of accounts. Relevant member interests are also documented and held by democratic services for scrutiny and also help to inform the process. The procedures for the identification and assessment of group accounts process also helps to inform this area in addition to the other processes and policies in place. Reviews by senior management also help inform the control process.</p>

No.	Questions for management	Management response
7	<p>Are you aware of any entries made in the accounting records of Sunderland City Council or group entities that you believe or suspect are false or intentionally misleading?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Are there particular balances where fraud is more likely to occur? ➤ Are you aware of any assets, liabilities or transactions that you believe were improperly included or omitted from the accounts of Sunderland City Council or group entities? ➤ Could a false accounting entry escape detection? If so, how? ➤ Are there any external fraud risk factors which are high risk of fraud? 	<p>No.</p> <p>Internal controls and internal check mitigate the risk as does appropriately qualified and experienced staff involved in compiling the accounts for both the Council and group entities. Where external support is brought in to assist with production of group entity accounts these are suitably qualified and experienced.</p> <p>All areas are subject to a risk review and reports from internal and external audit help identify and report their findings in areas where risk is high. The SAP system makes false accounting unlikely because of the way it is designed and is fed by the bank reconciliation and feeder systems and that have separate controls and reconciliation processes in place to maintain the integrity of the financial system. Monthly bank reconciliations are carried out and reviewed by senior management along with balance sheet and suspense account reviews. Strong and robust budgetary control and financial practices are in place across the Council.</p> <p>Areas that are identified as high risk are reviewed more regularly by internal audit as part of their risk-based approach to auditing.</p> <p>Legal and financial review is carried out across the whole Council spectrum of activity.</p>

No.	Questions for management	Management response
8	<p>Are you aware of any organisational, or management pressure to meet financial or operating targets?</p> <p>➤ Are you aware of any inappropriate organisational or management pressure being applied, or incentives offered, to you or colleagues to meet financial or operating targets?</p>	<p>No – The Medium Term Financial Plan, the budget planning process and the annual budget along with agreed cash limits approach are reviewed and monitored during the year to review progress and adherence to agreed budget levels agreed by members and executive directors within the Council. Actual performance and any actions necessary are reviewed by management and reported to members who receive formal Cabinet quarterly reports during the year. Consequently, there are no inappropriate pressures or incentives being applied in either the Council or its group entities.</p>
9	<p>What arrangements has the Council put in place in response to the Bribery Act 2010?</p>	<p>Arrangements were in place before the introduction of the Bribery Act and continue to be applied, e.g. existence and promotion of the anti - fraud and corruption policy, whistle blowing policy, codes of conduct, financial procedure rules, procurement procedure rules, disciplinary procedures; the existence of effective audit service. In response to the introduction of the Bribery Act 2010 these arrangements were reviewed in light of the Act to ensure they continued to be 'adequate procedures'. The Council's senior management team reaffirmed its commitment its zero tolerance to bribery. An assessment was made of the risk to the Council regarding bribery. Procurement arrangements, i.e. procurement procedure rules, were reviewed to ensure appropriate due diligence is carried out in respect of suppliers seeking to contract with the Council and contract terms and conditions address the subject of bribery.</p>

Mr Mark Kirkham
Partner
Mazars LLP
5th Floor
3 Wellington Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

Date: 29 November 2023

Sunderland City Council and Group - audit for year ended 31 March 2023

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Sunderland City Council (the Council) and Group for the year ended 31 March 2023 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

I confirm that the following representations, to the best of my knowledge and belief, are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy ourselves that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

My responsibility for the financial statements and accounting information

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information

I have provided you with:

- access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other material;
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

I confirm as Director of Finance (s151 officer) that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information. As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

Accounting records

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and committee meetings, have been made available to you.

Accounting policies

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with Code and International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

Accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value

I confirm that any significant assumptions used by the Council in making accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are reasonable.

Contingencies

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
- the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

Laws and regulations

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

Fraud and error

I acknowledge my responsibility as Director of Finance (s151 officer) for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error. I have disclosed to you:

- all the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- all knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
 - management and those charged with governance;
 - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
 - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Related party transactions

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances, have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code

and applicable law. I have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

Charges on assets

All the Council's assets are free from any charges exercisable by third parties except as disclosed within the financial statements.

Impairment review

To the best of my knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there is a permanent reduction in the recoverable amount of the property, plant and equipment below their carrying value at the balance sheet date. An impairment review is, therefore, not considered necessary.

Future commitments

I am not aware of any plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

Service concession arrangements

I am not aware of any material contract variations, payment deductions or additional service charges in 2022/23 in relation to the Council's PFI schemes that you have not been made aware of.

Subsequent events

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code and applicable law, require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed. Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly. I confirm I have disclosed to you the extent of RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete) in Council-owned buildings and to date, there is no indication of any significant issues.

Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council and Group will cease to continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Unadjusted misstatements

I confirm that the effects of the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole.

Yours faithfully,

s151 Officer – Director of Finance

Appendix to Letter of Representation

Unadjusted misstatements

		Assets	Liabilities	Reserves	Income Statement
		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1	Dr Gross Income – Children’s Services				1,575
	Cr General Fund – as at 31/03/2022			-1,575	
	Being 2021/22 income included in 2022/23 in error; above the Council's de minimis level of £0.005 million, so should have been accrued for in 2021/22. Actual error £0.008 million, extrapolated error £1.575 million. N.B. error would have impacted upon the General Fund as at 31/3/22 only.				
2	Dr Gross Income – Dynamic City				4,260
	Cr Gross Income – Vibrant City				-4,260
	Being the misclassification of income in the Dynamic City portfolio line heading when it should have been included in the Vibrant City portfolio line heading. Actual error £0.061 million, extrapolated error £4.260 million -no net impact on net cost of services.				
	Total unadjusted misstatements	0	0	-1,575	1,575

Unadjusted disclosure amendments

Note 2 - Accounting standards issued but not yet adopted:

The Council has disclosed IFRS 16 leases in this note, however, it is not technically required given implementation of this standard has been deferred until 2024/25.

Note 34 – Leases:

The value of disclosed lease payments (due after five years) is misstated by an extrapolated £3.406 million arising from testing which identified an incorrectly input lease value.

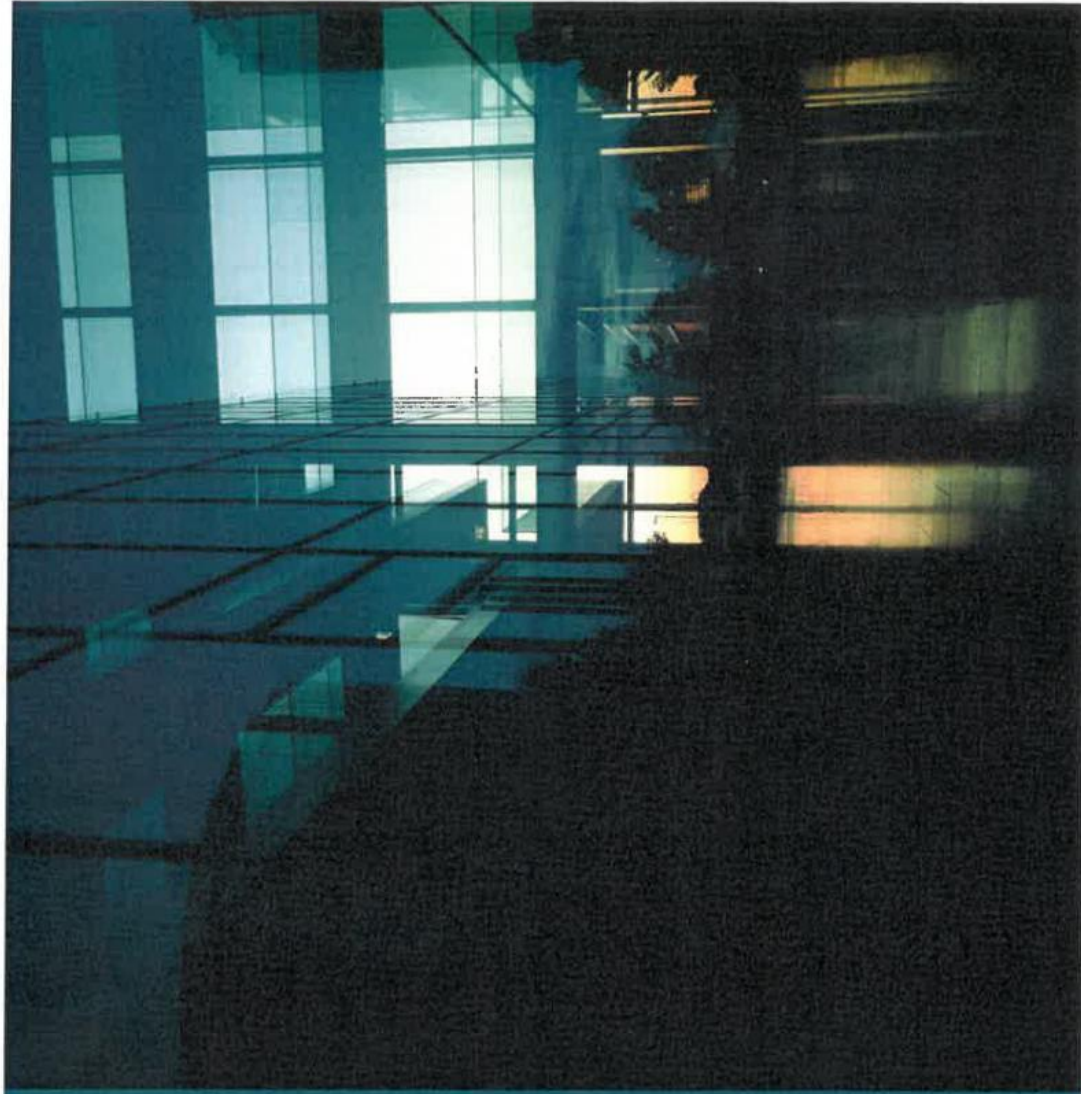
Audit Completion Report

Sunderland City Council
Year ended 31 March 2023

November 2023

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07	Value for money arrangements

Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Appendix B: Draft audit report

Appendix C: Independence

Appendix D: Other communications

Our reports are prepared in the context of the 'Statement of Responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies' and the 'Appointing Person Terms of Appointment' issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Reports and letters prepared by appointed auditors and addressed to the Council are prepared for the sole use of the Council and we take no responsibility to any member or officer in their individual capacity or to any third party. Mazars LLP is the UK firm of Mazars, an international advisory and accountancy group. Mazars LLP is registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.



Audit and Governance Committee Members
Sunderland City Council
City Hall
Plater Way
Sunderland
SRT 3AA

16 November 2023

Dear Committee Members

Audit Completion Report – year ended 31 March 2023

We are pleased to present our Audit Completion Report for the year ended 31 March 2023. The purpose of this document is to summarise our audit conclusions.

The scope of our work, including identified significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement, was outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum which we presented on 22 September 2023. We have reviewed our Audit Strategy Memorandum and concluded that the original significant audit risks and other areas of management judgement remain appropriate. We noted in our Audit Strategy Memorandum that our risk assessment in respect of our VFM work was not complete; following completion of this risk assessment, we did not identify any significant risks of weaknesses in arrangements.

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We would also like to express our thanks for the assistance of your team during our audit.

If you would like to discuss any matters in more detail, then please do not hesitate to contact me on 0774 776 4529.

Yours faithfully


Mark Kirkham (Nov 20, 2023 09:36 GMT)

Mark Kirkham
Partner
MAZARS LLP

Mazars LLP
5th Floor
3 Wellington Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

01

Section 01:
Executive summary

1. Executive summary

Principal conclusions and significant findings

The detailed scope of our work as your appointed auditor for 2022/23 is set out in the National Audit Office's (NAO) Code of Audit Practice. Our responsibilities and powers are derived from the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and, as outlined in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, our audit has been conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and means we focus on audit risks that we have assessed as resulting in a higher risk of material misstatement.

In section 4 of this report we have set out our conclusions and significant findings from our audit. This section includes our conclusions on the audit risks and areas of management judgement in our Audit Strategy Memorandum, which include:

- management override of controls (Council and Group);
- valuation of Local Government Pension Scheme obligation; and
- valuation of property, plant and equipment (Council only).

Section 5 sets out internal control recommendations and section 6 sets out audit misstatements. Section 7 outlines our work on the Council's arrangements to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Status and audit opinion

We have substantially completed our audit in respect of the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023, other than the areas listed on page 7. We will provide an update to you in relation to the matters outstanding through issuance of a follow-up letter.

Subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the remaining audit work, we have the following conclusions:



Audit opinion

We anticipate issuing an unqualified opinion, without modification, on the financial statements, subject to the conclusion of matters outstanding, as listed on page 7. Our proposed audit opinion is included in the draft auditor's report in Appendix B.



Value for money arrangements

We are yet to complete our work in this area; we anticipate having no significant weaknesses in arrangements to report in relation to the arrangements that the Council has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Further detail on our work is provided in section 7 of this report.



Whole of Government Accounts (WGA)

We have received the Group Audit Instructions and have completed our assessment for the Council which falls below the threshold whereby detailed work is required; therefore, we will submit the required assurance statement to the National Audit Office in line with the deadline.



Wider powers








The 2014 Act requires us to give an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and to consider any objection made to the accounts. No questions or objections have been received.

02

Section 02: Status of the audit

2. Status of the audit

Our work is substantially complete; there are currently no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinion, subject to completion of work in the areas detailed below.

Audit area	Status	Description of the outstanding matters	
Net defined benefit pension scheme position		Consideration of the net pensions asset. Receipt and consideration of assurance from the Pension Fund auditor.	 Likely to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements.
Short-term investments		Outstanding external confirmations for two short-term investment balances.	 Potential to result in material adjustment or significant change to disclosures within the financial statements.
IT General Controls		Completion of work in relation to the Council's IT General Controls.	 Not considered likely to result in material adjustment or change to disclosures within the financial statements.
Closing procedures		Review of the revised financial statements and consideration of any post balance sheet events. Technical team review of the revised financial statements. Engagement Partner final review.	

03

Section 03: Audit approach

3. Audit approach

Changes to our audit approach

We provided details of our intended audit approach in our Audit Strategy Memorandum in September 2023. We have not made any changes to our audit approach since we presented our Audit Strategy Memorandum.

Materiality

Our provisional materiality at the planning stage of the audit was set at £16.172 million for the Group and £15.324 million for the Council using a benchmark of 2% of gross operating expenditure.

Our final assessment of materiality, based on the final financial statements is £16.234 million and £15.629 million for the Group and Council respectively, using the same benchmark.

Use of experts

Changes to our planned approach since issuing our Audit Strategy Memorandum are shown in *italics below*.

Item of account	Management's expert	Our expert
Defined benefit pension scheme net position	AON Hewitt (Actuary)	Report commissioned by the National Audit Office from PwC in respect of actuaries nationally.
Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)	Internal Valuer	We consider relevant information available from third parties.
Shared Waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI) facility	Hilco Appraisal Ltd	We have engaged our own internal valuation expert to review the assumption that the movement in the value of the shared waste facility is not material between years.
Financial instrument disclosures	Link Asset Services	No expert required.

3. Audit approach

Group audit approach

Our group audit approach remains unchanged.

Group component	Approach adopted	Key points or other matters to report
Sunderland City Council (the parent)		The Council has disclosed the financial performance of its interests in other entities in Note 32 Related Parties.
Together for Children (TIC)		Full scope audit – reliance on the component auditor, Robson Laidler LLP.
Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership (SLP)		Specified audit procedures in respect of the consolidation adjustments for the leisure assets, due to them being valued on a different basis in the component's accounts. Note 32 sets out the additional support provided to SLP in 2022/23. No reliance on component auditor as the consolidation adjustments are calculated by the Council for Group purposes and we carry out work in respect of those adjustments at the Group level. Component auditor is Mazars LLP, assessment of potential threats per Appendix C.
Sunderland Care and Support Limited (SCAS)		No matters to report.
Siglion Ltd		No matters to report.
IAMP (International Advance Manufacturing Park) LLP		No matters to report.

Full audit
Performance of an audit of the component's financial information prepared for group reporting purposes using component materiality

Audit of balances and/or disclosures
Performance of an audit of specific balances and/or disclosures included in the component's financial information prepared for group reporting purposes, using component materiality

Specific audit procedures
Performance of specific audit procedures on the component's financial information

Review procedures
Review of the component's financial information prepared for group reporting purposes using the component materiality assigned

Desktop analytical review procedures
Desktop analytical review procedures carried out on non-significant consolidated components

04

Section 04: Significant findings

4. Significant findings

In this section we outline the significant findings from our audit. These findings include:

- our audit conclusions regarding other significant risks and key areas of management judgement outlined in the Audit Strategy Memorandum;
- our comments in respect of the accounting policies and disclosures that you have adopted in the financial statements. On page 15 we have concluded whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework and commented on any significant accounting policy changes that have been made during the year;
- any further significant matters discussed with management; and
- any significant difficulties we experienced during the audit.

Significant risk – management override of controls

Management override of controls	Description of the risk
	<p>This is a mandatory significant risk on all audits due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur.</p> <p>Management at various levels within an organisation are in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of their ability to manipulate accounting records and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively. Due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur there is a risk of material misstatement due to fraud on all audits.</p>
	<p>How we addressed this risk</p> <p>We addressed this risk by carrying out audit work in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accounting estimates impacting amounts included in the financial statements; • consideration of identified significant transactions outside the normal course of business; and • journals recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in preparation of the financial statements.
	<p>Audit conclusion</p> <p>There are no significant issues arising from our work that we are required to report to you.</p>

4. Significant findings – significant risk: net defined benefit liability (pensions)

Net defined benefit scheme position	Description of the risk
	<p>The financial statements contain material pension entries in respect of the retirement benefits. The calculation of these pension figures, both assets and liabilities, can be subject to significant volatility and includes estimates based upon a complex interaction of actuarial assumptions. This results in an increased risk of material misstatement.</p>
	<p>How we addressed this risk</p>
	<p>We:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critically evaluated the Council's arrangements (including relevant controls) for making estimates in relation to pension entries within the financial statements; • challenged the reasonableness of the Actuary's assumptions that underpin the relevant entries made in the financial statements, through the use of an expert commissioned by the National Audit Office; • critically assessed the competency, objectivity and independence of the Actuary; • liaised with the auditors of the Pension Fund to gain assurance that the overall IAS19 procedures and controls in place at the Pension Fund are operating effectively; • compared assumptions to expected ranges, using information provided by the consulting actuary engaged by the National Audit Office; • agreed data in the Actuary's valuation report for accounting purposes to the relevant accounting entries and disclosures in the Council's financial statements; and • critically reviewed the component auditor's work in respect of Together for Children's net pensions liability which is consolidated in the group financial statements.
	<p>Audit conclusion</p>
	<p>We critically reviewed the consolidated pensions net (liability) / asset for Together for Children (TfC) and Sunderland Care and Support (SCAS) and challenged management in respect of variances.</p>
	<p>We noted the significant decrease in net pension liabilities for the Council, TfC and SCAS, which is consistent with significant decreases seen elsewhere. Both the Council and SCAS have net pension assets, whereas there is a net pensions liability for TfC, with TfC having a different membership profile.</p>
	<p>We assessed the calculation of the asset ceiling, as compared to the net pensions asset recognised by the Council and SCAS; this is because of the requirement, where a net pensions asset is recognised, to assess whether any restriction on the surplus is required.</p>
	<p>Our work is on-going, with the following key areas outstanding:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical review of the net pension (liability) / asset calculation; and • receipt and consideration of the assurance from the Pension Fund auditor.
	<p>We will provide an update on outstanding matters to the Committee via our formal follow-up letter, which will include an updated summary of misstatements, if required.</p>

4. Significant findings – significant risk: valuation of property, plant and equipment

Valuation of property, plant and equipment (PPE)	Description of the risk
	<p>The financial statements contain material entries on the balance sheet as well as material disclosure notes in relation to the Council's holding of property, plant and equipment (including the Council's PFI shared waste facility). The Council employs valuation experts to provide information on valuations, however, there remains a high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with the (re)valuations of property, plant and equipment (PPE) due to the significant judgements and number of variables involved.</p>
	<p>How we addressed this risk</p>
	<p>We:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">critically assessed the Council's arrangements for ensuring that property, plant and equipment valuations are reasonable and not materially misstated;critically assessed the basis of valuations, using third party trend data where appropriate, as part of our challenge of the reasonableness of the valuations provided by Valuers, including the PFI shared waste facility;considered the competence, skills and experience of the Valuers and the instructions issued to the Valuers;substantively tested capital expenditure additions and disposals during the year;substantively tested the Council's property, plant and equipment to gain assurance that they exist and are owned by the Council;substantively tested revaluations, including critically reviewing the Council's own consideration of assets not revalued in the year and why they are not materially misstated;carried out procedures to gain assurance over the consolidation adjustments for group accounts which impact on property, plant and equipment and associated financial statement areas, andwhere necessary, performed further audit procedures on individual assets to ensure the basis of valuations is appropriate.
	<p>Audit conclusion</p>
	<p>We critically reviewed valuations; as part of our substantive testing, we identified a small number of errors:</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">one asset was understated in the asset register by £0.925 million, due to the use of an earlier draft of the valuation report;we disagreed with the Valuer's assessment that one asset had an obsolescence factor of 0%, which we deemed too low as asset has been operational since 2020, resulting in an overstatement of the asset by £0.359 million; andone asset valuation used the incorrect index, resulting in the asset being overstated by £0.225 million.
	<p>The net impact of these three errors is £0.341 million, which is below our triviality threshold.</p>
	<p>Overall, there have been no significant issues arising from our testing that we are required to report to you, and we have obtained the assurance sought.</p>

4. Significant findings

Qualitative aspects of the Council's accounting practices

We have reviewed the Council's accounting policies and disclosures and concluded they comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

Draft financial statements were received from the Council on 6 July 2023 and were of a good quality, supported by comprehensive working papers. The finance team has again worked closely with us and has been very responsive in addressing queries throughout the audit period. The platform used for sharing working papers and logging queries has again facilitated the smooth completion of the audit.

Significant matters discussed with management

Assurance was obtained in respect of the matters detailed below, with issues arising summarised in the referenced sections, subject to completion of outstanding work.

Pensions

We discussed with management the revision to the 2021/22 accounts made in May of this year, as a result of the triennial valuation of the Pension Fund. We critically reviewed the 2022/23 net pensions asset disclosed by the Council and Group as at 31/3/23, which has significantly decreased compared to the prior year; see further commentary under the significant risks section.

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Shared Waste PFI Facility

We discussed with management the valuation of the shared waste facility, which was not revalued as at 31/3/23; the Council considered whether there was any indication of material misstatement and satisfied itself there was not. We reviewed the Council's assessment and considered it to be reasonable.

Newcastle Airport Shares

We noted from our 2022/23 audit work there has been no movement in the £16.508m valuation of the Airport shares accounted for in the Council's financial statements at 31 March 2023. Officers critically considered the future-looking projections for the Airport and this did not indicate a material movement since the previous valuation, therefore, the Council's judgement was that the valuation remained appropriate. Our review of the valuation and evidence provided by Council officers supported this assumption.

Litigation and claims

We discussed with management whether there was any new litigation or claims which could give rise to liabilities for the Council. We also made enquiries of officers in respect of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) being present in any Council-owned buildings and obtained assurance that there was no

indication of any material issues affecting the Council's assets.

Group financial statements

Our initial review of the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) included in the 2022/23 financial statements identified some highly material and unusual variances for both gross income and gross expenditure. Upon further review, these were because of formulae errors in the underlying group consolidation working paper, rather than being 'true' variances. We note there was no 'net' impact on the Group net cost of services. We discussed this matter with the finance team who immediately addressed this.

IT

We followed-up with management IT internal control recommendation raised as part of the 2021/22 audit; several have not yet been fully addressed so they remain 'open' recommendations; see further detail in section 5 of this report.

Significant difficulties during the audit

During the course of the audit we did not encounter any significant difficulties and we have had the full co-operation of management.

Wider responsibilities

Our powers and responsibilities under the 2014 Act are broad and include the ability to:

- issue a report in the public interest;
- make statutory recommendations that must be considered and responded to publicly;
- apply to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law; and
- issue an advisory notice under schedule 8 of the 2014 Act.

We have not exercised any of these powers as part of our 2022/23 audit. The 2014 Act also gives rights to local electors and other parties, such as the right to ask questions of the auditor and the right to make an objection to an item of account. No such objections have been raised.

05

Section 05: Internal control recommendations

5. Internal control recommendations

The purpose of our audit was to express an opinion on the financial statements. As part of our audit we have considered the internal controls in place relevant to the preparation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures to allow us to express an opinion on the financial statements but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal controls or to identify any significant deficiencies in their design or operation.

The matters reported are limited to those deficiencies and other control recommendations that we have identified during our normal audit procedures and that we consider to be of sufficient importance to merit being reported. If we had performed more extensive procedures on internal controls we might have identified more deficiencies to be reported or concluded that some of the reported deficiencies need not in fact have been reported. Our comments should not be regarded as a comprehensive record of all deficiencies that may exist or improvements that could be made.

Our findings and recommendations are set out below. We have assigned priority rankings to each of them to reflect the importance that we consider each poses to your organisation and, hence, our recommendation in terms of the urgency of required action. In summary, the matters arising fall into the categories detailed hereafter.

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2022/23 internal control recommendations

We have raised the following internal control recommendations in respect of 2022/23:

- evidencing lease agreements **(medium)**
- evidencing approval for new loans **(low)**
- access to journal posting **(low)**

2021/22 internal control recommendations – follow-up

We have documented our follow-up of prior year recommendations in this section, namely:

- infrastructure, and useful economic lives per asset register **(medium priority)**
- back-up restorations for SAP **(medium)**
- management user access reviews for SAP **(low)**
- complexity requirements for password configuration on SAP **(low)**
- disaster recovery tests for SAP **(low)**

Priority ranking	Description	Number of issues (current year)
1 (high)	In our view, there is potential for financial loss, damage to reputation or loss of information. This may have implications for the achievement of business strategic objectives. The recommendation should be taken into consideration by management immediately.	0
2 (medium)	In our view, there is a need to strengthen internal controls or enhance business efficiency. The recommendations should be actioned in the near future.	1
3 (low)	In our view, internal controls should be strengthened in these additional areas when practicable.	2

5. Internal control recommendations

Deficiencies in internal control – Level 2

Description of deficiency – evidencing lease agreements

Sample testing of leases included one short-term lease where the lease agreement was not readily available. In addition, sample testing also identified an error, being the annual rental income incorrectly input to the Council schedule used to calculate operating lease disclosures.

Potential effects

Risk of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Recommendation

Review all leases and ensure they are supported by lease agreements, and the correct amount is recorded on the operating lease schedule.

Management response

The lease agreement which was not readily available relates to an asset which is managed by an external property management company. The Council will review all records to ensure that all lease agreements are held on the Council's asset management system. A full review of annual rental amounts has already been undertaken and all details held are now appropriate.

5. Internal control recommendations

Deficiencies in internal control – Level 3

Description of deficiency – evidencing approval for new loans

One loan only was taken out in 2022/23, with the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB); our walkthrough of the loans system identified that no written decision sheet was retained to evidence this.

Where decisions to borrow are made, documentary evidence (e.g. a clear email trail or paper trail in the form of a Decision Sheet) is normally retained. The loan walked-through here was the only one taken out in 2022/23 and alternative evidence to show subsequent scrutiny and approval of the loan was noted

Potential effects

Risk of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Recommendation

Management should ensure that, where a decision is taken verbally to undertake new borrowing, this is supported by contemporaneous documentary evidence, for example, a completed, signed-off Decision Sheet (or similar) and/or an email trail.

Management response

This one loan was taken out in exceptional circumstances in order to secure funding at an attractive rate within a very tight timescale. Senior officers did approve the loan verbally.

We will ensure that all future decisions are fully supported by documentary evidence.

Description of deficiency – inappropriate access for journal posting

As part of our walkthrough of the general ledger, it was noted that one non-finance person was posting journals, namely re-coding car leasing payments from revenue to the balance sheet. Whilst no errors have been identified, we discussed with the Council these journals and we understand they plan to ensure these journals are to be done by the finance team going forward.

Potential effects

Risk of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Recommendation

Ensure journals are posted only by authorised/appropriate staff.

Management response

Action has already been taken to review which staff are posting journals and address any inappropriate use of journals.

5. Internal control recommendations

Follow-up of prior year deficiencies in internal control – Level 2

Description of deficiency – infrastructure

As part of audit work on infrastructure earlier in 2023, it was noted that amendments were required to useful economic lives for different categories of infrastructure (e.g. roads). We note the Council plans to revise its fixed asset register for 2022/23, based on the infrastructure useful economic lives calculated as part of this exercise.

Potential effects

Misstatement of infrastructure.

Recommendation

The Council should amend its fixed asset register for 2022/23, to reflect the infrastructure exercise carried out and the resulting amendments to infrastructure useful economic lives, plus amend for derecognised assets.

The Council should also amend its accounting policy for infrastructure to reflect the revised useful economic lives, by category.

Management response

Agreed.

2022/23 follow-up

Based on our work in 2022/23, the above recommendation has been actioned.

Description of deficiency – back-up restoration test for SAP

It was noted that back-up restoration test was not performed during the audit reporting period (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

Potential effects

In the event of a data loss, the Council will not have the ability to restore critical data continue with business as usual in a timely manner.

Recommendation

Management should ensure that data restoration tests are performed on a regular basis.

Management response

Recovery is periodically tested when implementing change backout plans, which utilise server snapshots. The daily backups are verified daily via the platforms built-in validation tools, but no test restores are carried out. Treatment recommendation to introduce test restores and resource requested to investigate options.

2022/23 follow-up

Oracle Solaris restore testing is conducted as part of post change testing when the backup solution is updated, in order to confirm success of change.

The next backup platform upgrade process is scheduled for W/C 13th November, including test restores of "Oracle Solaris" databases as part of post change testing.

Last tests were May and November 2023.

Status following 2022/23 audit

Recommendation now 'closed'.

5. Internal control recommendations

Follow-up of prior year deficiencies in internal control – Level 3

Description of deficiency – user access reviews on SAP

It was noted that management does not perform user access reviews on SAP.

Potential effects

User access review is a detective control and in the absence of the effective control discrepancies in the users' access on underlying applications might go unnoticed and corrective actions might not be taken in a timely manner.

Recommendation

Management should ensure that users' access is reviewed on a periodic basis.

Management response

There will be a Monthly Operation board with the business to discuss the contents and format of the review of user access, so it meets the business's needs.

2022/23 follow-up

User account and permission reports are currently provided on request from business owners

Reports for review aren't currently provided on a schedule. The option to include this as a scheduled report will be presented to the upcoming SAP board.

Status following 2022/23 audit

Recommendation remains 'open'.

Description of deficiency – password complexity configuration on SAP

The password configuration does not include the complexity requirement.

Potential effects

Weak authentication mechanisms facilitate brute force attacks and password guessing.

Recommendation

In order to ensure access is appropriately restricted, and avoid compromising the confidentiality and integrity of data, we recommend strengthening the application password restrictions, taking into account industry best practice.

Management response

There will be a Monthly Operation board with the business to reviewing passwords complexity - looking to see if "Single Sign On" is an option within SAP or ways to improve security and user experience.

2022/23 follow-up

Internal ICT Risk Assessment conducted for SAP identity requirement.

Recommendation defined for SAP password policy, which was presented to the SAP board.

Recommendation accepted and currently being resourced for implementation

Recommendation was to align SAP password policy to Active Directory policy with the exception of the minimum password length.

In the absence of a technical control for minimum password length, an administrative control will be applied via guidance for staff on setting a strong secure password based on National Cyber Security Centre guidance, which is guidance adopted by the Council.

Status following 2022/23 audit

Recommendation remains 'open'.

5. Internal control recommendations

Follow-up of prior year deficiencies in internal control – Level 3

Description of deficiency – disaster recovery tests for SAP

It was noted that a Disaster Recovery (DR) Test were not performed during the audit reporting period (1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022).

Potential effects

'Business continuity issues, temporary or definitive unavailability of systems, partial or complete loss of data.

Recommendation

Management should ensure that the draft disaster recovery plan is formalised.

Management should ensure that the planned test proceeds and is tested on at least an annual basis.

Management response

A full disaster recovery test is provisionally scheduled for Q1 2023 and annually thereafter. The test in 2023 will be part of contract sign-off for the server and storage refresh work which is in progress. Dates for testing will need to be signed-off by the Chief Operators Group.

2022/23 follow-up

The infrastructure we have in place now supports testing with no perceivable service impact, therefore is no longer limited to an agreed annual full test. ICT has a scheduled DR test plan for infrastructure services.

Status following 2022/23 audit

Recommendation 'closed'.

06

Section 06: Summary of misstatements

6. Summary of misstatements

This section outlines the misstatements identified during the course of the audit, above the trivial threshold for adjustment of £0.487 million and £0.469 million for the Group and Council respectively.

- The first table overleaf outlines the misstatements that were identified during the course of our audit which management has assessed as not being material either individually or in aggregate to the financial statements and does not currently plan to adjust. There were no unadjusted misstatements from the prior year which had a brought forward impact in 2022/23.
- The second table outlines the misstatements that have been adjusted by management during the course of the audit.
- The table below summarises all errors.

Summary of unadjusted and adjusted misstatements

		Assets (£'000)	Liabilities (£'000)	Reserves (£'000)	Income Statement (£'000)
1	Unadjusted misstatements identified during the 2022/23 audit (see detail in table)	0	0	-1,575	1,575
-	Unadjusted misstatements identified during the 2021/22 audit which remain carried forward (none)	0	0	0	0
	Sub-total unadjusted misstatements: current year and prior year	0	0	-1,575	1,575
2	Adjusted misstatements (see detail in table)	0	0	0	0

6. Summary of misstatements

1. Unadjusted misstatements – current year

	Assets (£'000)	Liabilities (£'000)	Reserves (£'000)	Income Statement (£'000)
1				
Dr: Gross Income – Children's Services				1,575
Cr: General Fund – as at 31/03/2022			-1,575	
Being 2021/22 income included in 2022/23 in error; above the Council's de minimis level of £0.005 million, so should have been accrued for in 2021/22. Actual error £0.008 million, extrapolated error £1.575 million. N.b. error would have impacted upon the General Fund as at 31/3/22 only.				
2				
Dr: Gross Income – Dynamic City				4,260
Cr: Gross income – Vibrant City				-4,260
Being the misclassification of income in the Dynamic City portfolio line heading, when it should have been included in the Vibrant City portfolio line heading. Actual error £0.061 million, extrapolated error £4.260 million - no net impact on net cost of services.				
Total unadjusted misstatements – current year	0	0	-1,575	1,575

6. Summary of misstatements

3. Adjusted misstatements

	Assets	Liabilities	Reserves	Income Statement
	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)	(£'000)
1	Dr: Group gross income Cr: Group gross expenditure Dr: Group other operating expenditure – gross income Dr: Group financing and investment income and expenditure – gross income			377,024 -381,248 395 3,829
Being the incorrect signage in the group consolidation working paper formulae, resulting in intra group consolidation adjustments being added back, rather than deducted. Net nil impact. Impacts on most of the portfolio headings above net cost of services, plus several lines below.				
2	Dr: Group plant, property and equipment (PPE) Cr: Group short term debtors	8,742 -8,742		
Being the incorrect classification of Sigilon's Assets Under Construction balance as a current debtor, rather than PPE.				
3	Dr: Group provisions Cr: Group deferred tax	2,336 -2,336		
Being the incorrect classification of deferred tax on the Group balance sheet (no net impact).				
4	Dr: Gross income (Cabinet Secretary) Cr: Gross expenditure (Cabinet Secretary)			17,358 -17,358
Being the incorrect accounting for the Council Tax Energy Rebate non-discretionary grant from central government, which should have been accounted for on an 'agent' basis.				
5	Dr: Debtors - Payments in Advance Dr: Debtors - Other Local Authorities & Public Bodies Cr: Debtors - Central Government Bodies Cr: Debtors - NHS Bodies Cr: Debtors - Council subsidiaries Cr: Debtors - Other Entities & Individuals	1,844 8,951 -8,951 -49 -161 -1,634		
Being amendment to classification between the short-term debtors line headings (no net impact) due to errors in producing the disclosure note.				
Total adjusted misstatements (current year)		0	0	0

6. Summary of misstatements

Disclosure amendments

Audit work identified a number of amendments to disclosures. The most significant are summarised below, split into adjusted and unadjusted.

Adjusted disclosures

- **Note 3 – Critical Judgements in applying accounting policies:** the Council's judgements in relation to McCloud and cost management have been clarified.
- **Note 5 – Material items of income and expenditure:** narrative has been added to cross reference to other notes to ensure that all material items of income and expenditure are covered in this disclosure.
- **Note 25 – Reconciliation of Liabilities arising from Financing Activities:** various amendments to the disclosure note for accuracy.
- **Note 28 – Officers' Remuneration:** senior officers' remuneration – amendment to include the name and salary of an officer paid more than £0.150 million (required by underlying regulations); amendment to the prior year also.
- **Note 31 – Grant Income:** amendments between line headings (no net impact) for Disabled Facilities Grant which had been misclassified within the DHLUC line instead of DHSC.
- **Note 34 – Leases:** amendment to disclose sub-lease payments and any contingent rents (Council as Lessee, finance leases and corresponding sub-leases); mainly relating to City Hall and Keel Square Hotel.
- **Note 34 – Leases:** amendment to the value of lease payments due to an input error in the source leasing schedule – resulting amendment of £1.316 million (for the value due after five years). Extrapolated error included within unadjusted disclosures overleaf.
- **Note 37 – Termination Benefits:** amendment to classification between voluntary and compulsory; with four exits misclassified as voluntary instead of compulsory. Corresponding impact on the group disclosure.
- **Note 39 – Defined Benefit Pension Schemes:** comparator mortality assumptions (for 2021/22) have been updated. Amendment to long-term rate of return on assets for discretionary (unfunded) benefits.
- **Note 39 – Defined Benefit Pension Schemes:** narrative included in respect of the assumptions around the calculation of the asset ceiling.
- **Note 42 – Nature and Extent of Risk Arising from Financial Instruments:** amendment to the Council's maximum exposure to risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies from £299.050 million to £243.427 million. Comparator also included.
- **Note 42 – Nature and Extent of Risk Arising from Financial Instruments:** amendment to the table "Past due but not impaired amount for local taxation analysed by age".
- **Group balance sheet:** amendment to the net pensions liability as at 31/03/2022 by £47.010 million; no net impact as the amendment had already been included in the total, so a disclosure amendment only.
- **Group Note 3 – Group Property, Plant and Equipment:** amendment to group capital commitments from £0.595 million to £0.995 million.
- **Group Note 3 – Group Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE):** amendment to Sunderland Leisure Partnership PPE from £31.071 million to £32.254 million. Amendment also to depreciation from £2.366 million to £1.183 million (i.e. the Council's 50% share, rather than the full amount).
- **Group Note 3 – Group Property, Plant and Equipment:** amendment to the Siglilon LLP table for PPE from £22.667 million to £31.409 million.
- **Group Note 4 – Group Reserves (Pension Reserve):** amendment to the 'Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)' for 2021/22 from £229.878 million to £276.888 million to reflect the May 2023 pension amendments to the 2021/22 financial statements.

6. Summary of misstatements

Disclosure amendments - continued

Unadjusted disclosures

- Note 2 - Accounting standards issued but not yet adopted: the Council has disclosed IFRS 16 leases in this note, however, it is not technically required given implementation of this standard has been deferred until 2024/25.
- Note 34 – Leases: the value of disclosed lease payments (due after five years) is misstated by an extrapolated £3.406 million arising from testing which identified an incorrectly input lease value.

07

Section 07: Value for money arrangements

7. Value for money arrangements

Our approach

We are required to consider whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The National Audit Office issues guidance to auditors that underpins the work we are required to carry out and sets out the reporting criteria that we are required to consider. The reporting criteria are:

- **Financial sustainability** - how the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services.
- **Governance** - how the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks.
- **Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness** - how the Council uses information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services.

At the planning stage of the audit, we undertake work to understand the arrangements that the Council has in place under each of the reporting criteria and we identify risks of significant weaknesses in those arrangements. Although we describe this work as planning work, we keep our understanding of arrangements under review and update our risk assessment throughout the audit to reflect emerging issues that may suggest significant weaknesses in arrangements exist.

Where our risk-based procedures identify actual significant weaknesses in arrangements we are required to report these and make recommendations for improvement. Where such significant weaknesses are identified, we report these in the audit report.

The primary output of our work on the Council's arrangements is the commentary on those arrangements that forms part of the Auditor's Annual Report. We intend to issue the Auditor's Annual Report no later than three months after the auditor's report on the financial statements is signed.

Status of our work

We are yet to complete our work in respect of the Council's arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

At the time of preparing this report, we have not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements that require us to make a recommendation, however, we continue to undertake work on the Council's arrangements.

Our draft audit report at Appendix B outlines that we have not yet completed our work in relation to the Council's arrangements. As noted earlier, our commentary on the Council's arrangements will be provided in the Auditor's Annual Report no later than three months after the auditor's report on the financial statements is signed.

Appendices

A: Draft management representation letter

B: Draft audit report

C: Independence

D: Other communications

Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Mr Mark Kirkham
Partner
Mazars LLP

Date:

To be provided on letter-headed paper and not dated any earlier than one day before the auditor's report is signed. Please note this is a draft management representation letter, containing required representations up to and including 07 November 2023.

Sunderland City Council and Group - audit for year ended 31 March 2023

This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Sunderland City Council (the Council) and Group for the year ended 31 March 2023 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

I confirm that the following representations, to the best of my knowledge and belief, are made on the basis of enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience (and, where appropriate, inspection of supporting documentation) sufficient to satisfy ourselves that I can properly make each of the following representations to you.

My responsibility for the financial statements and accounting information

I believe that I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the true and fair presentation and preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

My responsibility to provide and disclose relevant information

I have provided you with:

- access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other material;
- additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- unrestricted access to individuals within the Council you determined it was necessary to contact in order to obtain audit evidence.

I confirm as Director of Finance (s151 officer) that I have taken all the necessary steps to make me aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you, as auditors, are aware of this information. As far as I am aware there is no relevant audit information of which you, as auditors, are unaware.

Accounting records

I confirm that all transactions that have a material effect on the financial statements have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements. All other records and related information, including minutes of all Council and committee meetings, have been made available to you.

Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Accounting policies

I confirm that I have reviewed the accounting policies applied during the year in accordance with Code and International Accounting Standard 8 and consider these policies to faithfully represent the effects of transactions, other events or conditions on the Council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

Accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value

I confirm that any significant assumptions used by the Council in making accounting estimates, including those measured at current or fair value, are reasonable.

Contingencies

There are no material contingent losses including pending or potential litigation that should be accrued where:

- information presently available indicates that it is probable that an asset has been impaired or a liability had been incurred at the balance sheet date; and
the amount of the loss can be reasonably estimated.

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There are no material contingent losses that should be disclosed where, although either or both the conditions specified above are not met, there is a reasonable possibility that a loss, or a loss greater than that accrued, may have been incurred at the balance sheet date.

There are no contingent gains which should be disclosed.

All material matters, including unasserted claims, that may result in litigation against the Council have been brought to your attention. All known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements have been disclosed to you and accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the Code and applicable law.

Laws and regulations

I confirm that I have disclosed to you all those events of which I am aware which involve known or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, together with the actual or contingent consequences which may arise therefrom.

The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that would have a material effect on the accounts in the event of non-compliance.

Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Fraud and error

I acknowledge my responsibility as Director of Finance (s151 officer) for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and error.

I have disclosed to you:

- all the results of my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud;
- all knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the Council involving:
 - management and those charged with governance;
 - employees who have significant roles in internal control; and
 - others where fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.

I have disclosed to you all information in relation to any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the Council's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Related party transactions

I confirm that all related party relationships, transactions and balances, have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Code and applicable law. I have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

Charges on assets

All the Council's assets are free from any charges exercisable by third parties except as disclosed within the financial statements.

Impairment review

To the best of my knowledge, there is nothing to indicate that there is a permanent reduction in the recoverable amount of the property, plant and equipment below their carrying value at the balance sheet date. An impairment review is, therefore, not considered necessary.

Future commitments

I am not aware of any plans, intentions or commitments that may materially affect the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities or give rise to additional liabilities.

Service concession arrangements

I am not aware of any material contract variations, payment deductions or additional service charges in 2022/23 in relation to the Council's PFI schemes that you have not been made aware of.

Appendix A: Draft management representation letter

Subsequent events

I confirm all events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the Code and applicable law, require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed. Should further material events occur after the date of this letter which may necessitate revision of the figures included in the financial statements or inclusion of a note thereto, I will advise you accordingly.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

I confirm I have disclosed to you the extent of RAAC in Council-owned buildings and to date, there is no indication of any significant issues.

Going concern

To the best of my knowledge there is nothing to indicate that the Council and Group will cease to continue as a going concern in the foreseeable future. The period to which I have paid particular attention in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis is not less than twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Unadjusted misstatements

I confirm that the effects of the uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, both individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole. **Please make sure an appendix is attached to the letter setting out unadjusted disclosures and misstatements.**

Yours faithfully

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51 Officer – Director of Finance

Signature:

Date:

Appendix B: Draft audit report

Independent auditor's report to the Members of Sunderland City Council

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Sunderland City Council ('the Council') and its subsidiaries and joint ventures ('the Group') for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund Statement, the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group Balance Sheet, the Group Cash Flow Statement and notes to the Council and Group financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council and the Group as at 31st March 2023 and of the Council's and the Group's expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities section of our report. We are independent of the Council and Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Director of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed and taking into account the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Director of Finance is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Appendix B: Draft audit report

Responsibilities of the Director of Finance for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Director of Finance's Responsibilities, the Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Director of Finance is also responsible for such internal control as the Director of Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Director of Finance is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, on the assumption that the functions of the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Director of Finance is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council and Group to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Based on our understanding of the Council and the Group, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the Local Government Act 2003 (and associated regulations made under section 21), the Local Government Finance Acts of 1988, 1992 and 2012, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements.

- help us identify instances of non-compliance with these laws and regulations, and in identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect to non-compliance, our procedures included, but were not limited to: inquiring with management and the Audit and Governance Committee, as to whether the Council is in compliance with laws and regulations, and discussing their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the Council and the Group which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

We evaluated the Director of Finance's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- making enquiries of management and the Audit and Governance Committee on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

Appendix B: Draft audit report

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management and the Audit and Governance Committee. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

We are also required to conclude on whether the Director of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. We performed our work in accordance with Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statement and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, and Supplementary Guidance Note 01, issued by the National Audit Office in February 2023.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Matter on which we are required to report by exception

We are required to report to you if, in our view, we are not satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We have not completed our work on the Council's arrangements. On the basis of our work to date, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023, we have not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We will report the outcome of our work on the Council's arrangements in our commentary on those arrangements within the Auditor's Annual Report. Our audit completion certificate will set out any matters which we are required to report by exception.

responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We are required under section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Appendix B: Draft audit report

Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the Members of Sunderland City Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 44 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed:

- the work necessary to issue our assurance statement in respect of the Council's Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack; and
- the work necessary to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

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Mark Kirkham
Partner
For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

5th Floor
3 Wellington Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

Date:

Appendix C: Independence

As part of our ongoing risk assessment, we monitor our relationships with you to identify any new actual or perceived threats to our independence within the regulatory or professional requirements governing us as your auditors.

We have identified the following potential threat to independence since issuing our Audit Strategy Memorandum:

Issue	Potential threat / safeguards
Mazars LLP is also the external auditor of one of the Council's joint ventures – Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership (SLP).	<p>Potential threat to auditor independence and associate safeguards in place are set out below:</p> <p>Self-review: the nature of this work is to provide an independent assurance report to the relevant external body. The engagement is entirely separate from the audit through a separate contract, and the team is a different team to the audit team.</p> <p>Self-interest: the fee for the external audit of SLP is not deemed to be material to SLP or Mazars. The fees are not contingent on any outcomes from the work.</p> <p>Management: The work does not involve Mazars making any decisions on behalf of management.</p> <p>Advocacy: the work does not involve Mazars advocating SLP to third parties.</p> <p>Familiarity: work is not deemed to give rise to a familiarity threat, and</p> <p>Intimidation: the nature of the work does not give rise to any intimidation threat from management to Mazars.</p> <p>The work is undertaken and led by a separate team, based from our Birmingham office.</p> <p>We do not place any reliance on the audit of SLP for the purposes of our audit of Sunderland City Council's group financial statements, based on our assessment of benchmarks, as detailed on page 10.</p>

Based on the above assessment, we remain independent.

Appendix D: Other communications

Other communication	Response
Compliance with laws and regulations	We have not identified any significant matters involving actual or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations. We will obtain written representations from management that all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements have been disclosed.
External confirmations	We have experienced some issues with respect to obtaining external confirmations, however, we have had the full cooperation of management.
Related parties	<p>We did not identify any significant matters relating to the audit of related parties.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management confirming that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. they have disclosed to us the identity of related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which they are aware; and b. they have appropriately accounted for and disclosed such relationships and transactions in accordance with the requirements of the applicable financial reporting framework.
Going concern	<p>We have not identified any evidence to cause us to disagree with the Director of Finance that Sunderland City Council will be a going concern, and, therefore, we consider that the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation of the financial statements.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management, confirming that all relevant information covering a period of at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements has been taken into account in assessing the appropriateness of the going concern basis of preparation of the financial statements.</p>

Appendix D: Other communications

Other communication	Response
<p>Subsequent events</p>	<p>We are required to obtain evidence about whether events occurring between the date of the financial statements and the date of the auditor's report that require adjustment of, or disclosure in, the financial statements are appropriately reflected in those financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.</p> <p>We will obtain written representations from management that all events occurring subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which the applicable financial reporting framework requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.</p>
<p>Matters related to fraud</p>	<p>We have designed our audit approach to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement due to fraud. In addition to the work performed by us, we will obtain written representations from management, and the Audit and Governance Committee, confirming that</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. they acknowledge their responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud; b. they have disclosed to the auditor the results of management's assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud; c. they have disclosed to the auditor their knowledge of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the entity involving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. management; ii. employees who have significant roles in internal control; or iii. others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements; and d. they have disclosed to the auditor their knowledge of any allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

Mark Kirkham, Partner

Mazars

5th Floor
3 Wellington Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP

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Mazars is an internationally integrated partnership, specialising in audit, accountancy, advisory, tax and legal services*. Operating in over 90 countries and territories around the world, we draw on the expertise of 40,400 professionals – 24,400 in Mazars' integrated partnership and 16,000 via the Mazars North America Alliance – to assist clients of all sizes at every stage in their development.

*where permitted under applicable country laws.

mazars



**Statement
of
Accounts

2022/2023**

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Narrative Statement

A published and audited Statement of Accounts is at the heart of ensuring proper accountability for the use of local and national taxpayers' money. We recognise, however, that the Council's Accounts can only tell part of the story. The Council needs to continue to demonstrate that it is aiming to operate to the highest standards of conduct in accordance with the principles of corporate governance and has a robust system of internal control in place.

In line with guidance issued by The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA), the Council has a well-established Audit and Governance Committee which carries out the role of an Audit Committee. The role of this Committee involves approving the Statement of Accounts, as well as reviewing arrangements for areas such as treasury management, risk management, the wider internal control environment and consideration of internal and external audit plans, progress reports and annual reports.

With regard to corporate governance, the Council considers an annual review of its Corporate Government arrangements, including the Local Code. The 2022/2023 review has been completed and was considered by the Chair and members of the Audit and Governance Committee in April 2023. The Code follows the framework recommended by CIPFA / SOLACE. The review assesses the Council's arrangements for compliance with the Code, which identifies the underlying principles of corporate governance - openness and inclusivity, integrity, and accountability – across the various dimensions of the Council's business. The review found that the Council's arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework. Although the Council's internal audit service had reduced capacity during 2022/2023, this was supplemented by additional, external resources, and therefore, this has not impacted on the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements for the year or the head of Internal Audit's ability to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Council's control arrangements. A small number of areas for improvement and development have been identified which will be acted upon during 2023/2024.

Within the Statement of Accounts, an Annual Governance Statement has been included, which confirms that there are sound systems of internal control in place. We will, however, continue to ensure action is taken where necessary to maintain and develop the system of internal control in the future.



Councillor Graeme Miller
Leader of the Council



Paul Wilson CPFA
Director of Finance

Dated: 29 November 2023

Narrative Statement

Introduction to Narrative Statement

The Narrative Statement provides information about Sunderland, the Council's performance and its Accounts. The narrative provides:

- a summary of both the non-financial and financial performance of the Council during 2022/2023 and focuses on the key matters that are of relevance to the readers of the Accounts; and
- a forward look at issues that will affect the Council's operation in 2023/2024 and beyond.

Financial Statements presented within the Statement of Accounts 2022/2023

The financial highlights noted in the Narrative Statement are reflected in the Statement of Accounts and Notes to the Accounts for 2022/2023.

The Accounts set out the Council's income and expenditure for the year, and its financial position as at 31 March 2023. The format and content of the financial statements is prescribed by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/2023, which in turn is underpinned by International Financial Reporting Standards. Whilst the format of the accounts does not reflect the way we monitor and present information during the year, the accounts are fully reconciled to our in-year results.

The financial statements required to be prepared under the Code are:

1. **Statement of Responsibilities** - This discloses the respective responsibilities of the Council and the Director of Finance.
2. **Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS)** - This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other unusable reserves.
3. **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement** - This statement shows the accounting costs in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. Authorities 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.
4. **Balance Sheet** - The Balance Sheet shows the value of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council at the year end. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by reserves held by the Council.
5. **Cash Flow Statement** - The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period.
6. **Notes** - The Notes to the financial statements have three significant roles, they:
 - present information about the basis of preparation of the financial statements and the specific accounting policies used;
 - disclose information that is required by the Code that is not presented elsewhere in the financial statements; and
 - disclose information that is not presented elsewhere in the financial statements but is relevant to their understanding.
7. **Collection Fund Statement** - The Collection Fund is a statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund for Council Tax and Business Rates. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and the distribution between the Council, its precepting bodies and the Government.
8. **Group Accounts** - The Group Accounts present the financial statements and associated notes for the Council together with its subsidiaries and joint ventures.

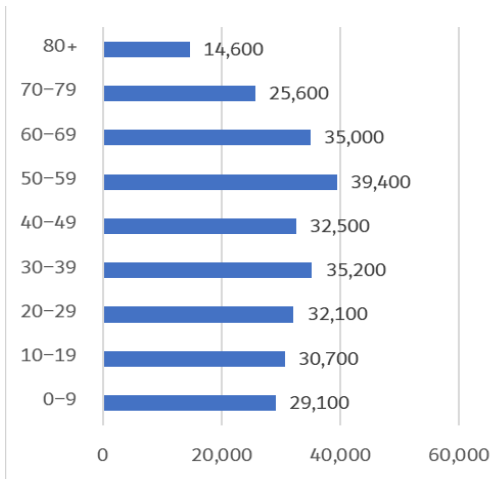
ABOUT SUNDERLAND

5 UNIQUE SUB AREAS,
25 WARDS

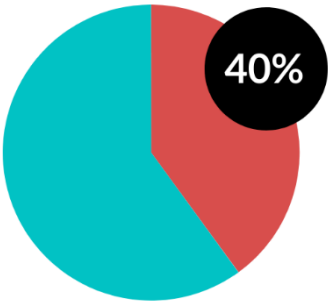


- 53 SQUARE MILES
- RIVER PORT & COASTLINE
- CITY CENTRE WITH AN URBAN CORE OF 180 HECTARES
- 2 MAJOR RETAIL SUB-CENTRES IN WASHINGTON & HOUGHTON, COALFIELD
- MORE THAN 50% GREENFIELD LAND

POPULATION BY AGE



POPULATION
274,200



40% OF LOCAL AREAS
IN SUNDERLAND ARE
AMONGS THE MOST
DEPRIVED IN ENGLAND

Our vision for Sunderland is for a connected, international city with opportunities for all. Our ambitions are set out in our City Plan, focusing on a **dynamic, healthy** and **vibrant** smart city. Under these three themes we pledge our commitments, along with a Timeline of Activity to achieve our ambitions. Key achievements for 2022/2023 are set out in the following section, based on latest available data.

Narrative Statement



A DYNAMIC SMART CITY

- a lower carbon city with greater digital connectivity for all
- more and better jobs
- more local people with better qualifications and skills
- a stronger city centre with more businesses, housing and cultural opportunities
- more and better housing.



790 jobs created through businesses receiving support from the Council's Business Investment Team (2022/2023).

Advanced **Digital Infrastructure Deployment** continued, and Digital Catapult affordable warmth test bed delivered



36% of all council spend on suppliers and services spent in the local economy and 64% in the regional economy. £21,434,569 of social value secured through procurement (2022/2023).



Digital ambition being realised with digital (self-serve) customer contact at **55%** and instances of access to public Wi-Fi up at **72,899** for 2022/2023.

Hillthorn Business Park Phase 1 developed, and the Yard **Business Hub** opened



CO2 emissions estimates for Sunderland have continued to reduce year on year – down to **3.7** tonnes per resident (2020), below England (at 4.3) and the North East (at 4.7).



More new homes built – **1,037** new homes built in 2022/2023.



24 major planning applications approved for non-housing and **23** for housing (2022/2023).

Sunderland became a **Real Living Wage** city



Narrative Statement



A HEALTHY SMART CITY

- reduced health inequalities enabling more people to live healthier longer lives
- access to equitable opportunities and life chances
- people enjoying independent lives
- great transport links with low carbon and active travel opportunities for all
- a cleaner and more attractive city and neighbourhood.



Local data shows that **99.5%** of new birth visits and **98.3%** of 2-2½ year-old reviews were within timescale at the end of March 2023.

Sunderland City Council signed up to the **Mental Health Prevention Concordat**



98.2% of people aged 18 or over live independently, without social care services (March 2023).



33 businesses in Sunderland hold a Better Health at Work Award 2022/2023.



3,379 homes with assisted technology supporting independent living (March 2023).



An additional **708** people signed up to the Sunderland Step Up programme in 2022/2023 – promoting increased physical activity.



100% of schools engaged in the Active School Charter (March 2023).



8,425 participants taking part in Active Sunderland Big Events (2022/2023).

Increased walking and cycling routes linking communities to the city centre riverside, seafront and green spaces.

5,929 metres of new adopted paths / footways and **3,860 metres** of new / improved cycleways (2022/2023).



New sport and physical activity opportunities.

Launch of the **SWIM BIKE RUN** programme

Hosted the **British Triathlon Super Series**, **Tour of Britain** cycling stage 3 finish and the **Tour Series 2022** cycling Round 3.



Narrative Statement



● more resilient people ● more people feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods
● more residents participating in their local communities ● more people visiting Sunderland and more residents participating in cultural events, programmes and activities.



67 welcoming warm spaces open. (March 2023)



Engagement with Sunderland UK social media increased with **29,588** Facebook and **42,054** Twitter followers (March 2023).



86% of early help cases referred to our Children's Services closed with successful outcomes (2022/2023).

World class music events staged in the city including **Ed Sheeran** and **Elton John**.



8,938 people supported with benefits / debt issues (2022/2023).



34 retailers engaged in the responsible retailer's scheme and 80 intelligence led disruption activities carried out in relation to licensing (2022/2023).

Visitors continuing to enjoy our cultural venues & activities including:

- **320,649** visits to the Empire Theatre.
- **238,848** visits to the Arts Centre.
- **270,964** visits to the Museum & Winter Gardens.
- **121** activities delivered by the Heritage Partnership (2022/2023)



People enabled to support 15 local projects / causes financially, through the Crowdfund platform - raising **£366,355** (2022/2023).



Narrative Statement

FUTURE FOCUS

Following the publication of our City Plan in 2019, an annual review and assurance has been undertaken each year, to ensure that delivery remains focused on achieving the plan's vision and commitments, whilst taking account of the changing context of the world in which we live. The second annual assurance concluded that the plan remained relevant but given the significant focus on tackling global climate change, a related challenge to support the council's and city's commitments in respect of carbon neutrality was included (and adopted from 1st April 2022). The latest assurance recognised the impact of the cost-of-living crisis and a need to focus on resilience within our plan. It also recognised the significant achievements that have made on the delivery of the plan through the completion of the plan's Timeline Activity, and therefore the planned activity has been substantially refreshed to deliver outcomes to 2035.

We will work with our partners to ensure that:

- The city and its residents have the resilience to mitigate ongoing challenges, including the cost-of-living crisis, and emerge in a healthy and sustainable position.
- Sunderland offers the opportunities that families and individuals need to achieve their ambitions.
- Families are resilient and resourceful to respond to challenges and achieve the best possible outcomes for their children.
- Health and wellbeing outcomes are significantly improved.
- Sunderland City Centre will drive city-wide transformational economic growth with Riverside Sunderland clearly demonstrating our investment ambition.
- Residents' skills and qualifications enable them to secure good jobs matching the needs of employers in the city's key sectors.
- Sunderland will play its role in tackling the global challenge of climate change, working together across the city to be carbon neutral by 2040.

Narrative Statement

Financial Performance of the Council 2022/2023

The original estimated net revenue expenditure for 2022/2023 to be met from Government grants and local taxpayers was approved at £216.914m. The Council's Band D Council Tax was set at £1,589.59 for 2022/2023, inclusive of the Adult Social Care Precept. This represented a 1.99% Council Tax increase from the 2021/2022 Band D Council Tax level and a 1% Adult Social Care Precept increase. However, the Council again set the lowest Council Tax level in the North East region for 2022/2023, continuing the trend since Council Tax was introduced in 1993/1994.

Comprehensive budget monitoring is carried out during the year and is scrutinised through monthly challenge sessions with Directors with subsequent reporting to the Chief Executive, and monthly briefing sessions with Portfolio holders. The process is supplemented by formal budget monitoring reports which are made quarterly to the Council's Cabinet. These detail the outcome of the review of budgets and spending forecasts for both capital and revenue expenditure and include a review of certain other key financial items including Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators. Reporting during the financial year reflects robust financial management, continuing the Council's strong track record in this regard.

In overall terms, the Council achieved a surplus of £8.932m for the financial year, which has been transferred to reserves. The table below summarises the financial position for the year 2022/2023.

	Final Budget	Outturn	Variance Under / (Over) Spend
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Leader	797	681	116
Deputy Leader and Clean Green City	46,064	44,702	1,362
Cabinet Secretary	31,259	29,929	1,330
Children, Learning and Skills	85,032	87,923	(2,891)
Dynamic City	29,938	30,083	(145)
Healthy City	73,452	69,047	4,405
Vibrant City	13,656	13,286	370
Total Service (Delegated) Expenditure	280,198	275,651	4,547
Provision for Contingencies	(2,582)	0	(2,582)
Capital Financing Costs	27,285	15,559	11,726
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	(17,688)	(12,279)	(5,409)
Technical Adjustments	(61,336)	(61,336)	0
Levies	16,109	16,119	(10)
Hetton Town Council Precept	70	70	0
Less Grants	(25,141)	(25,650)	509
Total Net Expenditure	216,915	208,134	8,781
Revenue Support Grant	(28,974)	(28,974)	0
Retained Business Rates	(29,452)	(29,603)	151
Top Up Grant	(43,724)	(43,724)	0
Council Tax Requirement	(114,765)	(114,765)	0
Outturn	0	(8,932)	8,932
Establishment of / Transfer to Reserves	0	8,932	(8,932)
Final Outturn Position	0	0	0

Narrative Statement

The Council maintained a strong usable reserves position, the overall level of reserves being £213.675m at 31 March 2023 (£216.062m at 31 March 2022). Dependent on the future financial impact from inflationary pressures and the level of Government funding made available to support this, these reserves could come under greater strain than planned in the coming years.

Included within the usable reserves at 31 March 2023 is £7.188m of school balances (£9.782m at 31 March 2022). The Education Reform Act 1988 provides for the carry forward of individual school balances. These earmarked reserves are not for Council use and the level of the reserve, in accordance with the Code, forms part of the movement in General Fund Balances in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The General Fund balance was maintained at £12.000m as planned.

Further details can be found in the Council's Revenue Outturn report to Cabinet on 8 June 2023.

Balance Sheet Position

Net assets / total reserves have increased by £406.249m. Unusable reserves have increased by £408.636m, mainly due to re-measurement of the defined benefit pension asset / liability. Further details relating to unusable reserves and the net pension asset / liability can be found in Notes 21 and 39 respectively.

With the exception of the General Fund balance, all usable reserves are earmarked for specific purposes.

	Balance as at 31 March 2022 £m	Balance as at 31 March 2023 £m
Non-current assets	1,209	1,306
Net current assets	170	149
Long term liabilities and provisions	(987)	(657)
Net Assets	392	798
Represented by:		
Usable reserves	216	214
Unusable reserves	176	584
Total reserves	392	798

Financial Indicators

Financial indicators can be calculated to assess the efficiency of the Council and show whether it is delivering value for money.

Working Capital Ratio

The Working Capital Ratio indicates whether the Council has enough resources to cover its immediate liabilities (i.e. those liabilities to be met within the next year). A ratio of less than one indicates potential liquidity problems. The Council's ratio is currently 2.0 (2.1 at 31 March 2022) demonstrating a strong position.

Ratio of Long Term Borrowing to Long Term Assets

This ratio shows long term borrowing as a share of long-term assets. A ratio of more than one means that long term borrowing exceeds the value of long-term assets. The Council's ratio is 0.4 (0.4 at 31 March 2022), meaning that the Council has enough long-term assets to cover its long-term liabilities.

Usable Non-School Reserves to Gross Expenditure (Cost of Services)

This ratio shows the Council's reserves, which are available for use, as a proportion of gross revenue expenditure (excluding exceptional items relating to pensions (IAS19), including

Narrative Statement

those earmarked for specific purposes). A higher ratio indicates that the Council has a greater ability to fund unexpected pressures from available resources. The Council has non-school reserves equivalent to 26% of gross expenditure (26% at 31 March 2022), however, these are largely committed for specific purposes.

Capital Expenditure & Income and Major Acquisitions, Capital Works and Disposals during 2022/2023

The Council's capital expenditure for the year totalled £152.331m. Expenditure on non-current assets was £125.368m, whilst expenditure on intangible assets was £1.524m. The remainder of £25.439m represents loans, grants, and advances to other organisations for capital purposes, equity purchases and expenditure on property not owned by the Council.

Capital expenditure was financed as follows:

Project	Capital Financing £'000
Borrowing	74,901
Capital Receipts	6,373
Government Grants and other Contributions	62,924
Revenue Contributions from Reserves	8,133
Total	152,331

The Council is involved in several major capital projects. The main projects are listed below for information, and shows the amounts of expenditure incurred during 2022/2023, the total estimated gross cost of each project, and the status of the project at the end of this financial year.

Project	Expenditure During 2022/2023 £'000	Total Estimated Gross Cost £'000	Physically Completed / On-going at 31 March 2023
Sunderland Central Station Redevelopment & Car Park	15,186	35,565	Ongoing
Riverside Sunderland Multi-Storey Car Park	10,776	14,400	Ongoing
Strategic Acquisitions and Developments *	9,430	9,430	Complete
Housing Delivery Investment Plan	8,299	59,000	Ongoing
Riverside Sunderland Infrastructure	6,448	49,164	Ongoing
Sunningdale Primary School – New Build	5,374	14,773	Complete
SSGA – Ryhope Doxford Link Road	4,984	9,084	Complete
Hetton Primary School – New Build	4,646	8,079	Complete
Disabled Facilities Grants *	4,499	4,499	Complete
Refuse Collection Vehicle Replacement Programme	4,497	5,113	Ongoing
Barnes Junior School Refurbishment	3,906	5,585	Ongoing
Vaux Housing	3,860	52,767	Ongoing
Highways Maintenance *	3,598	3,598	Complete
Planned Property Capital Maintenance *	2,842	2,842	Complete

* These projects are a rolling programme of works, therefore, the total cost is the 2022/2023 spend only.

There were three asset sales for more than £0.500m. A sum of £2.744m was received in respect of land at Chapelgarth / Potters Hill. A sum was received of £1.750m in respect of

Narrative Statement

the former Civic Centre site at Burdon Road, and £1.048m in respect of the former Houghton Colliery site.

Council's Borrowing and Treasury Management Position

As part of the budget for 2022/2023, agreed at Council on 2 March 2022, borrowing limits were set for the year, with Prudential Indicators set as required by the Prudential Code. The limits for 2022/2023 were as follows:

- Authorised Limit for External Debt of £1,082.658m; and
- Operational Boundary for External Debt of £1,057.658m.

These limits have not been exceeded during 2022/2023.

The performance of the Council's treasury management function continues to make a positive contribution to the financial position of the Council. The average rate of interest payable on the Council's borrowing in 2022/2023 is 2.55%, which is low and the Council's treasury management advisor reports this compares favourably with their other local authority clients. The rate of return achieved on investments was 2.16%. This represents a good achievement, especially when short-term investment rates remained turbulent throughout the year due to global economic uncertainties.

Group Accounts

The Council delivers some of its activities through a number of wholly owned subsidiaries and joint ventures. The financial performance of the Council presented earlier includes the outturn position of the Council and all group activities to reflect the full extent of the Council's economic activity and financial position. Group financial statements are produced to consolidate the results and balances of the Council with those organisations considered to be part of the group. The group and single entity accounts should be viewed with equal prominence.

The Group Balance Sheet position is:

	Balance as at 31 March 2022 £m	Balance as at 31 March 2023 £m
Non-current assets	1,236	1,348
Net current assets	218	177
Long term liabilities and provisions	(1,075)	(666)
Net Assets	379	859
Represented by:		
Usable reserves	216	214
Unusable reserves	215	622
Profit/(Loss) in subsidiaries and joint ventures*	(52)	23
Total Reserves	379	859

As with the Council's single entity Balance Sheet, net assets / total reserves have increased significantly due to re-measurement of the defined benefit pension assets / liabilities for the Council, Sunderland Care and Support and Together for Children.

Funding Context and Financial Planning

The Council has had to deal with significant reductions in its spending power since 2010, when the Government introduced its austerity measures. Reductions in Government funding has led to the Council's overall spending power reducing by over one third in real terms, despite increases in Council Tax levels. Difficult decisions have had to be taken, involving changes to the level and standard of services we deliver, transforming the way we deliver the remaining services, looking to increase income generation and ensuring our resources

Narrative Statement

are focused on statutory and priority services. When setting the 2022/2023 budget, Council Tax increases (including the Adult Social Care Precept) of 2.99% were necessary.

The budget setting process for 2023/2024 provided for some additional investment in services. However, in order to set a balanced budget further revenue savings of over £13.4m, utilisation of £9.0m of reserves, in addition to a 2.99% increase in Council Tax (including the Adult Social Care Precept) were still required. Significant demand and cost pressures remain within Adult and Children's Social Care as well as continued pressure on all areas of service delivery from increased levels of inflation. Full details of the budget for 2023/2024 are set out in the Budget Report to Council of 22 February 2023.

The Government has yet to publish indicative funding figures for councils beyond 2023/2024. Changes to retained Business Rates aligned to a fair funding review of Local Government funding has been awaited for some time, however, this continues to be delayed. The Government has indicated that the new fair funding formula and revised system of business rates for Local Government will be developed and consulted upon in the short to medium term. The economic impact of the pandemic, inflation and uncertainty of future funding arrangements poses a significant risk to the Council's financial position. The Council continues to plan as best it can through its Medium Term Financial Plan covering 2023/2024 to 2026/2027, and this will be reviewed and refined as budget planning progresses, and Government funding becomes clearer.

Four Year Capital Programme

The Council's capital programme supports a range of priorities in the City Plan but continues to have a focus on economic regeneration. The four-year programme from 2023/2024 to 2026/2027 totals £521m, including £54m of new start schemes. This will support the delivery of the key priorities in the City Plan.

The new starts proposals for 2023/2024 include investment in front-line services to residents across the City, including refuse collection, social care and other operational assets.

The funding of the Council's four-year Capital Programme is summarised in the table below:

Capital Expenditure and Funding	2023/2024 £m	2024/2025 £m	2025/2026 £m	2026/2027 £m	Total £m
Total Expenditure	268	128	102	23	521
Grants and Contributions	70	22	14	4	110
Capital Receipts	4	2	5	0	11
Reserves and Revenue	2	0	0	0	2
Borrowing	192	104	83	19	398
Total Funding	268	128	102	23	521

Full detail of the approved Capital Programme is set out in the Budget Report to Council of 22 February 2023.

Financial Risk Assessment

As part of the annual budget setting process, the Council undertakes an analysis of financial risks. Those risks deemed either likely or possible are:

- future available resources being less than notified. The MTFP is based on data as known, but this does not reflect any potential impact of the Government Fair Funding review and move to any alternative retained business rates system. This is likely to be a key impact on the level of funding available in the future;
- changes to Government policy;
- pay awards and price inflation are higher than assumed;
- future spending plans underestimated, including through increased social care demand;
- anticipated savings are not achieved;
- revenue implications of capital programme are not fully anticipated;

Narrative Statement

- income targets for Business Rates and Council Tax are not achieved;
- other miscellaneous income targets are not achieved; and
- exit strategies for external funding ceasing/tapering are not met.

The Council carefully manages these risks to ensure any potential impact will be mitigated appropriately. Further details can be found in the Revenue Budget Report to Council of 22 February 2023.

Conclusion

Whilst the Council faces ongoing financial challenges, these accounts demonstrate the scale of services which the Council delivers and confirm that the Council's resources are being managed on a prudent basis. Working with our partners, aligned with the City Plan, this provides a strong base for the future, to ensure we can deliver the services that our residents, businesses and visitors need.



Paul Wilson CPFA
Director of Finance

29 November 2023

Certification of the Statement of Accounts

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. For 2022/2023, that officer was the Director of Finance;
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets; and
- approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Director of Finance's Responsibilities

The Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Council'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 Director of Finance has:

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

The Director of Finance 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.

Authorised for Issue Date

The unaudited accounts were certified on 6 July 2023 and the audited accounts are now authorised for issue on 29 November 2023.

Certification of the Statement of Accounts

Certification of Statement of Accounts (subject to audit) by the Director of Finance

As the Council's Section 151 officer, I hereby certify that, in accordance with The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 (subject to audit) presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Sunderland City Council at 31 March 2023 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023.




Paul Wilson CPFA
Director of Finance

06 July 2023

Certification of Audited Statement of Accounts 2022/2023 on behalf of those charged with governance

As Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, I hereby acknowledge receipt of the audited Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 by this Committee, in accordance with The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and confirm that the Statement of Accounts was approved at the Audit and Governance Committee on 29 November 2023 in accordance with The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.



Mr. G. Cook
Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee

29 November 2023

Certification of audited Statement of Accounts by the Director of Finance

As the Council's Section 151 officer, I hereby re-certify the audited Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 in accordance with The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.



Paul Wilson
Director of Finance

29 November 2023

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Sunderland City Council

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on the financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of Sunderland City Council ('the Council') and its subsidiaries and joint ventures ('the Group') for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund Statement, the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group Balance Sheet, the Group Cash Flow Statement and notes to the Council and Group financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council and the Group as at 31st March 2023 and of the Council's and the Group's expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities section of our report. We are independent of the Council and Group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Director of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed and taking into account the requirements of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Director of Finance is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Responsibilities of the Director of Finance for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Director of Finance's Responsibilities, the Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Sunderland City Council

practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. The Director of Finance is also responsible for such internal control as the Director of Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The Director of Finance is required to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 and prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis, on the assumption that the functions of the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Director of Finance is responsible for assessing each year whether or not it is appropriate for the Council and Group to prepare its accounts on the going concern basis and disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Based on our understanding of the Council and the Group, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to the Local Government Act 2003 (and associated regulations made under section 21), the Local Government Finance Acts of 1988, 1992 and 2012, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements.

To help us identify instances of non-compliance with these laws and regulations, and in identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect to non-compliance, our procedures included, but were not limited to:

- inquiring with management and the Audit and Governance Committee, as to whether the Council is in compliance with laws and regulations, and discussing their policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;
- communicating identified laws and regulations throughout our engagement team and remaining alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout our audit; and
- considering the risk of acts by the Council and the Group which were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

We evaluated the Director of Finance's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to posting manual journal entries to manipulate financial performance, management bias through judgements and assumptions in significant accounting estimates and significant one-off or unusual transactions.

Our audit procedures in relation to fraud included but were not limited to:

- making enquiries of management and the Audit and Governance Committee on whether they had knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- gaining an understanding of the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud;
- discussing amongst the engagement team the risks of fraud; and
- addressing the risks of fraud through management override of controls by performing journal entry testing.

There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures described above and the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of irregularities including fraud rests with management and the Audit and Governance Committee. As with any audit, there remained a risk of non-detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations or the override of internal controls.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Sunderland City Council

We are also required to conclude on whether the Director of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate. We performed our work in accordance with Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statement and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, and Supplementary Guidance Note 01, issued by the National Audit Office in February 2023.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Report on the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Matter on which we are required to report by exception

We are required to report to you if, in our view, we are not satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2023. We have not completed our work on the Council's arrangements. On the basis of our work to date, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023, we have not identified any significant weaknesses in arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We will report the outcome of our work on the Council's arrangements in our commentary on those arrangements within the Auditor's Annual Report. Our audit completion certificate will set out any matters which we are required to report by exception.

Responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, to ensure proper stewardship and governance, and to review regularly the adequacy and effectiveness of these arrangements.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We are required under section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We have undertaken our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

We are required by the Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014;
- we make a recommendation under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we exercise any other special powers of the auditor under sections 28, 29 or 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Use of the audit report

This report is made solely to the members of Sunderland City Council, as a body, in accordance with part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 44 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the members of the Council those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Members of the Council, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Sunderland City Council

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have completed:

- the work necessary to issue our assurance statement in respect of the Council's Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack; and
- the work necessary to satisfy ourselves that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Mark Kirkham
Key Audit Partner
For and on behalf of Mazars LLP

5th Floor
3 Wellington Place
Leeds
LS1 4AP
Date:

Annual Governance Statement

Scope of Responsibility

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business, and that of its owned companies, is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. We also have a duty to continually review and improve the way in which functions are exercised.

We have put in place a local Code of Corporate Governance and a framework intended to make sure we do the right things, in the right way, for the right people. The Code is in line with the 2016 Framework issued by CIPFA. This Statement explains how the Council has complied with its Code in 2022/2023.

The Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values that direct and control our activities and through which we account to, engage with, and lead the community. The framework enables us to monitor the achievement of strategic objectives and priorities and to consider whether they have led to the achievement of appropriate, cost-effective outcomes.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The governance framework has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31st March 2023 and up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

The Governance Framework

The City Plan sets out the vision for the City until 2035. The intentions of the vision are set out as part of a Dynamic Smart, Healthy Smart and Vibrant Smart City. The City Plan sets out explicitly the Council's planned key actions and performance targets for the future.

The annual strategic planning process, engagement and participation with residents, needs analysis and demographic information ensure the Council's vision remains relevant and meets the needs of local communities. There are annual reviews of the Local Code of Corporate Governance to ensure that it is up to date and effective.

Arrangements are in place to measure the quality of services, to ensure they are delivered in line with our objectives and priorities and for ensuring that they provide value for money. There are performance management arrangements in place including regular reporting to the Chief Officer's Group and Scrutiny. Services are delivered by suitably qualified / trained / experienced staff and all posts have detailed job profiles / descriptions.

The roles and responsibilities of Council members and employees are clearly documented. The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates. It incorporates a delegation scheme, indicates responsibilities for functions and sets out how decisions are made. The Council's wholly owned companies have similar arrangements that set out how they will be governed.

The Constitution includes Rules of Procedure and a scheme of delegation which clearly define how decisions are taken and we have various Codes and Protocols that set out standards of behaviour for members and staff. Directorates have established delegation schemes, although these require regular updating to reflect ongoing organisational changes.

During the year a system of scrutiny was in place allowing the scrutiny function to:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the executive and/or any joint or area committee in connection with the discharge of any functions;
- consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
- exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the executive and/or area committees;
- consider Local Petitions and Councillor Calls for Action for matters within their terms of reference; and
- consider regular reports on the Council's performance against the City Plan.

A range of financial and people management policies and procedures are in place. Appropriate project management standards and Business Continuity Plans are in place. There are comprehensive budgeting

Annual Governance Statement

systems in place and a robust system of budgetary control, including formal quarterly and annual financial reports, which indicate financial performance against forecasts. There are clearly defined capital expenditure guidelines in place and procedures are in place to ensure that the Dedicated Schools Grant is properly allocated to and used by schools in line with the terms of grant given by the Secretary of State under section 16 of the Education Act 2002.

The Council's financial management arrangements conform to the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. The importance of compliance with this statement was also confirmed in Financial Management Code issued by CIPFA in 2019. The Director of Finance is designated Chief Finance Officer and fulfils this role through the following:

- Attendance at meetings of the Chief Officer Group, helping it to develop and implement strategy and to resource and deliver the Council's strategic objectives sustainably and in the public interest;
- Involvement in all material business decisions to ensure immediate and longer term implications, opportunities and risks are fully considered;
- Alignment of medium term business and financial planning processes;
- Leading the promotion and delivery of good financial management by the whole organisation so that public money is safeguarded and used appropriately, economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- Ensuring that the finance function is resourced to be fit for purpose.

The Council has an Audit and Governance Committee which, as well as approving the Council's Statement of Accounts, undertakes an assurance and advisory role to:

- consider the effectiveness of the Council's corporate governance arrangements, risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance that action is being taken on risk-related issues identified by auditors and inspectors;
- be satisfied that the Council's assurance statements, including the Annual Governance Statement, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it;
- receive and consider (but not direct) internal audit's strategy, plan and monitor performance;
- receive and consider the external audit plan;
- review a summary of internal audits, the main issues arising, and seek assurance that action has been taken where necessary;
- receive and consider the annual report of internal audit;
- consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies, including the Annual Audit Letter;
- ensure that there are effective relationships between external and internal audit, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and that the value of the audit process is actively promoted;
- review the external auditor's opinions and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit;
- review the adequacy of and compliance with, the Council's Treasury Management Policy; and
- make recommendations to Cabinet or Council as appropriate.

We have arrangements to ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful. The Assistant Director of Law and Governance is the Council's designated Monitoring Officer and a protocol is in place with all Chief Officers to safeguard the legality of all Council activities. All Cabinet Reports are considered for legal issues before submission to members.

Arrangements for whistle-blowing and for receiving and investigating complaints from the public are well publicised and subject to periodic review. We are committed to maintaining these arrangements to ensure that, where any individual has concerns regarding the conduct of any aspect of the Council's business, they can easily report their concerns. Monitoring records held by the Assistant Director of Law and Governance show that the whistle blowing arrangements are being used by both staff and the public, and that the Council is responding appropriately. The whistle blowing arrangements have assisted with the maintenance of a strong regime of internal control.

We have arrangements to identify the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles. The Council recognises that managing the performance of all of employees is key to ensuring that the organisation meets the needs of the community. This includes assessing ability against requirements of the role focusing on strengths and highlighting areas of weakness, job related training, and ongoing evaluation of the extent to which employees understand and support the values of the Council.

Channels of communication have been established with the community to promote accountability and encourage open consultation. We are committed to listening to, and acting upon, the views of the local community and carry out consultation in order to make sure that services meet the needs of local people.

Annual Governance Statement

The Council has arrangements in place for the consistent management of partnerships through a guidance and supporting documents for all Council employees to use when involved with partnerships and supporting arrangements have been in place throughout the year.

Contractual arrangements with our subsidiary companies set out challenging targets around use of resources and improved outcomes.

Review of Effectiveness

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of the effectiveness is carried out over the course of the year through the Integrated Assurance Framework. The review is informed by the Risk and Assurance Map which summarises assurances gathered from all available sources in relation to the Council and its wholly owned companies, and in particular:

- Assurances from Assistant Directors who have carried out self-assessments relating to their areas of responsibility;
- assurances from Chief Officers through completion of controls assurance statements;
- assurances from senior officers responsible for relevant specialist areas;
- internal audit planning processes which include consultation with all Chief Officers, and the results of audit activity as summarised in the Annual Governance Review report; and
- the external auditors (Mazars) opinion for 2021/2022 has not highlighted any significant issues to date.

The Assistant Director of Assurance and Property Services, as the Council's head of internal audit, has directed, co-ordinated and overseen the review and its findings and proposed improvements have been reported to the Chief Officers for their consideration and approval of the Annual Governance Statement.

The findings of the review have been reported to the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee in April 2023 to ensure that under their Terms of Reference the Committee has satisfied themselves that the Annual Governance Statement properly reflects the risk environment and any actions required to improve it before formal approval of the Statement of Accounts.

The outcome of the review of effectiveness provided the necessary assurance and that no significant issues across the Council or its wholly owned companies were identified.

We have been advised of the outcome of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework, and that the overall arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework. A small number of improvement actions have been set out in an agreed improvement plan.

We propose over the coming year to take steps to implement the improvement plan to further enhance the Council's governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in the review and we will monitor their implementation and operation as part of the next annual review.

Annual Governance Statement

Annual Governance Review - Improvement Plan for 2023/2024

Ref	Action	COG Lead	Timescale
1.	Finalise the management arrangements for services which have been temporarily transferred into Together for Children Ltd.	Director of Children Services	September 2023
2.	Ensure that Service Plans are in place for all services for 2023/2024.	All Executive Directors / Directors	June 2023



Councillor Graeme Miller
Leader of the Council



Patrick Melia CPFA
Chief Executive



Paul Wilson CPFA
Director of Finance

Dated: 29 November 2023

Financial Statements

Movement in Reserves Statement

This statement shows the movement from the start of the year to the end of the year on the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and 'unusable reserves'.

The Statement shows how the movement in year of the Council's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice, and the statutory adjustments required to return to the amounts chargeable to Council Tax for the year.

The Increase / Decrease line shows the statutory General Fund Balance movement in the year following those adjustments. The table below shows the details for both 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

	Notes	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Council Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2021		22,742	167,969	9,386	4,085	204,182	(13,124)	191,058
Movement in reserves during 2021/2022:								
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		(53,064)	0	0	0	(53,064)	253,698	200,634
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	7	62,747	0	337	1,860	64,944	(64,944)	0
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves		(10,643)	10,643	0	0	0	0	0
Increase / (Decrease) in 2021/2022		(960)	10,643	337	1,860	11,880	188,754	200,634
Balance at 31 March 2022		21,782	178,612	9,723	5,945	216,062	175,630	391,692
Movement in reserves during 2022/2023:								
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		(52,957)	0	0	0	(52,957)	459,206	406,249
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	7	49,794	0	1,020	(244)	50,570	(50,570)	0
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves		569	(569)	0	0	0	0	0
Increase / (Decrease) in 2022/2023		(2,594)	(569)	1,020	(244)	(2,387)	408,636	406,249
Balance at 31 March 2023		19,188	178,043	10,743	5,701	213,675	584,266	797,941

Financial Statements

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. Councils raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with statutory requirements, but this may be different from the accounting cost. The taxation position is shown in both the Expenditure and Funding Analysis and the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The statement is presented in line with the Council's Portfolio responsibilities which were in place between May 2022 and May 2023. 2021/2022 has been restated to reflect this structure and the detail of the changes can be found in Note 43. The roles and responsibilities of each Portfolio are detailed in the Council's Constitution.

2021/2022 (restated)				Notes	2022/2023		
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000			Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
3,211	(328)	2,883	Leader		3,842	(744)	3,098
49,576	(12,611)	36,965	Deputy Leader		53,574	(13,970)	39,604
190,319	(114,298)	76,021	Cabinet Secretary		152,473	(106,228)	46,245
220,839	(127,101)	93,738	Children, Learning and Skills		224,762	(127,153)	97,609
14,498	(2,769)	11,729	Vibrant City		15,809	(2,566)	13,243
182,719	(138,312)	44,407	Healthy City		189,125	(129,570)	59,555
60,994	(30,804)	30,190	Dynamic City		78,506	(39,261)	39,245
722,156	(426,223)	295,933	Cost of Services	8	718,091	(419,492)	298,599
15,236	(1,047)	14,189	Other operating expenditure	10	34,852	0	34,852
28,796	(3,499)	25,297	Financing and investment income and expenditure	11	28,508	(10,119)	18,389
0	(282,355)	(282,355)	Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure	12	0	(298,883)	(298,883)
766,188	(713,124)	53,064	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services		781,451	(728,494)	52,957
		(6,586)	(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets	21a			(32,856)
		(4,602)	(Surplus) or deficit from investments in equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	21b			0
		(242,510)	Re-measurements of the net defined benefit liability / (asset)	21e			(426,350)
		(253,698)	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure				(459,206)
		(200,634)	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure				(406,249)

Financial Statements

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value at 31 March of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. 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 (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt).

The second category of reserves, unusable reserves, is those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets were sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

31 March 2022 £'000		Notes	31 March 2023 £'000
1,103,886	Property, Plant and Equipment	13	1,180,003
12,823	Heritage Assets	14	12,986
3,399	Intangible Assets	-	3,791
0	Long Term Pensions Asset	15 / 39	20,960
29,372	Long Term Investments	15	29,376
60,005	Long Term Debtors	15	58,984
1,209,485	Long Term Assets		1,306,100
210,254	Short Term Investments	15	167,447
1,401	Inventories	-	1,489
72,590	Short Term Debtors	15 / 16	84,495
42,175	Cash and Cash Equivalents	15 / 18	50,581
326,420	Current Assets		304,012
(38,092)	Short Term Borrowing	15	(32,525)
(88,386)	Short Term Creditors	15 / 19	(75,475)
(7,364)	Short Term PFI and Finance Lease Liability	15	(7,900)
(912)	Short Term Provisions	20	(1,026)
(7,020)	Grant Receipts in Advance - Revenue	31	(3,986)
(15,325)	Grant Receipts in Advance - Capital	31	(34,461)
(157,099)	Current Liabilities		(155,373)
(476,524)	Long Term Borrowing	15	(525,533)
(376,290)	Long Term Pensions Liability	15 / 39	0
(124,538)	Long Term PFI and Finance Lease Liability	15	(123,554)
(9,762)	Long Term Provisions	20	(7,711)
(987,114)	Long Term Liabilities		(656,798)
391,692	Net Assets		797,941
216,062	Usable Reserves	9	213,675
175,630	Unusable Reserves	21	584,266
391,692	Total Reserves		797,941

Financial Statements

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the financial 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 flow 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 towards 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.

2021/2022 £'000		Notes	2022/2023 £'000
53,064	Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services		52,957
(118,703)	Adjustments to net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non cash movements		(99,371)
59,004	Adjustments for items included in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities		67,247
(6,635)	Net cash flows from operating activities	22	20,833
137,879	Investing activities	23	(5,361)
(99,290)	Financing activities	24 / 25	(23,878)
31,954	Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(8,406)
74,129	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		42,175
42,175	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	18	50,581

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Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 1 – Significant Accounting Policies

The Council applies the following Accounting Policies:

1.1	General Principles
1.2	Accrual of Income and Expenditure
1.3	Cash and Cash Equivalents
1.4	Exceptional Items
1.5	Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies and Estimates and Errors and Portfolio Restatements
1.6	Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets
1.7	Employee Benefits
1.8	Events after the Balance Sheet Date
1.9	Financial Instruments
1.10	Government Grants and Contributions
1.11	Intangible Assets
1.12	Interests in Companies and Other Entities
1.13	Joint Operations
1.14	Inventories
1.15	Investment Property
1.16	Leases
1.17	Overheads and Support Services
1.18	Delegated Budgets
1.19	Property, Plant and Equipment
1.20	Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Similar Contracts
1.21	Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets
1.22	Provisions
1.23	Contingent Liabilities
1.24	Contingent Assets
1.25	Reserves
1.26	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute
1.27	Value Added Tax (VAT)
1.28	Schools
1.29	Council Tax and Business Rates

1.1 General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2022/2023 financial year and its position at the year end of 31 March 2023. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and these Regulations require the Statement of Accounts to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices, under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2003, primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/2023 supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

1.2 Accrual of Income and Expenditure

Activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- revenue from contracts with service recipients, whether for services or the provision of goods, is recognised when (or as) the goods or services are transferred to the service recipient in accordance with the performance obligations in the contract;
- supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a difference between the date supplies are received and the date of their consumption, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet;
- expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made;

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- interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure based on the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract;
- where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded 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;
- 12 months' costs are included in the accounts for those supplies and services used continuously and charged on a periodic basis (e.g. gas, electricity and water), but the period covered by the payments does not always coincide with the financial year and may include an element of estimation; and
- a de-minimis level of £5,000 is applied to accruals.

1.3 Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that mature in three months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Due to the risk of lost income from reduced interest earned or the cost of penalties charged for early redemption of fixed-term investments, the Council does not consider fixed-term investments to be highly liquid. Fixed-term investments are shown on the Balance Sheet as either long or short-term investments depending on the remaining term to maturity of the investment.

In the Cash Flow 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.

1.4 Exceptional Items

When items of income and expenditure are material, their nature and amount is disclosed separately, either on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement or in the notes to the accounts, depending on how significant the items are to an understanding of the Council's financial performance.

1.5 Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies, Estimates and Errors and Portfolio Restatements

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 period adjustment.

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the Council's financial position or financial performance.

Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless stated otherwise) by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied.

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period. The reason and impact of any necessary adjustments are explained in more detail in the accounts as required.

Where Portfolio responsibilities have changed within the Council's reporting structure, the prior period disclosures relating to Portfolios have been restated to facilitate comparison with the current year.

1.6 Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services, support services and trading accounts are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

Notes to the Financial Statements

- depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service;
- revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off; and
- amortisation of intangible assets attributable to the service.

The Council is not required to raise Council Tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisation. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Council in accordance with statutory guidance.

Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisation are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund Balance (Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)), by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

1.7 Employee Benefits

Benefits Payable during Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled wholly within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. cars) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Council. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year.

The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday entitlements are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits. They are charged on an accrual basis to the appropriate service at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, appropriations are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination 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.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Council are members of three separate pension schemes:

- the Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE);
- the National Health Service (NHS) Pension Scheme; and
- the Local Government Pension Scheme administered by South Tyneside Council.

All three schemes provide defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees work for the Council.

However, the arrangements for the teachers' scheme and the NHS scheme mean that liabilities for these benefits cannot ordinarily be identified specifically to the Council. These schemes are therefore accounted for as if they were defined contribution schemes and, as a result, no liability for future

Notes to the Financial Statements

payments of benefits is recognised in the Council's Balance Sheet. The Children, Learning and Skills and Healthy City lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are charged with the employer's contributions payable to Teachers' Pensions and NHS Pensions respectively.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

The Local Government Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme:

- the liabilities of the Tyne and Wear Pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected 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;
- liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate based on the indicative rate of return on high quality corporate bonds;
- the assets of the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:
 - quoted securities at current bid price;
 - unquoted securities based on professional estimate;
 - unitised securities at current bid price; and
 - property at market value.
- the change in the net pension liability is analysed into the following components:
 - a) Service cost comprising:
 - current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked;
 - past service cost – the increase in liabilities, arising from current year decisions, whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement; and
 - net interest on the net defined benefit liability / (asset), i.e. net interest expense for the Council – 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – 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.
 - b) Re-measurements comprising:
 - 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; and
 - 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 Pension Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
 - c) contributions paid to the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund – cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to 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 based on cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Discretionary Benefits

The Council also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award to any member of staff (including teachers) are accrued in the year of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as those applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

1.8 Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Events after the Balance Sheet date are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue. Two types of events can be identified:

- those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period. The Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events; and
- those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

Events taking place after the date of authorisation for issue are not reflected in the Statement of Accounts.

1.9 Financial Instruments

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument, and these are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised.

For most of the Council's borrowings, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest); and interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Where premiums and discounts have been charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, regulations allow the impact on the General Fund Balance to be spread over future years. The Council has 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. The reconciliation of amounts charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the net charge required against the General Fund Balance is managed by a transfer to or from the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified based on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cashflow characteristics. There are three main classes of financial assets measured at:

- Amortised cost;
- Fair value through profit or loss (FVPL); and
- Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI).

The Council's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised costs, except for those whose contractual payments are

Notes to the Financial Statements

not solely payment of principal and interest (i.e. where the cash flows do not take the form of a basic debt instrument).

Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised in the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value. They are subsequently measured at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. For most of the financial assets held by the Council, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest) and interest credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

A number of exceptions have been made where the Council has provided loans to partners and community organisations at less than market rates (soft loans). When soft loans are made, a loss is recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (debited to the appropriate service) for the present value of the interest that will be foregone over the life of the instrument, resulting in a lower amortised cost than the outstanding principal.

Interest is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at a marginally higher effective rate of interest than the rate receivable from these organisations, with the difference serving to increase the amortised cost of the loan in the Balance Sheet. Statutory provisions require that the impact of soft loans on the General Fund Balance is the interest receivable for the financial year – the reconciliation of amounts debited and credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the net gain required against the General Fund Balance is managed by a transfer to or from the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Any gains and losses that arise on the derecognition of an asset are credited or debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Expected Credit Loss Model

The Council recognises expected credit losses on all its financial assets either on a 12 month or lifetime basis. The expected credit loss model also applies to lease receivables and contract assets. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the Council.

Impairment losses are calculated to reflect the expectation that the future cash flows might not take place because the borrower could default on their obligations. Credit risk plays a crucial part in assessing losses. 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 a 12 month expected losses basis.

Expected credit losses are reviewed annually.

Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss

Financial assets that are measured at FVPL are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arise in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

Fair value of an asset is the price that would be received to sell an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurements of the Council's financial assets are based on the following techniques:

- Instruments with quoted market prices – the market price; and
- Other instruments with fixed and determinable payments – discounted cash flow analysis.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The inputs to the measurement techniques are categorised in accordance with the following three levels:

- Level 1 inputs – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets that the Council 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; and
- Level 3 inputs – unobservable inputs for the asset.

Any gains and losses that arise on the derecognition of the asset are credited or debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Council also holds a small number of investment bonds which are classified as 'financial assets at fair value through profit and loss', meaning that all movements in price are recognised within the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income

The Council does not generally invest in equity shares but does have shareholdings in Newcastle Airport Ltd. Whilst this investment is not anticipated to be sold, the Council is consequently exposed to losses arising from movements in the prices of the shares.

These shares have therefore been elected as 'fair value through other comprehensive income', meaning that all movements in price will impact on gains and losses recognised in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

The Council has long term investments in two companies which form part of the group accounts – Siglion LLP and Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd. In the Council's own single-entity accounts, the interests in these companies are recorded as financial assets at cost.

1.10 Government Grants and Contributions

Whether paid on account, by instalments or in arrears, government grants and third-party contributions and donations are recognised as due to the Council when there is reasonable assurance that:

- the Council will comply with the conditions attached to the payments; and
- the grants or contributions will be received.

Amounts recognised as due to the Council are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset acquired using 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.

Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as creditors. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (attributable revenue grants and contributions) or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure (non-ringfenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

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1.11 Intangible Assets

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the Council as a result of past events (e.g. software licences) is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Council.

Internally generated assets are capitalised where it is demonstrable that the project is technically feasible and is intended to be completed (with adequate resources being available) and the Council will be able to generate future economic benefits or deliver service potential by being able to sell or use the asset. Expenditure is capitalised where it can be measured reliably as attributable to the asset and is restricted to that incurred during the development phase (research expenditure cannot be capitalised).

Expenditure on the development of websites is not capitalised if the website is solely or primarily intended to promote or advertise the Council's goods or services.

Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held by the Council can be determined by reference to an active market. In practice, no intangible asset held by the Council meets this criterion, and they are therefore carried at amortised cost. The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. An asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset might be impaired – any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where expenditure on intangible assets qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses and disposal gains and losses are not permitted to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and, for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000, the Capital Receipts Reserve.

The only category of intangible assets for the Council is software licences; the asset life used for licences is between 5 and 10 years depending on licence conditions.

1.12 Interests in Companies and Other Entities

The Council has material interests in companies and other entities that have the nature of subsidiaries and joint ventures and require it to prepare group accounts. In the Council's own single entity accounts, the interests in companies and other entities are recorded as financial assets at cost less any impairment allowances.

1.13 Joint Operations

Joint operations are arrangements where the parties that have joint control of the arrangement have rights to the assets and obligations for the liabilities relating to the arrangement. The activities undertaken by the Council in conjunction with other joint operators involve the use of the assets and resources of those joint operators. In relation to its interest in a joint operation, the Council as a joint operator recognises:

- its assets, including its share of any assets held jointly;
- its liabilities, including its share of any liabilities incurred jointly;
- its revenue from the sale of its share of the output arising from the joint operation;
- its share of the revenue from the sale of the output by the joint operation; and
- its expenses, including its share of any expenses incurred jointly.

1.14 Inventories

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at cost price, apart from inventories held by Highways Services and salt stock. These are valued at latest price, which is a departure from the Code but the values are not material. A de-minimis level of £5,000 is applied to inventories.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.15 Investment Property

Investment properties are those that are used solely to earn rentals and/or for capital appreciation. The definition is not met if the property is used in any way to facilitate the delivery of services or production of goods or is held for sale.

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, being the price that would be received to sell such an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. As a non-financial asset, investment properties are measured at highest and best use. Properties are not depreciated but are revalued annually according to market conditions at the year-end. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal.

Revaluation and disposal gains and losses are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and, for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000, the Capital Receipts Reserve.

The Council does not currently hold any investment properties.

1.16 Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

Where a lease covers both land and buildings, the land and buildings elements are considered separately for classification.

Arrangements that do not have the legal status of a lease but convey a right to use an asset in return for payment are accounted for under this policy where fulfilment of the arrangement is dependent on the use of specific assets.

(a) The Council as Lessee

Finance Leases

Property, Plant and Equipment held under finance leases is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the lease's inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Initial direct costs of the Council are added to the carrying amount of the asset. Premiums paid on entry into a lease are applied to writing down the lease liability. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

- a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property, plant or equipment – applied to write down the lease liability; and
- a finance charge (debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

Property, Plant and Equipment recognised under finance leases is accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, subject to depreciation being charged over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life (where ownership of the asset does not transfer to the Council at the end of the lease period).

The Council is not required to raise Council Tax to cover depreciation or revaluation and impairment losses arising on leased assets. Instead, a prudent annual contribution is made from revenue funds towards the deemed capital investment in accordance with statutory requirements. Depreciation and revaluation and impairment losses are therefore substituted by a revenue contribution in the General

Notes to the Financial Statements

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.

Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense of the services benefiting from use of the leased property, plant or equipment. Charges are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (e.g. there is a rent-free period at the commencement of the lease).

(b) The Council as Lessor

Operating Leases

Where the Council grants an operating lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the asset is retained in the Balance Sheet. Rental income is credited to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Credits are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (e.g. there is a premium paid at the commencement of the lease). Initial direct costs incurred in negotiating and arranging the lease are added to the carrying amount of the relevant asset and charged as an expense over the lease term on the same basis as rental income.

1.17 Overheads and Support Services

The costs of overheads and support services are charged to service segments in accordance with the Council's arrangements for accountability and financial performance. The charging method varies according to the service provision.

1.18 Delegated Budgets

As set out in the Local Management of Schools Scheme, schools may carry forward any under-spending on their budgets to the following financial year as provisions for specific future spending plans or as earmarked general balances. To ensure there is no impact on the General Fund balance, any deficit relating to school budgets is held in the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account.

1.19 Property, Plant and Equipment

Assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes and that are expected to be used during more than one financial year are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment.

Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accrual basis, if it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Capital expenditure that does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense in the year when it is incurred.

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

- the purchase price;
- any costs attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management; and
- the initial estimate of the costs of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located.

The Council does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred whilst assets are under construction.

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Capital projects that are still in progress are classed as 'non-current assets under construction' and are shown in the Balance Sheet under the relevant asset category. For material capital schemes that have been completed an assessment is undertaken by the Senior Manager – Property Services to determine any change the capital scheme has made to an asset's value.

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its fair value, unless the acquisition does not have commercial substance (i.e. it will not lead to a variation in the cash flows of the Council). In the latter case, where an asset is acquired via an exchange, the cost of the acquisition is the carrying amount of the asset given up by the Council.

Property, Plant and Equipment assets are carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- infrastructure and vehicles, plant and equipment assets – depreciated historic cost (DHC);
- assets under construction and community assets – historic cost;
- surplus assets – the current value measurement base is fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective;
- dwellings – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value for social housing – EUV-SH); and
- all other assets – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV).

Where there is no market-based evidence of current value because of the specialist nature of an asset, such as for school buildings, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at current value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. To ensure that this takes place a rolling programme of valuations has been put in place by the Senior Manager – Property Services.

Assets are valued in accordance with the principles of the RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) Appraisals and Valuation Standards. The valuations are supervised by M. Whitaker, Senior Manager – Property Services, the Council's qualified (MRICS) Chartered Surveyor. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Exceptionally, gains might be credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services where they arise from the reversal of a loss previously charged to a service.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for by:

- where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains); and
- where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Revaluation Reserve contains revaluation gains recognised since 1 April 2007 only, the date of its formal implementation. Gains arising before that date have been consolidated into the Capital Adjustment Account.

Voluntary Aided Church schools and Foundation schools where the asset is not owned by the Council are not included on the Council's Balance Sheet. Assets for schools that transfer to Academy status are transferred on a long lease with peppercorn rental and the asset is in effect owned by the school and its asset value is not therefore included on the Council's Balance Sheet. Community school assets are included on the Council's Balance Sheet.

Notes to the Financial Statements

De-Minimis Levels

The use of a de-minimis level for valuations and for capital expenditure means that expenditure on assets below the de-minimis level are charged to the revenue account, i.e. the asset is not included in the Balance Sheet unless it is part of an overall project costing more than the established de-minimis level or the assessed gross book value is more than the established de-minimis level. For all valuations and capital expenditure the de-minimis level is £20,000.

Impairment

Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that they may be impaired. Where indications of impairment exist, the overall estimated level of impairment is considered and, if material, the recoverable amounts of each of the affected assets are estimated. Where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for as follows:

- where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains); and
- where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, 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.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. An exception is made for assets without a determinable finite useful life (i.e. freehold land and community assets) and assets that are not yet available for use (i.e. assets under construction).

Depreciation on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets has been calculated on a straight-line basis by taking the opening net asset value divided by the future life expectancy.

Depreciation is charged in the first full year following acquisition, revaluation and enhancement of buildings. This reflects the pattern of consumption of economic benefits of the assets.

The life expectancy for each asset category falls within the following ranges:

Asset Category	Years
Land and buildings	5 – 60
Vehicles, plant and equipment	3 – 40
Infrastructure	20 – 100

A standardised life expectancy is used for each category of Infrastructure assets.

All land and buildings assets are componentised and recorded as separate assets on the Council's asset register. A standard list of components is used by the Council:

- land;
- building structure; and
- mechanical and electrical.

The depreciation applied reflects the remaining life of each element of the asset held.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Revaluation gains are also depreciated, with an amount equal to the difference between current value depreciation charged on assets and the depreciation that would have been chargeable based on their historical cost being transferred each year from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Disposals and Non-current Assets Held for Sale

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, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and 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 previous losses recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

If assets no longer meet the criteria to be classified as Assets Held for Sale, they are reclassified back to non-current assets and valued at the lower of their carrying amount before they were classified as held for sale; adjusted for depreciation, amortisation or revaluations that would have been recognised had they not been classified as Assets Held for Sale, and their recoverable amount at the date of the decision not to sell.

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. A proportion of capital receipts relating to housing disposals is payable to the Government. The balance of receipts remains within the Capital Receipts Reserve and can then only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow (the capital financing requirement). 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.

Heritage Assets

Heritage assets over £10,000 are classified into the following categories:

- **Museum Collection**
Items are held on the Balance Sheet at insurance valuation which is based on market values and is reviewed periodically. Acquisitions are made by purchase or donation with purchases being recognised at cost and donations at valuation with reference to appropriate commercial markets and auction sale information.
- **Public artwork**
Items are held on the Balance Sheet at historic cost.
- **Other historic assets**
Other items are held on the Balance Sheet at historic cost, or insurance value where this is available.

Heritage assets held on the Balance Sheet are recorded in the Council's Asset Register.

Notes to the Financial Statements

As heritage assets are considered to have indeterminate lives and relatively high residual values, the Council does not consider it appropriate to charge depreciation on these assets.

The carrying amounts for heritage assets are reviewed where there is evidence of impairment such as where an item has suffered physical deterioration or breakage or where doubts arise as to its authenticity. Any impairment is recognised and measured in accordance with the Council's policies on impairment.

Disposal of heritage assets is rare but would be accounted for in accordance with the Council's policies for disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment.

1.20 Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and Similar Contracts

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 Council 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 Council at the end of the contracts for no additional charge, the Council carries the assets used under the contracts on its Balance Sheet as part of Property, Plant and Equipment.

The original recognition of these assets at fair value (based on the cost to purchase the property, plant and equipment) was balanced by the recognition of a liability for amounts due to the scheme operator to pay for the capital investment.

Non-current assets recognised on the Balance Sheet are revalued and depreciated in the same way as property, plant and equipment owned by the Council.

The amounts payable to the PFI operators each year are analysed into five elements:

- **fair value of the services received during the year** – debited to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement;
- **finance cost** – an interest charge on the outstanding Balance Sheet liability, debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement;
- **contingent rent** – increases in the amount to be paid for the property arising during the contract, debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement;
- **payment towards liability** – applied to write down the Balance Sheet liability towards the PFI operator (the profile of write-downs is calculated using the same principles as for a finance lease); and
- **lifecycle replacement costs** – proportion of the amounts payable is posted to the Balance Sheet as a prepayment and then recognised as additions to Property, Plant and Equipment when the relevant works are eventually carried out.

1.21 Fair Value Measurement of non-financial assets

The Council measures some of its non-financial assets such as surplus assets and investment properties and, where material to the financial statements, some of its financial instruments such as equity shareholdings at fair value at each reporting date. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either:

- a) in the principal market for the asset or liability, or
- b) in the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market for the asset or liability.

The Council measures the fair value of an asset or liability using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, if market participants act in their economic best interest.

Notes to the Financial Statements

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the Council considers a market participant's ability to generate economic benefits by using the asset in its highest and best use or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use.

The Council uses valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which enough data is available, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

Inputs to the valuation techniques in respect of assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the Council's financial statements are categorised within the fair value hierarchy, as follows:

- Level 1 – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the Council can access at the measurement date;
- Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly; and
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

1.22 Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council 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 Council may be involved in a court case which could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year that the Council becomes aware of the obligation and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, considering relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

Where some or all the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Council settles the obligation.

1.23 Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council 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 Council. 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.

Contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts.

1.24 Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council 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 Council.

Contingent assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1.25 Reserves

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by transferring amounts out of the General Fund Balance. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then transferred back into the General Fund Balance so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are maintained to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, local taxation, retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Council. These reserves are explained in the relevant policies.

1.26 Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year. Where the Council has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from existing capital resources or by borrowing, a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses out the amounts charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement so that there is no impact on the level of Council Tax.

1.27 Value Added Tax (VAT)

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from HM Revenue and Customs. VAT receivable is excluded from income.

1.28 Schools

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom confirms that the balance of control for local authority-maintained schools (i.e. those categories of school identified in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended) lies with the local authority. The Code also stipulates that those schools' assets, liabilities, reserves and cash flows are recognised in the local authority financial statements. Therefore, schools' transactions, cash flows and balances are recognised in each of the financial statements of the Council as if they were the transactions, cash flows and balances of the Council.

1.29 Council Tax and Business Rates

Billing authorities act as agents, collecting Council Tax and Business Rates on behalf of the major preceptors (including the Government for Business Rates) and, as principals, collecting Council Tax and Business Rates for themselves. Billing authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate fund (the Collection Fund) for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates. Under the legislative framework for the Collection Fund, billing authorities, major preceptors and central government share proportionately the risks and rewards that the amount of Council Tax and Business Rates collected could be less or more than predicted.

The Council Tax and Business Rates income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the Council's share of accrued income for the year. However, regulations determine the amount of Council Tax and Business Rates that must be included in the Council's General Fund. Therefore, the difference between the income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the amount required by regulation to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account and included as a reconciling item in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The Balance Sheet includes the Council's share of the end of year balances in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates relating to arrears, impairment allowances for doubtful debts, overpayments, prepayments and appeals.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 2 – Accounting standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

The Code requires the Council to disclose information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard which has been issued but has not yet been adopted by the Code.

The Council follows the requirements of the Code and retrospectively makes relevant changes to opening balances when a change in accounting policy is introduced unless the Code allows transitional provisions to be followed.

The new/amended standards that may affect the Statement of Accounts from 1 April 2023 are:

- Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendment to IAS 8) issued in February 2021.
- Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS 1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2) issued in February 2021.
- Deferred Tax related to Assets and Liabilities arising from a Single Transaction (Amendments to IAS12) issued in May 2021.
- Updating a Reference to the Conceptual Framework (Amendments to IFRS 3) issued in May 2020.

These are not expected to have a significant impact on the Statement of Accounts and restatement of 2022/2023's accounts will not be required.

Following consultation, implementation of IFRS 16 Leases has been further deferred and now has a formal implementation date of 1 April 2024. The Government's Financial Reporting Advisory Board (FRAB) has agreed to this deferral. However, FRAB have advised CIPFA/LASAAC that the Code should allow and encourage local authorities to adopt the standard in the preceding reporting periods, but this is at the discretion of each Council.

Once adopted, IFRS 16 will require the Council to recognise leased in assets on their Balance Sheet as 'right of use' assets with corresponding lease liabilities.

This is expected to have some impact on the Council's accounts in the future, but this is not expected to be significant as any material leases are already reflected on the Balance Sheet. Some changes may be required to existing reporting arrangements.

Note 3 – Critical Judgements in applying accounting policies

In applying the accounting policies set out in Note 1, 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:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government. However, the Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet enough to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision;
- Pension Fund Guarantor – Gentoo
The Council acts as a guarantor to the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund in respect of pensions for employees who were originally employed by the Council but transferred to Gentoo in March 2001. Under this guarantee, only the basic level of pension would be funded (no added years). Although facing similar pressures to the Council, Gentoo's financial position does not indicate any likelihood of Gentoo ceasing to operate. It is very difficult to estimate the potential cost to the Council if that were to happen as the Council only has partial liability and that liability will have significantly diminished since 2001 as a result of staff turnover and some of the affected staff retiring. The Council's share of any potential deficit would need to be considered as part of the overall financial position of Gentoo at the point that it ceased operating and any liability relating to the Council would be repaid over an agreed repayment period. This guarantee has been judged

Notes to the Financial Statements

to be a guarantee against financial risk under IFRS 9, Financial Instruments, but as any value would not be material to the accounts, acquiring a Fair Value has not been considered necessary;

- Pension Fund Guarantor – other organisations
The Council also acts as a joint guarantor (along with other councils) to the Tyne and Wear Pension Fund in respect of pensions for employees of several bodies such as the Association of North East Councils (ANEC) and the North East Regional Employers Organisation (NEREO). The councils involved have agreed with the Pension Fund administrators that, in the unlikely event of any of these bodies failing, any pension deficit would be repaid over an agreed repayment period. Independently, the Council has similar arrangements in place for possible pension deficits with several other organisations. These guarantees have been judged to be guarantees against financial risk under IFRS 9, Financial Instruments, but as any value would not be material to the accounts, acquiring a Fair Value has not been considered necessary;
- Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Indexation and Equalisation
GMP is a portion of pension that was accrued by individuals who were contracted out of the State Second Pension prior to 6 April 1997. All public service schemes, including the LGPS, were contracted out.

Reforms to the State Pension system on 6 April 2016 removed the facility by which central government paid top-up payments to members with GMP who reached the State Pension Age (SPA) on or after 6 April 2016. The Government have subsequently committed to compensate all members of public sector pension schemes reaching SPA on or after 6 April 2016 by uprating GMPs in line with CPI inflation. This commitment is reflected in the actuarial assumptions used for the accounts.

In October 2020 a second ruling in the Lloyds bank case clarified that compensation would be required to members who transferred benefits out since May 1990. The Government has not yet acknowledged a liability relating to public service schemes nor indicated an approach to rectifying this. It is therefore not yet clear what impact this may have so no allowance has been made for this in the accounts.

- McCloud Judgement
Following a review of public service pension schemes in 2011, all schemes were reformed with the objective of reducing the overall cost to the taxpayer and putting schemes on a more sustainable footing.

Transitional arrangements provided members within 10 years of normal retirement age on 1 April 2012 with an underpin promise that benefits earned after 1 April 2014 would be at least as valuable, in terms of amount and when they could be drawn, as if they had remained in the 2008 Scheme.

In 2018 the Government lost a Court of Appeal case (the 'McCloud/Sargeant' judgement) which found that the transitional protection arrangements put in place when the firefighters' and judges' pension schemes were reformed were age discriminatory.

Given the similarity between all public sector pension schemes, it was considered likely that protection granted to those LGPS members who were closest to retirement would also be considered age discriminatory and would lead to other LGPS members being compensated.

In light of this, an additional liability of £17.21m was accounted for as a past service cost in 2018/2019 and, in subsequent years, an allowance has been made for estimated liabilities relating to potential remedies for age discrimination within the LGPS arrangements.

The Government published its McCloud consultation for the LGPS on 16 July 2020, setting out proposed changes aimed at removing the unlawful age discrimination in the LGPS. In a written ministerial statement on 13 May 2021 the Government confirmed they would be proceeding with the key principles set out in the consultation. The approach adopted by the Council's Actuary is closely aligned with the remedy proposed by the Government and considered by the Council to be appropriate.

Notes to the Financial Statements

From 1 October 2023 the McCloud age discrimination will be removed and qualifying younger members will receive underpin protection. As this underpin protection only applies to pension built up during the remedy period, between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2022, the impact of this is already accounted for in the Actuary's past service cost estimate and the underpin protection will therefore have no further impact after 31 March 2023.

- **Cost Management in the LGPS**
Legislation requires HM Treasury (HMT) and the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) to undertake periodic valuations to monitor the cost of the LGPS to ensure it remains sustainable and affordable.

HM Treasury and the SAB had paused their 2016 reviews following the 'McCloud' judgement in the Court of Appeal. These have now been un-paused and HMT Directions were made during 2021 which allowed the Treasury and SAB reviews to proceed. The outcome of the SAB review has been published and has recommended no changes to the provisions of the Scheme. It is expected that the outcome of HMT's review will also recommend no changes.

However, the legality of the Government's decision to include McCloud costs as a member cost within the 2016 HMT process has been challenged by a Judicial Review brought by the trade unions. In March 2023 the High Court dismissed the Judicial Review but the trade unions have applied for permission to appeal that decision and, if successful on appeal, this may cause the 2016 HMT process to be re-run and could result in changes in benefits or member contributions backdated to 1 April 2019.

At this stage there is nothing to indicate that an appeal will be successful and therefore it is not considered appropriate for the Council's Actuary to make any allowance for the cost of potential improvements to members' benefits.

Note 4 – 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 considering historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2023 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 Assets – valuations	Assets are valued, in accordance with Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) valuation standards and involve the use of a number of estimation techniques including various property indices. See note 13 for more details on Property, Plant and Equipment.	The gross book value (GBV) of the Council's land and buildings and surplus assets is £615.610m at 31 March 2023. A 1% change in asset valuations would equate to a £6.156m change in the GBV.
Arrears	At 31 March 2023, the Council had a balance of debtors of £106.537m. A review of significant balances suggested that an impairment of doubtful debts of 21.1% (£22.530m) was appropriate. However, in the current economic climate it is not certain that such an allowance would be sufficient.	If collection rates were to deteriorate, an increase in the amount of the impairment of doubtful debts would be required.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
	Further information regarding the impairment of doubtful debts can be found in note 42.	
Pension net asset / liability - valuation	Estimation of the net asset / 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, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. Further information regarding pension assets / liabilities can be found in note 39.	For funded LGPS benefits, the effects on the net pension asset / liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. Details relating to the sensitivity of each assumption can be found in note 39.
Fair Value measurements – surplus assets and equity investments	<p>When the fair values of financial assets cannot be measured based on quoted prices in active markets (i.e. Level 1 inputs), their fair value is measured using valuation techniques (e.g. quoted prices for <i>similar</i> assets in active markets or the discounted cash flow (DCF) model). Where possible, the inputs to these valuation techniques are based on observable data, but where this is not possible judgement is required in establishing fair values. These judgements typically include considerations such as uncertainty and risk. However, changes in the assumptions used could affect the fair value of the Council's assets.</p> <p>Where Level 1 inputs are not available, the Council employs relevant experts to identify the most appropriate valuation techniques to determine fair value (for example, for surplus assets, the Council's chief valuation officer). Information about the valuation techniques and inputs used in determining the fair value of the Council's assets is disclosed in notes 13 and 15.</p>	<p>The Council uses the market approach that compares the asset to be valued with the prices obtained for other similar assets and the income approach that capitalises the potential income of the asset to measure the fair value of its surplus assets.</p> <p>For the Council's equity investments, significant changes in any of the unobservable inputs would result in a significantly higher or lower fair value.</p> <p>As the equity investments relating to the Airport have been elected as 'fair value through other comprehensive income', all movements in fair value will impact on gains and losses recognised in the Council's unusable reserves.</p>

Note 5 – Material items of income and expenditure

All significant income and expenditure transactions are disclosed within the Notes to the financial statements.

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement reflects accounting entries which the Council must include in its financial statements in order to comply with proper accounting practice.

Some of these accounting entries are then reversed via a statutory override to ensure that technical accounting entries do not impact on the Council Tax payer. Note 7, adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations, details the items covered by the statutory override.

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also reflects funding received and expenditure incurred during the year. Note 8, Expenditure and Funding Analysis, provides details of the actual income and expenditure relating to the Cost of Services delivered by the Council's Portfolios.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Notes 10, 11 and 12 detail the corporate activity supporting the Cost of Services for the year.

Also shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is movement in unusable reserves relating to asset revaluations and pension remeasurement. Note 21, Unusable Reserves details movement relating to asset revaluations and pension remeasurement with further detail available in Note 13, Property, Plant and Equipment and Note 39, Defined Benefit Pension Schemes.

Note 6 – Events after the Balance Sheet date

Adjusting Events after the Balance Sheet date

Where events take place after 31 March which provide information about conditions existing at 31 March, the financial statements and notes are adjusted to reflect the impact of this information. At the time of publishing the accounts no such events have taken place.

Non-adjusting Events after the Balance Sheet date

Where events take place after 31 March which do not relate to conditions at 31 March, but which provide information that is relevant to an understanding of the Council's financial position, the financial statements and notes are not adjusted but the relevant information is disclosed. At the time of publishing the accounts no such events have taken place.

Note 7 – Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the Council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to arrive at the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Council to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

General Fund Balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of the Council are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the Council are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. These rules can also specify the financial year in which liabilities and payments should impact on the General Fund Balance, which is not necessarily in accordance with proper accounting practice. The General Fund Balance therefore summarises the resources that the Council is statutorily empowered to spend on its services or on capital investment (or the deficit of resources that the Council is required to recover) at the end of the financial year.

Capital Receipts Reserve

The Capital Receipts Reserve holds the proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets, which are restricted by statute from being used other than to fund new capital expenditure or to be set aside to finance historical capital expenditure. The balance on the reserve shows the resources that have yet to be applied for these purposes at the year-end.

Capital Grants Unapplied

The Capital Grants Unapplied Account (Reserve) holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the Council has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies, but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure. The balance is restricted by grant terms as to the capital expenditure against which it can be applied and/or the financial year in which this can take place.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 7 – Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations

2021/2022				2022/2023		
Usable				Usable		
General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000		General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000
			Adjustments to Revenue Resources			
			Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:			
33,960	0	0	Pensions costs - transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve	29,100	0	0
(303)	0	0	Financial instruments - transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	(259)	0	0
(19,143)	0	0	Council Tax and Business Rates - transfers to or from the Collection Fund Adjustment Account	(10,251)	0	0
142	0	0	Holiday pay - transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve	126	0	0
72,650	0	9,372	Reversal of items included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account)	58,420	0	5,784
(4,629)	0	0	Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve - sale proceeds credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain/(loss) on disposal	0	0	0
1,683	0	0	Transfer of Dedicated Schools Grant overspend / (underspend) to the DSG Adjustment Account	1,393	0	0
84,360	0	9,372	Total adjustments to Revenue Resources	78,529	0	5,784

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 7 – Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations

2021/2022				2022/2023		
Usable				Usable		
General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000		General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000
			Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources			
(3,077)	3,077	0	Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	(4,375)	4,375	0
160	(160)	0	Administrative costs of non-current asset disposals (funded by a contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve)	64	(64)	0
(13,018)	0	0	Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account)	(16,290)	0	0
(5,717)	0	0	Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(8,134)	0	0
(21,652)	2,917	0	Total adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(28,735)	4,311	0
			Adjustments to Capital Resources			
0	(2,691)	0	Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	(6,373)	0
0	0	(7,512)	Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure	0	0	(6,028)
0	111	0	Writing down of long term debtor to Capital Adjustment Account	0	112	0
39	0	0	Cash payments in relation to deferred capital receipts	0	2,970	0
39	(2,580)	(7,512)	Total adjustments to Capital Resources	0	(3,291)	(6,028)
62,747	337	1,860	Total Adjustments	49,794	1,020	(244)

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 8 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, rents, Council Tax and Business Rates) by the Council in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the Council in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's Portfolios. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practice is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

As with the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, this analysis is presented in line with the Council's Portfolio responsibilities in place between May 2022 and May 2023. 2021/2022 has been restated and further details can be found in Note 43.

2021/2022 (restated)				2022/2023		
Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance		Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance
£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
2,883	(425)	2,458	Leader	3,098	(395)	2,703
36,965	(12,537)	24,428	Deputy Leader	39,604	(16,038)	23,566
76,021	(46,522)	29,499	Cabinet Secretary	46,245	(15,237)	31,008
93,738	(23,742)	69,996	Children, Learning and Skills	97,609	(20,297)	77,312
11,729	(4,640)	7,089	Vibrant City	13,243	(4,137)	9,106
44,407	(9,264)	35,143	Healthy City	59,555	(7,963)	51,592
30,190	(44,097)	(13,907)	Dynamic City	39,245	(56,785)	(17,540)
295,933	(141,227)	154,706	Net Cost of Services	298,599	(120,852)	177,747
(242,869)	78,480	(164,389)	Other Income and Expenditure	(245,642)	71,058	(174,584)
53,064	(62,747)	(9,683)	(Surplus) or Deficit	52,957	(49,794)	3,163
		(190,711)	Opening General Fund Balance / Earmarked Reserves			(200,394)
		(9,683)	(Surplus) or deficit in year			3,163
		(200,394)	Closing General Fund Balance / Earmarked Reserves			(197,231)

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 8 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The adjustments between the funding and accounting basis can be further analysed between:

- adjustments for Capital Purposes;
- the net change relating to Pension Adjustments; and
- other differences and adjustments.

2022/2023	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £'000	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustment £'000	Other Statutory Differences £'000	Total Statutory Adjustments £'000	Other (non- statutory) Adjustments £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Leader	29	366	0	395	0	395
Deputy Leader	10,911	3,587	(3)	14,495	1,543	16,038
Cabinet Secretary	9,943	5,123	(5)	15,061	176	15,237
Children, Learning and Skills	16,052	4,015	1,589	21,656	(1,359)	20,297
Vibrant City	3,200	926	2	4,128	9	4,137
Healthy City	4,838	3,123	2	7,963	0	7,963
Dynamic City	52,439	1,951	(66)	54,324	2,461	56,785
Net Cost of Services	97,412	19,091	1,519	118,022	2,830	120,852
Other income and expenditure	(67,727)	10,009	(10,510)	(68,228)	(2,830)	(71,058)
Difference between General Fund surplus/deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus/deficit on the Provision of Services	29,685	29,100	(8,991)	49,794	0	49,794

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 8 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The adjustments between the funding and accounting basis can be further analysed between:

- adjustments for Capital Purposes;
- the net change relating to Pension Adjustments; and
- other differences and adjustments.

2021/2022 (restated)	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £'000	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustment £'000	Other Statutory Differences £'000	Total Statutory Adjustments £'000	Other (non- statutory) Adjustments £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Leader	1	427	(3)	425	0	425
Deputy Leader	8,262	3,768	(89)	11,941	596	12,537
Cabinet Secretary	40,635	5,881	25	46,541	(19)	46,522
Children, Learning and Skills	18,118	4,935	1,814	24,867	(1,125)	23,742
Vibrant City	3,731	910	(1)	4,640	0	4,640
Healthy City	5,549	3,700	10	9,259	5	9,264
Dynamic City	39,668	2,130	69	41,867	2,230	44,097
Net Cost of Services	115,964	21,751	1,825	139,540	1,687	141,227
Other income and expenditure	(69,595)	12,209	(19,446)	(76,832)	(1,648)	(78,480)
Difference between General Fund surplus/deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus/deficit on the Provision of Services	46,369	33,960	(17,621)	62,708	39	62,747

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 8 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments for Capital Purposes

This column adds depreciation, impairment and revaluation gains and losses to the Portfolio activity, and for:

- **Other Operating Expenditure**
adjusts for capital disposals with a transfer of income on disposal of assets and the amounts written off for those assets;
- **Financing and investment income and expenditure**
the statutory charges for capital financing i.e. Minimum Revenue Provision and other revenue contributions are deducted from other income and expenditure as these are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practice; and
- **Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure**
capital grants are adjusted for income not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practice. Revenue grants are adjusted from those receivable in the year to those receivable without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied throughout the year. The Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure line is credited with capital grants receivable in the year without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied in the year.

Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments

Net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS 19, Employee Benefits, pension related expenditure and income:

- **For Portfolios**
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; and
- **For Financing and investment income and expenditure**
The net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Other Statutory Adjustments

Other statutory adjustments between amounts debited/credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and amounts payable/receivable to be recognised under statute:

- **For Financing and investment income and expenditure**
The other statutory adjustments column recognises adjustments to the General Fund for the timing differences for premiums and discounts; and
- **For Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure**
The charge represents the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations for Council Tax and Business Rates that was projected to be received at the start of the year and the income recognised under generally accepted accounting practice in the Code. This is a timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future surpluses or deficits on the Collection Fund.

Other Non-statutory Adjustments

Other non-statutory adjustments represent amounts debited/credited to service segments which need to be adjusted against 'Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis' line to comply with the presentational requirements in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The other non-statutory adjustments column recognises adjustments to service segments for interest and investment income and expenditure, trading operation activity and disposal of subsidiaries.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 8 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The nature of the Cost of Services presented in the Expenditure and Funding Analysis is shown below:

2022/2023	Leader	Deputy Leader	Cabinet Secretary	Children, Learning and Skills	Vibrant City	Healthy City	Dynamic City	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fees, charges and other service income	(151)	(10,342)	(11,825)	(5,384)	(818)	(25,788)	(17,045)	(71,353)
Government grants	(368)	(3,310)	(83,043)	(114,320)	(1,120)	(80,301)	(20,871)	(303,333)
Other Grants, reimbursements and contributions	(225)	(1,860)	(11,599)	(7,525)	(637)	(23,482)	(3,849)	(49,177)
Total Income	(744)	(15,512)	(106,467)	(127,229)	(2,575)	(129,571)	(41,765)	(423,863)
Employee expenses	1,639	18,729	33,638	61,251	4,148	17,435	5,074	141,914
Other service expenditure	1,808	20,349	103,837	143,290	7,533	163,728	19,151	459,696
Total Expenditure	3,447	39,078	137,475	204,541	11,681	181,163	24,225	601,610
(Surplus) or deficit on Cost of Services	2,703	23,566	31,008	77,312	9,106	51,592	(17,540)	177,747

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 8 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The nature of the Cost of Services presented in the Expenditure and Funding Analysis is shown below:

2021/2022 (restated)	Leader	Deputy Leader	Cabinet Secretary	Children, Learning and Skills	Vibrant City	Healthy City	Dynamic City	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fees, charges and other service income	(222)	(8,765)	(9,709)	(5,157)	(805)	(22,113)	(14,083)	(60,854)
Government grants	0	(3,028)	(93,256)	(114,023)	(751)	(78,705)	(17,329)	(307,092)
Other Grants, reimbursements and contributions	(214)	(1,414)	(11,367)	(7,921)	(1,214)	(37,500)	(1,622)	(61,252)
Total Income	(436)	(13,207)	(114,332)	(127,101)	(2,770)	(138,318)	(33,034)	(429,198)
Employee expenses	1,590	15,755	31,957	64,572	3,362	18,250	4,538	140,024
Other service expenditure	1,304	21,880	111,874	132,525	6,496	155,212	14,589	443,880
Total Expenditure	2,894	37,635	143,831	197,097	9,858	173,462	19,127	583,904
(Surplus) or deficit on Cost of Services	2,458	24,428	29,499	69,996	7,088	35,144	(13,907)	154,706

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 9 – Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund balance in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2022/2023.

	Balance at 31 March 2021 £'000	Transfers Out 2021/2022 £'000	Transfers In 2021/2022 £'000	Balance at 31 March 2022 £'000	Transfers Out 2022/2023 £'000	Transfers In 2022/2023 £'000	Balance at 31 March 2023 £'000
General Fund:							
General Fund Balance	12,000	0	0	12,000	0	0	12,000
Balances held by schools under a scheme of delegation	10,742	(2,169)	1,209	9,782	(3,407)	813	7,188
	22,742	(2,169)	1,209	21,782	(3,407)	813	19,188
Earmarked General Fund Reserves - Capital:							
Section 106 Reserves	7,995	(2,879)	4,246	9,362	(1,713)	4,023	11,672
Riverside Transfer	9,041	(4)	0	9,037	(4)	0	9,033
Capital Priorities Reserve	8,192	(334)	0	7,858	(4,981)	2,765	5,642
Culture Development Reserve	0	0	3,000	3,000	0	0	3,000
Strategic Investment Reserve (Capital)	3,782	(1,321)	0	2,461	(1,024)	0	1,437
Other Earmarked Capital Reserves	2,527	(559)	726	2,694	(181)	311	2,824
	31,537	(5,097)	7,972	34,412	(7,903)	7,099	33,608
Earmarked General Fund Reserves - Revenue:							
Medium Term Planning Smoothing Reserve	17,859	(284)	17,026	34,601	0	0	34,601
Strategic Regeneration Reserve	9,997	0	750	10,747	(1,253)	1,063	10,557
Health and Social Care Reserve	0	0	9,336	9,336	(1,282)	2,466	10,520
Energy and General Inflation Reserve	0	0	5,750	5,750	0	3,621	9,371
Streetscene and Open Space	3,500	(302)	1,000	4,198	(1,370)	3,934	6,762
Insurance Reserve	5,600	(426)	296	5,470	0	766	6,236
Strategic Investment Reserve (Revenue)	5,749	(165)	57	5,641	(83)	0	5,558
Public Health Grant	2,987	0	1,045	4,032	0	1,289	5,321
Strategic Initiatives Budget Reserve	4,179	0	319	4,498	0	1	4,499
Street Lighting PFI Smoothing Reserve	4,280	0	0	4,280	(160)	0	4,120
Smart Cities	4,000	0	0	4,000	(106)	0	3,894

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 9 – Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at 31 March 2021 £'000	Transfers Out 2021/2022 £'000	Transfers In 2021/2022 £'000	Balance at 31 March 2022 £'000	Transfers Out 2022/2023 £'000	Transfers In 2022/2023 £'000	Balance at 31 March 2023 £'000
Low Level Family Support	2,000	(64)	2,450	4,386	(890)	0	3,496
HCA Stadium Transfer	3,109	0	0	3,109	0	0	3,109
Education Redundancies Reserve	2,125	(46)	0	2,079	(73)	347	2,353
Sandhill Centre PFI Smoothing Reserve	2,151	0	0	2,151	0	0	2,151
Transformation Reserve	3,000	(59)	0	2,941	(1,226)	0	1,715
Collection Fund Surplus Reserve	1,533	0	0	1,533	0	0	1,533
House Sales Income Reserve	1,020	(204)	0	816	0	574	1,390
Carbon Reduction Project Reserve	801	0	723	1,524	(400)	260	1,384
Housing Benefit Smoothing Reserve	1,298	0	161	1,459	(163)	0	1,296
Airport Smoothing Reserve	1,253	0	0	1,253	0	0	1,253
Events Reserve	1,200	0	0	1,200	0	0	1,200
Member Recovery Fund	0	0	1,000	1,000	0	0	1,000
Other Earmarked Revenue Reserves	20,559	(5,571)	5,006	19,994	(2,709)	3,831	21,116
NNDR Covid Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief Grant Reserve	19,874	(19,838)	8,166	8,202	(8,202)	0	0
Service Reduction Reserve	12,146	(12,146)	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Social Care Reserve	3,000	(3,000)	0	0	0	0	0
Children and Young People Recovery	1,700	(1,700)	0	0	0	0	0
Covid-19 Reserve	1,512	(1,512)	0	0	0	0	0
	136,432	(45,317)	53,085	144,200	(17,917)	18,152	144,435
Total General Fund Reserves	190,711	(52,583)	62,266	200,394	(29,227)	26,064	197,231
Capital Receipts Reserve	9,386	(2,774)	3,111	9,723	(6,437)	7,457	10,743
Capital Grants Unapplied	4,085	(7,512)	9,372	5,945	(6,028)	5,784	5,701
Total Usable Reserves	204,182	(62,869)	74,749	216,062	(41,692)	39,305	213,675

Notes to the Financial Statements

Purpose of Earmarked Reserves

Capital Reserves:	Purpose of the Reserve
Section 106 Reserve	Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, developers make financial contributions to the Council relating to affordable housing, public open spaces including allotments and locally equipped play parks, educational facilities, highways and public transport improvements, sports and recreational facilities and environmental improvements.
Riverside Transfer	Reserve established to fund capital works associated with the Homes and Communities Agency land transferred to the Council.
Capital Priorities Reserve	A reserve established to address some of the Council's key capital developments and strategic priorities.
Culture Development Reserve	A reserve to support a range of cultural developments in the city centre, using smart cities technology and immersive technologies.
Strategic Investment Reserve (Capital)	A reserve established to address some of the Council's key developments, strategic priorities and address other major liabilities.
Other Earmarked Capital Reserve	Funding set aside to fund future capital projects previously approved.

Revenue Reserves:	Purpose of the Reserve
Medium Term Planning Smoothing Reserve	This reserve has been established to address any potential impact arising from increased risk and uncertainty with the Business Rate Retention Scheme. It is being used to smooth the impact of government funding uncertainties.
Strategic Regeneration Reserve	A reserve to support the Council's regeneration ambitions, specifically to smooth any revenue impact of projects until they become self-sustaining.
Health and Social Care Reserve	Additional external income from in-year Health funding to support health and social care services in Sunderland in the short to medium term.
Energy and General Inflation	Reserve established in response to significant inflationary and trading pressures expected to impact council services in the short to medium term.
Streetscene and Open Space	A reserve to enhance the city's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and ensure that the full benefit can be made of the regeneration activities across the City. This reserve will fund a range of streetscene and open space projects.
Insurance Reserve	This reserve has been established to provide for potential future claims or claim increases.
Strategic Investment Reserve (Revenue)	A reserve established to address some of the Council's key developments, strategic priorities and address other major liabilities.
Public Health Grant	Ringfenced Public Health grant funding, to deliver future public health initiatives.
Strategic Initiatives Budget Reserve	A reserve held to fund future allocations through the Strategic Initiatives Budget.
Street Lighting PFI Smoothing Reserve	The reserve was established to smooth the financial impact to the Council across the 25 years of the contract life.
Smart Cities	This reserve was established to set aside revenue funding to cover 8-10 years, to support 5G and Wireless within the City.
Low Level Family Support	Reserve to support activities with families and individuals to address the challenges of recovering from the pandemic.
Homes and Communities Agency Stadium Transfer	Reserve established to fund ongoing maintenance of Homes and Communities Agency land transferred to the Council.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Revenue Reserves:	Purpose of the Reserve
Education Redundancy Reserve	The reserve was established to meet the anticipated costs of redundancies as a result of falling pupil rolls within maintained schools.
Sandhill Centre PFI Smoothing Reserve	The reserve was established to smooth the financial impact to the Council across the 25 years of the contract life.
Transformation Reserve	To support the changes that are likely to be required over the next 12-18 months to address financial pressures as the City emerges from the pandemic and MTFP challenges.
Collection Fund Surplus Reserve	Reserve established as part of 2018/19 budget setting to smooth the Collection Fund surplus benefit into future years.
House Sale Income Reserve	The reserve relates to the sale of client's homes that will be utilised to support future support needs of those clients.
Carbon Reduction Project Reserve	This reserve has been established to deliver a range of activities that will support carbon reduction project work.
Housing Benefit Smoothing Reserve	This reserve has been established to smooth any potential impact of outstanding debtors as Housing Benefit is subsumed within Universal Credit.
Airport Smoothing Reserve	Reserve established to smooth any delayed airport loan interest payment that may arise.
Events Reserve	Reserve established to support a bid to secure a multi-year arrangement with British Triathlon to host triathlon events in the City.
Member Recovery Fund	Members Covid Response fund.
Other Earmarked Revenue Reserves	Numerous revenue reserves under £1m set up for specific purposes.
NNDR Covid-19 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief Grant Reserve	Reserve established to manage the requirement to fund Collection Fund deficits in the proceeding financial year. Section 31 Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief Grant held to offset deficit in 2022/2023.
Service Reduction Reserve	This reserve is to provide temporary transitional funding relating to the implementation of planned service reductions.
Children's Social Care Reserve	A reserve to fund any one-off Children's Social Care costs that may arise in the future.
Children and Young People Recovery	The reserve was established for TfC to deliver a range of activities that will support Covid-19 recovery activities.
Covid-19 Reserve	A reserve established from the Government grant to fund the immediate costs and lost income associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 10 – Other operating expenditure

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
67	Parish Council Precept	70
15,169	Levies	16,120
(1,047)	(Gain) / losses on the disposal of non current assets	18,662
14,189	Total	34,852

Note 11 – Financing and investment income and expenditure

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
15,393	Interest payable and similar charges	17,204
12,070	Net interest on the net defined benefit liability	9,870
(2,799)	Interest receivable and similar income	(7,833)
(700)	Other Investment Income	(1,000)
482	(Surplus)/deficit on Trading Undertakings	(1,138)
0	Net income and expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value	0
(53)	Net income and expenditure in relation to financial instruments and changes in their fair value	(3)
904	Disposals and impairments	1,289
25,297	Total	18,389

Note 12 – Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(110,674)	Council tax income	(115,488)
(39,064)	Business rates income and expenditure	(40,426)
(102,925)	Non-ringfenced government grants *	(101,130)
(29,692)	Capital grants and contributions *	(41,839)
(282,355)	Total	(298,883)

* Further analysis of grants is shown in Note 31.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 13 – Property, Plant and Equipment

Movement on Balances 2022/2023	Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £'000	Infra-structure Assets £'000	Community Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Surplus Assets £'000	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £'000	PFI Assets included in Property, Plant and Equipment £'000
Cost or Valuation:								
At 1 April 2022	552,679	52,650	641,980	1,429	34,535	31,089	1,314,362	93,314
Additions	45,228	11,984	25,152	2,411	35,655	4,808	125,238	0
Recognition of PFI assets and Embedded Leases	9,373	2,962	250	0	0	0	12,585	250
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	15,492	0	0	0	0	2,983	18,475	0
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Provision of Services	(30,297)	0	0	0	0	(3,963)	(34,260)	0
Derecognition recognised in the Provision of Services	0	(5,105)	(6,016)	0	0	0	(11,121)	0
Disposals	(19,081)	(337)	0	0	0	(4,715)	(24,133)	0
Assets reclassified as Intangible Assets	0	0	0	0	(239)	0	(239)	0
Other movements in Cost or Valuation	12,190	185	3,560	2	(15,761)	(176)	0	0
At 31 March 2023	585,584	62,339	664,926	3,842	54,190	30,026	1,400,907	93,564
Accumulated Depreciation:								
At 1 April 2022	13,991	22,592	173,764	0	0	129	210,476	20,772
Depreciation Charge	20,051	5,764	15,283	0	0	153	41,251	4,658
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	(14,412)	0	0	0	0	0	(14,412)	0
Depreciation written out to the Provision of Services	(4,120)	0	0	0	0	(10)	(4,130)	0
Derecognition recognised in the Provision of Services	0	(5,105)	(6,016)	0	0	0	(11,121)	0
Disposals	(983)	(162)	0	0	0	(15)	(1,160)	0
At 31 March 2023	14,527	23,089	183,031	0	0	257	220,904	25,430
Net Book Value								
At 31 March 2022	538,688	30,058	468,216	1,429	34,535	30,960	1,103,886	72,542
At 31 March 2023	571,057	39,250	481,895	3,842	54,190	29,769	1,180,003	68,134

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 13 – Property, Plant and Equipment

Movement on Balances 2021/2022	Land and Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £'000	Infra-structure Assets £'000	Community Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Surplus Assets £'000	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £'000	PFI Assets included in Property, Plant and Equipment £'000
Cost or Valuation:								
At 1 April 2021	497,012	58,520	541,209	0	99,493	37,783	1,234,017	89,976
Additions	35,403	3,995	30,192	762	24,238	349	94,939	0
Recognition of PFI assets and Embedded Leases	62,737	1,119	213	0	0	0	64,069	213
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(7,188)	0	0	0	0	1,120	(6,068)	3,125
Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Provision of Services	(48,676)	0	0	0	0	(3,801)	(52,477)	0
Derecognition recognised in the Provision of Services	0	(10,945)	(2,326)	0	0	0	(13,271)	0
Disposals	(1,200)	(109)	0	0	0	(5,356)	(6,665)	0
Assets reclassified as Heritage Assets	0	0	(260)	0	0	0	(260)	0
Other movements in Cost or Valuation	14,513	70	72,952	667	(89,196)	994	0	0
At 31 March 2022	552,679	52,650	641,980	1,429	34,535	31,089	1,314,362	93,314
Accumulated Depreciation:								
At 1 April 2021	10,443	27,590	162,119	0	0	62	200,214	21,636
Depreciation Charge	18,927	6,020	13,970	0	0	193	39,110	3,911
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	(12,623)	0	0	0	0	(31)	(12,654)	(4,775)
Depreciation written out to the Provision of Services	(2,756)	0	0	0	0	(2)	(2,758)	0
Derecognition recognised in the Provision of Services	0	(10,945)	(2,325)	0	0	0	(13,270)	0
Disposals	0	(73)	0	0	0	(93)	(166)	0
At 31 March 2022	13,991	22,592	173,764	0	0	129	210,476	20,772
Net Book Value								
At 31 March 2021	486,569	30,930	379,090	0	99,493	37,721	1,033,803	68,340
At 31 March 2022	538,688	30,058	468,216	1,429	34,535	30,960	1,103,886	72,542

Notes to the Financial Statements

Depreciation

The following useful lives and depreciation rates have been used in the calculation of depreciation:

- Land and buildings – 5 to 60 years;
- Vehicles, plant and equipment – 3 to 40 years; and
- Infrastructure – 20 to 100 years

Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2023, the Council has entered into a number of contracts for the construction or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2023/2024 and future years budgeted to cost £58.699m (similar commitments at 31 March 2022 were £50.909m). The commitments are:

- Riverside Sunderland Infrastructure - £39.454m;
- Sunderland Central Station Redevelopment & Car Park - £9.178m;
- Housing Delivery Investment Plan - £2.345m;
- A182 Bridge Maintenance Phase 2 - £1.082m;
- Holmeside Bus Rationalisation and Priority Measures - £1.046m; and
- Various other schemes - £5.594m.

Revaluations

The Council carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment is revalued with enough regularity to ensure the carrying amount does not differ materially from the value at the end of the reporting period. All valuations are carried out by the Council's valuation experts. Valuations of Land and Buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Valuations of vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment are based on depreciated historical cost as a proxy for non-property assets that have short useful lives.

The significant assumptions applied in estimating the values are:

- Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) method has been used where the asset is used by the Council to deliver services, but the property is of a specialist nature in that there is little or no market evidence to support value;
- Existing Use Value has been used where the asset is used by the Council to deliver services but is not specialised and there is market evidence to support value;
- Existing Use Value – Social Housing has been used to measure the value of Council Dwellings
- the condition and state of repair of the assets is acceptable for the purpose for which they are used. Given that the Council has a regular maintenance programme for its assets, there will be no significant deterioration within the estimated life expectancy of each asset;
- the Council has good title to each asset with no adverse or restrictive covenants which could affect the use or the asset;
- the assets are fit for the purpose for which they are used and will continue to remain so physically, complying with fire, health and safety or any other statutory regulation;
- the current use will continue for the foreseeable future and the use will remain viable;
- the existing use has planning permission;
- the assets are not affected by any ground conditions / stability or contamination which would materially prejudice the valuation;
- the assets are free from contamination and deleterious or hazardous substances;
- no allowance has been made for taxation, acquisition, realisation or disposal costs or other expenses;
- the assets provided by PFI contracts will be effectively maintained by the contractor up to the end of the contract with each being fit for purpose; and
- an assumption that the transaction takes place in the principal market, or in the absence of the principal market, the most advantageous market for the asset is used for assets valued at fair value.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Valuation Techniques – there has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for valuing Surplus Assets. The fair value of the Council's surplus assets are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. All valuations are carried out by the Council's valuation experts, in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The Council's valuation experts work closely with finance officers reporting directly to the Director of Finance on a regular basis regarding all valuation matters.

	Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment	Infra-structure Assets	Community Assets	Assets Under Construction	Surplus Assets	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Carried at historic cost		62,339	664,926	3,842	54,190		785,297
Valued at:							
31 March 2023	303,726					8,632	312,358
31 March 2022	206,497					7,599	214,096
31 March 2021	75,361					13,795	89,156
Total Cost or Valuation	585,584	62,339	664,926	3,842	54,190	30,026	1,400,907

Non-operational Property, Plant and Equipment (Surplus Assets)

Market conditions are such that similar properties are actively purchased and sold and therefore there is a significant level of observable inputs allowing the Council to categorise these properties as Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy. The fair value for the surplus assets (at market rents) has been based on the market approach using current market conditions, recent sales prices and other relevant information for similar assets in the local authority area. The income approach has also been used, where appropriate, which capitalises the potential income of the asset.

There were no transfers between levels during the year.

Highest and Best Use of Surplus Assets – In estimating the fair value of the Council's surplus assets, the highest and best use of the properties is for residential or commercial use. The assets have become surplus to requirement and will become part of the Council's disposals programme or used to further regeneration projects within the City.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 14 – Heritage Assets

Reconciliation of the carrying value of Heritage Assets held by the Council

	Collections Held by Tyne & Wear Museums £'000	Statues, Monuments and Public Art £'000	Other Historic Assets £'000	Total Assets £'000
Cost or Valuation				
1 April 2021	9,975	556	1,661	12,192
Additions	0	341	0	341
Reclassified from PPE	0	260	0	260
Donations	30	0	0	30
Disposals	0	0	0	0
Revaluations	0	0	0	0
31 March 2022	10,005	1,157	1,661	12,823
Cost or Valuation				
1 April 2022	10,005	1,157	1,661	12,823
Additions	0	31	113	144
Donations	0	50	0	50
Disposals	0	0	0	0
Revaluations	(31)	0	0	(31)
31 March 2023	9,974	1,238	1,774	12,986

Collections maintained by Tyne & Wear Museums

These assets are managed on the Council's behalf by the Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums Joint Committee 'principally for their contribution to knowledge or culture'. A full list of exhibition listings and the Tyne and Wear Museums' access policy is available on their website.

There has been a minor revaluation to these assets during 2022/2023.

Statues, Monuments and Public Art

Where their value can be separately identified statues, monuments and public art have been classified as heritage assets.

A number of public art pieces have been commissioned during 2022/2023 as part of the ongoing regeneration of the City.

Other Historic Assets

Other historic objects held by the Council include the Book of Remembrance, a copy of the Lindisfarne Gospels and miners' banners.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 15 – Financial Instruments

The following categories of financial assets are carried in the Balance Sheet.

Financial Assets	Non Current				Current				Total	
	Investments / Pension Asset		Debtors		Investments / Cash and Cash Equivalents		Debtors			
	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Fair Value through profit or loss	14	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	18
Amortised Cost - Soft Loans	0	0	6,069	6,240	0	0	0	0	6,069	6,240
Amortised Cost - Other	0	0	53,936	52,744	252,429	218,028	36,142	41,290	342,507	312,062
Fair Value through other comprehensive income - designated equity instruments	16,508	16,508	0	0	0	0	0	0	16,508	16,508
Unquoted Equity Instruments in subsidiaries and joint ventures at cost	12,850	12,850	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,850	12,850
Total Financial Assets	29,372	29,376	60,005	58,984	252,429	218,028	36,142	41,290	377,948	347,678
Non Financial Instruments	0	20,960	0	0	0	0	36,448	43,205	36,448	64,165
Total	29,372	50,336	60,005	58,984	252,429	218,028	72,590	84,495	414,396	411,843

Notes to the Financial Statements

The following categories of financial liabilities are carried in the Balance Sheet.

Financial Liabilities	Non Current				Current				Total	
	Borrowings and Other Liabilities		Creditors		Borrowings and Other Liabilities		Creditors		31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000		
Amortised Cost - borrowings	(476,524)	(525,533)	0	0	(38,092)	(32,525)	(56,529)	(50,148)	(571,145)	(608,206)
Amortised Cost - PFI and finance lease liabilities	(124,538)	(123,554)	0	0	(7,364)	(7,900)	0	0	(131,902)	(131,454)
Total Financial Liabilities	(601,062)	(649,087)	0	0	(45,456)	(40,425)	(56,529)	(50,148)	(703,047)	(739,660)
Non Financial Instruments	(376,290)	0	0	0	0	0	(31,857)	(25,327)	(408,147)	(25,327)
Total	(977,352)	(649,087)	0	0	(45,456)	(40,425)	(88,386)	(75,475)	(1,111,194)	(764,987)

Notes to the Financial Statements

Investments in Equity Instruments designated at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income

Newcastle Airport

Under the Airport Act 1986, Newcastle International Airport Limited (NIAL) was formed and seven local authorities were allocated shares in consideration for all the property, rights and liabilities that were transferred into the new company. On 4 May 2001, the seven local authority shareholders of NIAL (the "LA7") created NIAL Holdings Limited, which is 51% owned by LA7 and 49% owned by InfraBridge (previously known as AMP Capital Investors Limited) following their purchase on 16 November 2012. The 51% holding is held in the Newcastle Airport Local Authority Holding Company Limited (NALAHCL), a company wholly owned by the seven authorities. NALAHCL has a called-up share capital of 10,000 shares with a nominal value of £1 each. The Council holds an 18.87% interest in NALAHCL valued at £16.508m at 31 March 2023 (£16.508m at 31 March 2022). The shares are not held for trading outside of the LA7.

The fair value for the shareholding is based on a combination of the discounted cash flow of income method together with the guideline public company method of the market approach to valuations and other observable and unobservable factors.

The spread of the Covid-19 pandemic across the world towards the end of 2019/2020 led to a sudden decline in air travel prompting the value of the shareholding to be impaired. By the end of 2021/2022 the travel sector had experienced a resurgence in passenger numbers and the majority of the Covid-19 related impairment had been reversed.

Forecast earnings before interest, tax and depreciation (EBITDA) have been compared against the EBITDA used for the last full valuation at 31 March 2022 to calculate any required revaluation to the share value at 31 March 2023. No change to the valuation was considered necessary.

The upper and lower limits for the fair value, established at the last full valuation, have been increased at 31 March 2023 based on EBITDA forecasts and the current value reflected on the Balance Sheet is within the revised parameters. The estimation of these upper and lower limits is sensitive to the accuracy of the EBITDA forecasts used. Sensitivity analysis shows that the current value would still be within acceptable parameters if the EBITDA projection was to either increase or decrease by 5%.

Trading of shares only takes place when one or more of the LA7 or InfraBridge wishes to sell their shareholding. There are no plans to dispose of shares next year.

The Council has chosen to designate its Newcastle Airport equity instrument at fair value through other comprehensive income under IFRS9 classifications. This decision protects council tax payers from any future movements in the value of these shareholdings until such time as the shares are sold or released. Valuation changes in respect of the Council's investment in Newcastle Airport are therefore reflected in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

Additional details on the relationship between the Council and Newcastle Airport can be found in Note 32, Related Parties.

Investments in Equity Instruments held at Cost

Siglion LLP

The Council has a 100% equity share in its subsidiary, Siglion LLP. The company was formed in November 2014 with the primary purpose being to assist in the delivery of economic and regeneration benefits to Sunderland, and primarily holds non-current assets in relation to land development and where possible, these assets are disclosed in subsidiary accounts at fair value.

The Council has no current intention to dispose of the equity share which is non-interest bearing and is not anticipated to be repaid until Siglion LLP is wound up.

The Council has exercised its right to hold equity shares in subsidiaries at cost. Investment in Siglion LLP is presented on the Balance Sheet as a Long-Term Investment valued at cost of £12.350m.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The draft accounts for Siglion LLP for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, show a net profit before taxation of £6.681m (£8.253m for 2021/2022). The overall current net worth of the group is £38.394m (£31.713m at 31 March 2022).

Additional details on the relationship between the Council and Siglion LLP can be found in Note 32, Related Parties.

Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd

The Council has a 50% equity share in its leisure joint venture partnership, Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership, with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd.

The Council has no current intention to dispose of the equity share which is non-interest bearing and is not anticipated to be repaid until Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership is wound up.

The Council has exercised its right to hold equity shares in joint ventures at cost. Investment in Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd is presented on the Balance Sheet as a Long-Term Investment valued at cost of £0.500m.

Additional details on the relationship between the Council and Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd can be found in Note 32, Related Parties.

Fair Values of Financial Assets

Some of the Council's financial assets are measured at fair value on a recurring basis and are described in the following table, including the valuation techniques used to measure them.

31 March 2022	Financial assets measured at fair value			31 March 2023
£'000	Recurring fair value measurements	Input level in fair value hierarchy	Valuation technique used to measure fair value	£'000
16,508	Equity Shareholding in Newcastle International Airport Limited	Level 3	The fair value for Newcastle Airport has been assessed at 31 March 2023 based on a combination of the discounted cash flow of income method together with the guideline public company method of the market approach to valuations.	16,508
14	Other financial instruments classified as fair value through profit and loss	Level 1	Unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical shares	18
16,522	Total			16,526

Transfers between Levels of the Fair Value Hierarchy

There have been no transfers between levels of the fair value hierarchy.

Changes in the Valuation Technique

The fair value for Newcastle Airport is based on a combination of the discounted cash flow of income method together with the guideline public company method of the market approach to valuations and other observable and unobservable factors.

Forecast earnings before interest, tax and depreciation (EBITDA) have been compared against the EBITDA used for the last full valuation at 31 March 2022 to calculate any required revaluation to the share value at 31 March 2023. No change to the valuation was considered necessary.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Other Financial Instruments Classified at Fair Value through Profit and Loss

The Council holds a small number of investment bonds. The market value of these holdings as at 31 March 2023 was £0.018m (£0.014m at 31 March 2022). These financial instruments have been classified at fair value through profit and loss and therefore the gain has been credited to Provision of Services on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

2021/2022			2022/2023	
Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services £'000	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure £'000		Surplus or (Deficit) on the Provision of Services £'000	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure £'000
53	0	Net gains / (losses) on:		
		Financial assets measured at fair value through profit and loss	3	0
2,446	0	Financial assets measured at amortised costs	3,232	0
0	4,602	Investments in equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	0	0
2,499	4,602	Total net gains / (losses)	3,235	0
		Interest Revenue		
2,799	0	Financial assets measured at amortised costs	7,833	0
2,799	0	Total interest revenue	7,833	0
		Interest expense		
(15,393)	0		(17,204)	0
(10,095)	4,602	Total	(6,136)	0

The Fair Values of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities that are not measured at Fair Value (but for which Fair Value Disclosures are required)

Except for the financial assets carried at fair value (described in the earlier table) and subsidiaries and joint ventures included in group accounts and carried at cost, all other financial liabilities and financial assets held by the Council are carried on the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. The fair value of financial assets and liabilities assets is shown in the tables below. The fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that take place over the remaining life of the instruments (Level 2), using the following assumptions:

- For loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) payable, PWLB prevailing market rates (new borrowing (certainty) rates) have been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures as per interest rate notice number 127/23;
- For non-PWLB loans payable, PWLB prevailing market rates have been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- For loans receivable prevailing benchmark market rates have been used to provide the fair value;
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months or is a trade or other receivable the fair value is taken to be the carrying amount or the billed amount; and
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The financial assets in the tables below classed as Deposits with Money Market Funds, Banks and Building Societies and the financial liabilities held with PWLB and Non PWLB were not quoted on an

Notes to the Financial Statements

active market and a Level 1 valuation is not available. To provide a fair value which provides a comparison to the carrying amount for these assets we have used a financial model valuation provided by Link Asset Services. This valuation applies the Net Present Value approach, which provides an estimate of the value of payments in the future in today's terms as at the Balance Sheet date. This is a widely accepted valuation technique commonly used by the private sector. Our accounting policy uses New Borrowing Rates to discount the future cash flows.

The fair values calculated are as follows:

31 March 2022		Financial Liabilities	31 March 2023	
Carrying Amount	Fair Value		Carrying Amount	Fair Value
£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
38,092	37,962	Short Term Borrowing	32,525	32,418
56,529	56,529	Short Term Creditors	50,148	50,148
124,538	124,538	Long Term PFI and Finance Lease Liability	123,554	123,554
7,364	7,364	Short Term PFI and Finance Lease Liability	7,900	7,900
46,941	66,108	Non PWLB Debt	45,983	44,479
429,583	434,563	PWLB Debt	479,550	307,049
703,047	727,064	Financial Liabilities	739,660	565,548

Short-term creditors are carried at cost as this is a fair approximation of their value.

As PFI liabilities are accounting assessments derived from the unitary charge, they do not represent a conventional financial instrument and, as such, are not appropriate for a fair value application.

The fair value of non PWLB debt is lower than the carrying amount because the Council's portfolio of loans includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate payable is lower than the rates available for similar loans in the market at the Balance Sheet date. This shows a notional future gain (based on economic conditions at 31 March 2023) arising from a commitment to pay interest to lenders below current market rates. The fair values as at 31 March 2023 are lower than last year due to the higher interest rate environment this year which impacts the prevailing market rates used in calculating fair value.

As with non PWLB debt, the fair value of PWLB debt of £307.049m includes the notional future gain arising from the current debt being fixed at below market rates. This future gain can only be realised by retaining the existing fixed rate debt.

If the Council no longer required this level of debt and wished to repay these loans, the PWLB would raise a penalty charge for early redemption, as well as applying a discount for the interest avoided. The exit price for the existing PWLB loans, including the penalty charge and interest discount, would be £373.935m.

31 March 2022		Financial Assets	31 March 2023	
Carrying Amount	Fair Value		Carrying Amount	Fair Value
£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
299,050	299,050	Deposits with Money Market Funds, Banks & Building Societies	243,427	243,427
(46,621)	(46,621)	Cash in Hand	(25,399)	(25,399)
36,142	36,142	Short Term Debtors	41,290	41,290
60,005	60,005	Long Term Debtors	58,984	58,984
16,508	16,508	Financial assets at fair value through other comprehensive income - designated equity instruments	16,508	16,508
14	14	Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss	18	18
12,850	12,850	Unquoted equity investment at cost	12,850	12,850
377,948	377,948	Financial Assets	347,678	347,678

Notes to the Financial Statements

Deposits with Money Market Funds, Banks and Building Societies, Cash and short-term debtors are carried at cost as this is a fair approximation of their value.

Long Term Debtors

Long Term Debtors included in the table below are predominately in respect of organisations linked to the Council with a very high degree of certainty regarding payment. Except for the Loan to IAMP LLP all financial instruments are at a market rate of interest, no early repayment is recognised and therefore the values of these long-term debtors reflect the fair value of the debt.

31 March 2022 £'000	Long Term Debtors	31 March 2023 £'000
13,270	Long Term Loan Note to Newcastle Airport	13,415
17,933	Long Term Loan Notes to Siglion LLP	17,933
5,883	Long Term Loan Note to IAMP LLP	6,059
10,350	Advances to Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	9,936
1,300	Loan to Leisure Joint Venture	1,200
5,671	Property Lease Debtors	627
5,598	Other Long Term Debtors	9,814
60,005	Total	58,984

Soft Loans Made by the Council

Included within Long Term Debtors above are Loan Notes which have been issued to IAMP LLP, a Joint Venture with South Tyneside Council.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
5,470	Balance at start of year	5,883
344	Nominal value of new loans granted in the year	0
(94)	Fair Value adjustment on initial recognition	8
163	Increase in Discounted Amount	168
5,883	Balance at end of year	6,059

Valuation Assumptions

Loan notes have been issued to IAMP LLP for £7.474m. These are soft loans as they are interest free and have therefore been made at a rate lower than the market rate at the time of issue. The fair value of these loans has been arrived at by taking the cost to the Council if it had borrowed over similar terms, plus an allowance for the risk that the loan might not be repaid, in order to identify an appropriate interest rate to apply. Using this interest rate the present value of all future cash flows in respect of the IAMP loan notes results in a fair value of £6.059m.

Additional details on the relationship between the Council and IAMP LLP can be found in Note 32, Related Parties.

The Council has issued a small number of other, low value, soft loans to partners and community organisations which have been made at less than market rates.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 16 – Short Term Debtors

31 March 2022		31 March 2023
£'000		£'000
1,085	Payments in Advance	1,844
6,479	Central government bodies	15,720
13,385	Other local authorities and public bodies	13,349
8,106	NHS bodies	6,168
4,646	Council subsidiaries	4,060
38,889	Other entities and individuals	43,354
72,590	Total	84,495

Note 17 – Assets Held for Sale

Where Council assets are available for immediate sale, there is a commitment to sell the asset and where the asset has been actively marketed and a sale is expected within one year, they are transferred from Property, Plant and Equipment to Assets Held for Sale. The carrying value of these assets is measured at fair value less costs to sell.

The Council has no Assets Held for Sale.

Note 18 – Cash and cash equivalents

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

31 March 2022		31 March 2023
£'000		£'000
(46,621)	Cash held by the Council	(25,399)
88,796	Bank current accounts and Money Market Funds	75,980
42,175	Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	50,581

Note 19 – Short-Term Creditors

31 March 2022		31 March 2023
£'000		£'000
(4,667)	Receipts in Advance	(3,050)
(26,938)	Central government bodies	(17,180)
(5,319)	Other local authorities and public bodies	(3,320)
(1,226)	NHS bodies	(3,391)
(11,982)	Council subsidiaries	(11,940)
(38,254)	Other entities and individuals	(36,594)
(88,386)	Total	(75,475)

Note 20 – Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that will probably require settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential at some point in the future, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

The estimated cost is charged as an expense to the appropriate service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year that the Council becomes aware of the obligation.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision in the Balance Sheet.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year and any provisions which are no longer required are credited back to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The nature of the provisions held at 31 March 2023 is detailed in the table below:

31 March 2022 £'000	Nature of provision	Additional provisions £'000	Amounts used £'000	Amounts reversed £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
(117)	Potential costs of successful business rates appeals	(390)	186	0	(321)
(795)	Insurance	(585)	483	192	(705)
(912)	Short Term Provisions	(975)	669	192	(1,026)
(7,161)	Potential costs of successful business rates appeals	(1,882)	3,672	0	(5,371)
(2,386)	Insurance	(1,755)	1,449	575	(2,117)
(215)	Other provisions	(16)	8	0	(223)
(9,762)	Long Term Provisions	(3,653)	5,129	575	(7,711)
(10,674)	Total Provisions	(4,628)	5,798	767	(8,737)

Business Rates Appeals

Local Authorities are liable for successful appeals against Business Rates charged to businesses. A provision has been recognised for the best estimate of the amount that will be successfully appealed (i.e. that businesses have been overcharged) in relation to 2022/2023 and previous years, regardless of when that appeal is raised or settled. The estimate has been calculated by applying historic trend analysis to open appeals lodged with the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) relating to the 2010 list, and historic estimates for likely appeals raised relating to the 2017 list.

Insurance

Provisions relating to insurance are based on the estimated value of potential claims, some of which are likely to result in a cost to the Council. Some claims are expected to be settled during 2023/2024 with others likely to take several years before they are concluded.

Other provisions

Other provisions relate to guarantee bonds held by the Council which will be held for several years.

Note 21 – Unusable Reserves

31 March 2022 £'000		Note	31 March 2023 £'000
181,293	Revaluation Reserve	21a	199,713
16,141	Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve	21b	16,141
337,741	Capital Adjustment Account	21c	324,686
(2,328)	Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	21d	(2,069)
(376,290)	Pensions Reserve	21e	20,960
29,356	Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	21f	26,386
(5,648)	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	21g	4,603
(1,601)	Accumulated Absences Account	21h	(1,727)
(3,034)	Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account	21i	(4,427)
175,630	Total Unusable Reserves		584,266

21a) Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve holds the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of

Notes to the Financial Statements

its Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible Assets. The balance is reduced when assets with 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 only holds 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.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
182,862	Balance at 1 April	181,293
22,377	Upward revaluation of assets	49,709
(15,791)	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(16,852)
189,448	Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	214,150
6,934	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	5,632
1,221	Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	8,805
8,155	Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account	14,437
181,293	Balance at 31 March	199,713

21b) Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve

The Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its investments that are measured at fair value through other comprehensive income. The balance is reduced when investments with accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost; or
- disposed of and the gains are realised.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
11,539	Balance at 1 April	16,141
4,602	Upward revaluation of investments	0
0	Downwards revaluation of investments	0
16,141	Balance at 31 March	16,141

21c) 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 additions to those assets under statutory provisions. The Account is adjusted for the cost of acquisition, construction or subsequent costs as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert current and 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 subsequent costs.

The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Council. 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 7 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

Notes to the Financial Statements

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
382,781	Balance at 1 April	337,741
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:	
(39,111)	Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(41,250)
(49,720)	Revaluation losses and reversal of prior year revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(30,130)
(2,852)	Amortisation of intangible assets	(1,307)
(25,889)	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(25,439)
108	Donated Assets	50
(6,499)	Amount 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	(22,973)
(123,963)		(121,049)
8,155	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	14,436
(115,808)	Net written out amount of the cost of non current assets consumed in the year	(106,613)
	Capital financing applied in the year:	
2,691	Use of Capital Receipts to finance new capital expenditure	6,373
41,941	Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	56,845
7,512	Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	6,028
13,018	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balance	16,290
5,717	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund balance	8,134
70,879		93,670
(111)	Writing down of Long Term Debtor	(112)
337,741	Balance at 31 March	324,686

21d) Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for income and expenses relating to certain financial instruments and for bearing losses or benefiting from gains per statutory provisions. The Council uses the Account to manage premiums paid on the early redemption of loans. Premiums are debited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when they are incurred but reversed out of the General Fund Balance to the Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Over time, the expense is posted back to the General Fund Balance in accordance with statutory arrangements for spreading the burden on Council Tax. In the Council's case, this period is the unexpired term that was outstanding on the loans when they were redeemed. As a result, the balance on the Account at 31 March 2023 will be charged to the General Fund over the next 32 years.

Notes to the Financial Statements

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(2,631)	Balance at 1 April	(2,328)
(94)	Premiums incurred in the year charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account	(8)
397	Proportion of premiums incurred in previous financial years to be charged against the General Fund Balance in accordance with statutory requirements	267
303	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	259
(2,328)	Balance at 31 March	(2,069)

21e) 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 Comprehensive 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 shows a notional surplus relating to the benefits earned by past and current employees. This is an indication of money which may potentially become available in the future and is restricted by statutory arrangements to ensure that appropriate funding is available at the point when benefits become due.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(584,840)	Balance at 1 April	(376,290)
242,510	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit (liability) / asset	426,350
(54,040)	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(49,880)
20,080	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	20,780
(376,290)	Balance at 31 March	20,960

21f) Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve

The Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve holds the gains recognised on the disposal of non-current assets but for which cash settlement has yet to take place. Under statutory arrangements, the Council does not treat these gains as usable for financing new capital expenditure until they are backed by cash receipts. When the deferred cash settlement eventually takes place, amounts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
24,766	Balance at 1 April	29,356
4,629	Transfer of deferred sale proceeds credited as part of the gain / (loss) on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	0
(39)	Transfer to the Capital Receipts Reserve upon receipt of cash	(2,970)
29,356	Balance at 31 March	26,386

Notes to the Financial Statements

21g) Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of Council Tax and Business Rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from council tax payers and business rates payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

The Collection Fund deficit for 2021/2022 was larger than anticipated, particularly in relation to Business Rates. This is primarily as a result of businesses being awarded further Expanded Retail and Nursery business rates reliefs in 2021/2022. These reliefs have been funded by DLUHC through Section 31 Grants, which will contribute towards the funding of the position in 2022/2023. Further details are provided in Collection Fund Statement and associated notes.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(24,791)	Balance at 1 April	(5,648)
19,143	Amount by which council tax and business rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from the council tax and business rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	10,251
(5,648)	Balance at 31 March	4,603

21h) Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000	£'000
(1,459)	Balance at 1 April		(1,601)
1,459	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	1,601	
(1,601)	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	(1,727)	
(142)	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accrual basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements		(126)
(1,601)	Balance at 31 March		(1,727)

21i) Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account

The Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account was established 1 April 2020 and absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from a deficit position on school budgets. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(1,351)	Balance at 1 April	(3,034)
(1,683)	DSG Deficit	(1,393)
(3,034)	Balance at 31 March	(4,427)

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 22 – Cash Flow Statement – Operating Activities

The net cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
1,115	Interest received	5,500
(14,903)	Interest paid	(17,051)
700	Dividends received	0

Note 23 – Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(97,227)	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets	(125,701)
(210,010)	Purchase of short-term and long-term investments	(165,010)
(2,128)	Other payments for investing activities	(3,354)
4,111	Net Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	7,339
105,064	Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments	210,254
62,311	Other receipts from investing activities	81,833
(137,879)	Net cash flows from investing activities	5,361

Note 24 – Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
102,102	Cash receipts of short and long-term borrowing	50,605
(5,825)	Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases and on-balance sheet PFI contracts	(8,084)
(10,157)	Repayments of short and long term borrowing	(12,352)
13,170	Other payments for/receipts from financing activities	(6,291)
99,290	Net cash flows from financing activities	23,878

Note 25 – Reconciliation of Liabilities arising from Financing Activities

2022/2023	1 April 2022	Financing cash flows	Non-cash changes		31 March 2023
			Acquisition	Other non- cash changes	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Long-term borrowings	(476,524)	(50,605)	1,596	0	(525,533)
Short-term borrowings	(38,092)	12,352	(1,596)	(5,189)	(32,525)
Lease liabilities	(71,406)	3,591	(12,679)	5,043	(75,451)
On balance sheet PFI liabilities	(60,496)	4,493	0	0	(56,003)
Total liabilities from financing activities	(646,518)	(30,169)	(12,679)	(146)	(689,512)

Notes to the Financial Statements

2021/2022	1 April 2021	Financing cash flows	Non-cash changes		31 March 2022
			Acquisition	Other non- cash changes	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Long-term borrowings	(381,790)	(102,101)	7,358	9	(476,524)
Short-term borrowings	(40,486)	10,157	(7,358)	(405)	(38,092)
Lease liabilities	(8,652)	1,102	(63,856)	0	(71,406)
On balance sheet PFI liabilities	(65,219)	4,723	0	0	(60,496)
Total liabilities from financing activities	(496,147)	(86,119)	(63,856)	(396)	(646,518)

Note 26 – Partnership Arrangements with National Health Service Bodies

Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006 allows partnership arrangements between National Health Service (NHS) bodies, Local Authorities to contribute to a common fund which can be used to commission health or social care related services. This power allows a local authority to commission health services and NHS commissioners to commission social care. It enables joint commissioning and commissioning of integrated services.

Better Care Fund (BCF)

The Better Care Fund (BCF) programme is a key enabler of health and care integration, supporting the joint delivery of person-centred and sustainable health and care provision that delivers better outcomes for people, place and population. The BCF enables the Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to establish a joint budget arrangement that supports effective collaboration in delivering on the NHS Long-Term Plan, alongside local strategies to improve population health and reduce inequalities.

The Council has entered into a Pooled Budget arrangement with the ICB under which each partner organisation makes an agreed contribution.

The Council and the ICB agreed BCF schemes and funding allocations to be pooled into the 2022/2023 BCF. This included high-level proposals for securing cost effective health and care investment that would:

- Address local health and care priorities aligned to two overarching policy objectives (i.e. 'enabling people to stay well, safe and independent at home for longer' and 'right care, right time, right place'), alongside the strategic objectives of the Healthy City Plan and emerging Integrated Care Strategy; and
- Build effective place-based governance arrangements, including a comprehensive s75 partnership arrangement to provide the mechanisms to support a pooled budget arrangement, alongside joint decision-making and appropriate delegations of powers.

In addition to meeting national BCF conditions, the s75 partnership agreement has the potential to include wider elements of health and care integration that will support achievement of strategic objectives within the Healthy City Plan and emerging Integrated Care Strategy. As such, an approved decision to develop a comprehensive s75 partnership arrangement between the ICB and Council, was agreed on the basis that it will:

- Lead to improved patient and population health and care outcomes, including delivery of the strategic objectives of the Healthy City Plan and emerging Integrated Care Strategy;
- Enable better use of scarce system resource to deliver improved cost effectiveness, increased efficiencies and achieve economies of scale;
- Support shared approaches to risk management to support continuity of care and build system resilience; and
- Create new opportunities to leverage the benefits of shared system capacity and powers to deliver innovation, improved market confidence and coordinated sustainable development activities, including community wealth building.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The Adult Social Care Discharge Fund has been pooled into the BCF, the funding is to be used on the interventions that best enable the discharge of patients from hospital to the most appropriate location for their ongoing care.

Within Sunderland, a significant amount of work has been progressed to create the conditions for integration and alignment of resources at various spatial levels across the City. There is a strong track record of aligning resources towards certain targeted client groups, key outcomes and at an area or neighbourhood level to better meet local needs (both formally and informally) and developing local responsive services.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
	Better Care Fund	
	Funding Provided to the Pooled Budget	
(477)	Sunderland City Council DFG b/f from Prior Year	(894)
(89,869)	Sunderland City Council	(105,074)
(168,680)	Integrated Care Board	(167,192)
(259,026)	Total Funding	(273,160)
	Expenditure met from the Pooled Budget	
477	Sunderland City Council DFG b/f from Prior Year	894
150,501	Sunderland City Council	162,206
108,157	Integrated Care Board	109,139
259,135	Total Expenditure	272,239
109	Net (Surplus)/Deficit arising on the Pooled Budget	(921)
(894)	Sunderland City Council Share of (Surplus)/Deficit	(551)
1,003	Integrated Care Board Share of (Surplus)/Deficit	(370)
	ASC Discharge Fund	
	Funding Provided to the ASC Discharge Fund:	
0	Sunderland City Council	(1,306)
0	Integrated Care Board	(1,372)
0	Total Funding	(2,678)
	Expenditure met from the ASC Discharge Fund:	
0	Sunderland City Council	1,306
0	Integrated Care Board	1,337
0	Total Expenditure	2,643
0	Net (Surplus)/Deficit arising on the ASC Discharge Fund	(35)
0	Sunderland City Council Share of (Surplus)/Deficit	0
0	Integrated Care Board Share of (Surplus)/Deficit	(35)

The Council's 2022/2023 surplus of £0.551m relates to underspend from Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) which will be re-profiled into 2023/2024 to pay for essential housing adaptations to help disabled people stay in their own homes.

Children's Services Agreement

The Council has also entered into a smaller Section 75 Agreement with the Integrated Care Board to jointly fund key services for its children.

Under this Agreement the Integrated Care Board has provided funds of £2.611m to the Council (£3.039m in 2021/2022) and the Council has provided funds of £0.512m to the Integrated Care Board (£0.482m in 2021/2022).

The services will be delivered largely by Together for Children Sunderland Ltd, the Council's wholly owned subsidiary created to focus specifically on Children's Services across the City.

Notes to the Financial Statements

A key initiative for Together for Children Sunderland Ltd is the development of an Integrated Children's Commissioning programme wherein partnership working, co-commissioning and co-production is central.

As this work matures, the Section 75 Agreement will also develop to reflect the new and holistic approach which aligns with Together for Children Sunderland Ltd's strategy – Putting the Child First

Note 27 – Members' Allowances and Expenses

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

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
1,004	Allowances	1,015
1	Expenses	2
1,005	Total	1,017

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 28 – Officers’ Remuneration

The remuneration paid to the Council’s senior employees is as follows:

Post Holder Information 2022/2023	Salary (Including Fees and Allowances) £	Bonuses £	Expense Allowances £	Compensation for loss of office £	Benefits in Kind £	Total Remuneration excluding Pension Contributions £	Pension Contributions £	Total Remuneration including Pension Contributions £
Senior Officer Emoluments exceeding £150,000 per year								
Chief Executive - Patrick Melia	196,399				2,077	198,476	37,039	235,515
Executive Director of City Development - Peter McIntyre	155,351				3,142	158,493	27,919	186,412
Chief Medical Officer - Syed Abbas	153,780					153,780	29,274	183,054
Senior Officer Emoluments exceeding £50,000 but less than £150,000								
Executive Director of Health, Housing & Commu	144,392					144,392	19,029	163,421
Director of Children’s Services (2)	144,392				1,730	146,122	26,728	172,850
Director of Adult Services (3)	115,577					115,577	21,200	136,777
Executive Director of Corporate Services (4)	50,848				299	51,147	9,614	60,761
Director of Finance (5)	83,224					83,224	16,320	99,544
Director of Smart Cities & Enabling Services (6)	81,073					81,073	15,077	96,150
Director of Strategy & Corporate Affairs (7)	24,699					24,699	4,637	29,336
Assistant Director of Law & Governance (8)	24,699					24,699	4,915	29,614
Director of Environmental Services (9)	51,567					51,567	10,262	61,829

(1) Post re-designated from Executive Director of Public Health and Integrated Commissioning

(2) Post re-designated from Executive Director of Children’s Services. £139,122 has been recharged to Together for Children in respect of this position.

(3) New position from April 2022. £67,029 has been recharged to Sunderland Care and Support in respect of this position.

(4) Post holder left the Council on 7 August 2022 which resulted in this post being deleted and posts (5)-(8) being re-designated as Senior Employees

(5) Post re-designated as a Senior Employee with effect from 25 July 2022

(6) Post re-designated as a Senior Employee with effect from 25 July 2022

(7) Post re-designated as a Senior Employee with effect from 1 January 2023

(8) Post re-designated as a Senior Employee with effect from 1 January 2023

(9) New position - appointed October 2022

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 28 – Officers’ Remuneration

The remuneration paid to the Council’s senior employees is as follows:

Post Holder Information 2021/2022	Salary (Including Fees and Allowances) £	Bonuses £	Expense Allowances £	Compensation for loss of office £	Benefits in Kind £	Total Remuneration excluding Pension Contributions £	Pension Contributions £	Total Remuneration including Pension Contributions £
Senior Officer Emoluments exceeding £150,000 per year								
Chief Executive - Patrick Melia	194,474	-	-	-	-	194,474	38,700	233,174
Executive Director of City Development - Peter McIntyre *	229,611	-	-	-	1,570	231,181	28,673	259,854
Chief Medical Officer - Syed Abbas	151,855	-	-	-	-	151,855	30,219	182,074
Executive Director of Neighbourhoods - Fiona Brown **	178,402	-	-	32,787	-	211,189	362,361	573,550
Senior Officer Emoluments exceeding £50,000 but less than £150,000								
Executive Director of Corporate Services	142,785	-	-	-	651	143,436	26,778	170,214
Executive Director of Children's Services ***	142,785	-	-	-	741	143,526	26,408	169,934
Executive Director of Public Health and Integrated Commissioning	130,408	-	-	-	-	130,408	18,753	149,161

* The salary figure for Executive Director of City Development includes a backdated pay settlement

** Post holder left the Council at end of April 2022 but exit costs have been reflected in the table above

*** £151,421 has been recharged to Together for Children in respect of this position

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 28 – Officers’ Remuneration

The Council’s other employees (other than Senior Officers in preceding tables) receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer’s pension contributions but including termination payments) are shown below:

2021/2022		Remuneration	2022/2023	
Non-Teaching Staff	Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	Teaching Staff
63	35	£50,000 - £54,999 (#1)	73	25
33	29	£55,000 - £59,999	42	18
11	10	£60,000 - £64,999 (#2)	19	10
6	11	£65,000 - £69,999 (#3)	10	11
7	13	£70,000 - £74,999 (#4)	6	16
4	3	£75,000 - £79,999	9	5
1	3	£80,000 - £84,999	1	5
3	3	£85,000 - £89,999	2	1
6	2	£90,000 - £94,999	1	2
7	0	£95,000 - £99,999	4	0
0	1	£100,000 - £104,999	1	0
3	0	£105,000 - £109,999 (#5)	3	0
1	0	£110,000 - £114,999	1	0
1	0	£135,000 - £139,999	1	0
1	0	£165,000 - £169,999	0	0

#1 One officer in this band was seconded to an external organisation in 2022/2023 until 31st July 2022 and 50% of their cost have been recovered

#2 One officer in this band has been seconded to an external organisation in 2021/2022 and 100% of their cost has been recovered

#2 One officer in this band has been seconded to an external organisation in 2021/2022 and 30% of their cost has been recovered

#3 Two officers in this band have been seconded to an external organisation in 2021/2022 and 50% of their cost has been recovered

#3 One officer in this band has been seconded to an external organisation in 2022/2023 and 100% of their cost has been recovered

#3 One officer in this band has been seconded to an external organisation in 2022/2023 and 30% of their cost has been recovered

#4 Two officers in this band have been seconded to an external organisation in 2022/2023 and 50% of their cost has been recovered

#5 One officer in this band has been seconded to an external organisation in 2021/2022 and 50% of their cost has been recovered

Note 29 – 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 for non-audit services provided by the Council’s external auditors.

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
105	Fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year (Mazars LLP)	130
15	Fees payable in respect of other services provided by Mazars LLP during the year	15
120	Total Costs	145

Notes to the Financial Statements

The table above represents fees agreed between the Council and their external auditor however, additional work on specific issues may subsequently be required. The fees shown are before a contribution of £0.006m (nil in 2021/2022) from Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA).

Note 30 – Dedicated Schools’ Grant

The Council’s expenditure on schools is funded primarily by grant monies provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The DSG is ring-fenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure properly included in the Schools Budget, as defined in the School Finance and Early Years (England) Regulations 2022. The Schools Budget includes elements for a range of educational services provided on a council-wide basis and for the Individual Schools Budget (ISB), which is divided into a budget share for each maintained school.

Details of the deployment of DSG receivable for 2022/2023 are as follows (reference to the former MHCLG has been retained for historical context):

	Schools Budget Funded by DSG		
	Central Expenditure £'000	Individual Schools Budget (ISB) £'000	Total £'000
Final DSG for 2022/2023 before Academy and High Needs recoupment			250,668
Academy and High Needs figure recouped for 2022/2023			156,530
Total DSG after Academy and High Needs recoupment for 2022/2023			94,138
Plus: brought forward from 2021/2022			0
Less: carry forward to 2023/2024 agreed in advance			0
Agreed initial budgeted distribution in 2022/2023	51,206	42,932	94,138
In year adjustments	(286)		(286)
Final budgeted distribution in 2022/2023	50,920	42,932	93,852
Less: Actual central expenditure	52,313		52,313
Less: Actual ISB deployed to schools		42,932	42,932
Plus: Local authority contribution for 2022/2023			0
In year carry forward to 2023/2024	(1,393)	0	(1,393)
Plus/Minus: Carry-forward to 2023/2024 agreed in advance			0
Carry-forward to 2023/2024			0
DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2021/2022			(3,034)
Addition to DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2022/2023			(1,393)
Total of DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2022/2023			(4,427)
Net DSG position at the end of 2022/2023			(4,427)

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Schools Budget Funded by DSG		
	Central Expenditure	Individual Schools Budget (ISB)	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Final DSG for 2021/2022 before Academy and High Needs recoupment			238,716
Academy and High Needs figure recouped for 2021/2022			142,358
Total DSG after Academy and High Needs recoupment for 2021/2022			96,358
Plus: brought forward from 2020/2021			0
Less: carry forward to 2022/2023 agreed in advance			0
Agreed initial budgeted distribution in 2021/2022	45,703	50,655	96,358
In year adjustments	3	0	3
Final budgeted distribution in 2021/2022	45,706	50,655	96,361
Less: Actual central expenditure	47,389		47,389
Less: Actual ISB deployed to schools		50,655	50,655
Plus: Local authority contribution for 2021/2022	0	0	0
In year carry forward to 2022/2023	(1,683)	0	(1,683)
Plus/Minus: Carry-forward to 2022/2023 agreed in advance			0
Carry-forward to 2022/2023			0
DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2020/2021			(1,351)
Addition to DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2021/2022			(1,683)
Total of DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2021/2022			(3,034)
Net DSG position at the end of 2021/2022			(3,034)

Note: Actual Individual Schools Budgets deployed to schools is reflected at the same level as the ISB budget distribution in line with DSG disclosure note guidance.

Note 31 – Grant Income

The Council has received a number of capital grants and contributions that have yet to be recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them that may require the monies or property to be returned to the provider.

The Council received specific grants during 2021/2022 to support Covid-19 response activity. A number of these grants had conditions attached. Where grant balances remained at the end of the financial year to support on-going activity, and grant conditions yet to be met these are held as receipts in advance in 2021/2022.

The balances at the year-end are as follows:

Notes to the Financial Statements

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
	Revenue Grant Receipts in Advance	
0	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs	(16)
0	Department for Education	(358)
0	Department for Transport	(54)
(4,808)	Department of Health and Social Care	(103)
(2)	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	0
(76)	Education Skills Funding Agency	(49)
(2,113)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	(3,052)
(11)	Department for Work and Pensions	(31)
(10)	Other Revenue Grants and Contributions	(323)
(7,020)		(3,986)
	Capital Grant Receipts in Advance	
(10,687)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	(27,684)
(766)	Department for Education	(3,857)
(3,303)	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	(2,765)
(569)	Other Capital Grants and Contributions	(155)
(15,325)		(34,461)

The Council has credited grants, contributions and donations of £142.969m (£132.617m in 2021/2022) to the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
	Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income and Expenditure	
	Revenue Grants:	
(43,724)	Top Up Grant	(43,724)
(28,110)	Revenue Support Grant	(28,974)
(16,047)	Section 31 Business Rates Grant	(19,401)
(1,518)	New Homes Bonus	(1,842)
0	Services Grant	(5,919)
0	Business Rates Levy Surplus Distribution Grant	(720)
(499)	Lower Tier Services Grant	(536)
(14)	Local Services Support Grant	(14)
(8,915)	Covid-19 General Grant	0
(3,670)	Covid-19 Local Council Tax Support Grant	0
(428)	Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation Grant	0
(102,925)		(101,130)
	Capital Grants, Contributions and Donations:	
(7,315)	Department for Transport	(11,408)
(6,337)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	(11,377)
(8,045)	Homes England	(8,650)
(1,532)	NHS	(4,285)
(5,073)	Department for Education	(2,942)
(636)	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	(1,289)
(754)	Other Capital Grants and Contributions	(1,888)
(29,692)		(41,839)
(132,617)		(142,969)

Notes to the Financial Statements

The Council has credited grants of £304.320m (£307.851m in 2021/2022) to the Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
	Revenue Grants Credited to Services:	
	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	
(18,134)	Improved Better Care Fund	(18,684)
(13,861)	Social Care Support Grant	(18,586)
(5,538)	PFI	(5,538)
0	UK Community Renewal Fund	(1,450)
(1,008)	Strengthening Families Grant	(1,356)
(583)	New Burdens (various)	(931)
(627)	European Grants	(867)
0	Homes for Ukraine	(826)
(817)	Independent Living Fund	(815)
(607)	Homelessness Prevention Grant	(714)
(667)	Domestic Abuse Support Grant	(669)
0	Council Tax Energy Rebate	(657)
(1,363)	Other grants	(1,023)
	Department for Work and Pensions:	
(80,544)	Housing Benefit	(77,246)
(2,674)	Household Support Fund	(5,347)
(364)	European Grants	(546)
(121)	Welfare Reform Additional Burdens	(100)
	Department of Health and Social Care:	
(25,266)	Public Health Grant	(26,219)
0	Adult Social Care Discharge Grant	(1,306)
0	Fair Cost of Care	(1,058)
(3,769)	Other grants	(767)
	Education Skills Funding Agency:	
(96,361)	Dedicated Schools Grant	(93,852)
(6,143)	Pupil Premium	(6,006)
(1,504)	Adult Education Apprenticeships	(1,457)
(1,202)	Holiday Activities & Food	(1,356)
0	Supplementary Grant	(1,334)
0	Schools NNDR Grant	(992)
0	Family Hubs & Start for Life	(935)
(1,083)	Universal Free School Meals	(865)
(320)	Recovery Premium	(858)
(793)	PE & Sport Grant	(681)
(306)	School Led Tutoring	(613)
(1,760)	Other grants	(2,335)
(276)	Home Office	(1,630)
(677)	Youth Justice Board	(814)
(592)	Other Grants	(493)
(266,960)		(278,926)

Notes to the Financial Statements

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
	Capital Grants Credited to Services:	
	Grants applied to revenue expenditure funded from capital under	
(788)	Department for Transport	(10,553)
(11,673)	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy:	(4,764)
(7,107)	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	(4,673)
(721)	Department for Education	(621)
(1,409)	Other Capital Grants	(229)
(21,698)		(20,840)

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
	Covid-19 Revenue Grants Credited to Services	
	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	
(554)	Support to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable Individuals	0
(415)	Reopening High Street Safely Fund	0
(104)	Protect and Vaccinate Grant	0
	Department for Work and Pensions:	
(1,289)	Covid-19 Winter Grant	(49)
	Department of Health and Social Care:	
(7,129)	Contain Outbreak Management Fund	(4,350)
(1,137)	Covid-19 Infection Control	0
(803)	Covid-19 Rapid Testing	0
(1,076)	Covid-19 Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme	0
(392)	Adult Social Care Omicron Support Fund	0
(354)	LA Compliance and Enforcement	0
(325)	Test and Trace Grant (ASC Care Homes)	0
(64)	Other Grants	0
	Education Skills Funding Agency:	
(417)	Covid-19 Catch Up Premium	0
(24)	Covid-19 Mass testing Funding for Schools and Colleges	(19)
	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy:	
(4,526)	Covid-19 Business Support Grants	0
(497)	New Burdens Covid-19 Business Support Grants Scheme	(136)
(87)	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	0
(19,193)		(4,554)

Note 32 – 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. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council.

Central Government

Central Government has significant influence 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 and Housing Benefits). Grants received from government departments are set out in Note 31.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances and expenses paid in 2022/2023 is shown in Note 27. During 2022/2023, works and services to the value of £1.769m (£0.934m for 2021/2022) were commissioned from companies in which members had an interest. Contracts were entered into in full compliance with the Council's standing orders. In addition, grants and contributions totalling £1.040m (£0.788m for 2021/2022) were paid to voluntary organisations.

The figures stated above do not include transactions with Sunderland Care and Support Ltd, Together for Children Sunderland Ltd or Siglion LLP as transactions between these companies and the Council have been separately identified as part of the production of Group Accounts for 2022/2023.

It should be noted that all Council members' pecuniary and non-financial interests which could conflict with those of the Council are open to public inspection as required by the Local Authority (Members' Interests) Regulation (SI 1992/618) laid under Section 19 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The relevant members must therefore declare an interest (which is minuted) and they do not take part in any discussion or decision relating to the transactions concerned.

Officers

During 2022/2023 there were no Chief Officers who had a controlling interest in a company, partnership, trust or entity which is considered to have generated a related party transaction with the Council (£0.000m in 2021/2022).

The figures stated above do not include transactions with Sunderland Care and Support Ltd, Together for Children Sunderland Ltd or Siglion LLP as transactions between these companies and the Council have been separately identified as part of the production of Group Accounts for 2022/2023.

Other Public Bodies

The Council has entered into partnership arrangements with Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group for the provision of services to support reduced hospital admissions and length of stay and also to deliver key children's services. Transactions and balances outstanding are detailed in Note 26.

Subsidiaries and Joint Ventures Controlled or Significantly Influenced by the Council

The Council delivers some of its activities through a number of wholly owned subsidiaries and joint ventures. The Council prepares Group Accounts which consolidate the results and balances of the Council with these organisations in order to reflect the full extent of the Council's economic activity and financial position.

The Council's Group Accounts are presented after the single entity accounts.

Sunderland Care and Support (Holding Company) Ltd (subsidiary)

Sunderland Care and Support (Holding Company) Ltd with its subsidiary Sunderland Care and Support Ltd commenced trading on 1 December 2013 for the provision of Adult Social Care Services for the Council and was set up as a Local Authority Trading Company (LATC).

Sunderland Care and Support (Holding Company) Ltd is 100% owned by Sunderland City Council, with Sunderland Care and Support Ltd being owned fully by the Holding Company. Sunderland City Council contracts with Sunderland Care and Support (Holding Company) Ltd for the provision of Adult Social Care Services, the holding company then subcontracts to Sunderland Care and Support Ltd who deliver the following Adult Social Care Services:

- Reablement at Home;
- Farnborough Court Intermediate Care Centre;
- Sunderland Telecare;
- Community Equipment Service and Handyperson Service;
- Day Services;
- Supported Living Schemes;
- Registered Residential Services;

Notes to the Financial Statements

- Short Break Services;
- Independence at Home (outreach) Services;
- Sunderland Shared Lives;
- See and Solve Solutions;
- Sunderland Home Improvement Agency; and
- Evening Service.

Both companies have a common board of directors appointed by Sunderland City Council (as the shareholder of the holding company).

The value of the contract for the period was £49.101m (£45.864m in 2021/2022), this included agency costs which were reimbursed to the Council by health partners of £9.603m (£9.298m in 2021/2022).

In addition to contract related activity, the following transactions have occurred between the Council and Sunderland Care and Support Ltd:

- Equipment and services were bought from Sunderland Care and Support Ltd of £0.127m (£0.133m in 2021/2022);
- Sunderland Care and Support Ltd bought back support services from the Council, totalling £1.473m (£1.453m in 2021/2022);
- Sunderland Care and Support Ltd also managed home improvement agency and disabled facilities grants on behalf of the Council. Fees for this were included in the Contract payment in 2022/2023 (£0.264m in 2021/2022);
- Sunderland Care and Support Ltd also bought back other services including rent, other services and equipment purchases of £1.698m (£2.776m in 2021/2022);
- Covid-19 grants for Infection Control, Rapid Testing, Workforce Capacity and Omicron Support ceased in 2022/2023 (£0.962m were passed to Sunderland Care and Support in 2021/2022);
- Adult Social Care Discharge funding of £0.221m was passed to Sunderland Care and Support (£0.000m in 2021/2022); and
- Sunderland CCG funding to support providers to pay their staff National Living Wage ceased in 2022/23 (£0.477m was passed to Sunderland Care and Support in 2021/2022).

At the year end, Sunderland Care and Support Ltd owed the Council £0.228m (£0.647m in 2021/2022) and the Council owed Sunderland Care and Support Ltd £2.763m (£4.524m in 2021/2022).

The operational profit attributable to this subsidiary for 2022/2023 was £27.780m (£12.985m operational profit in 2021/2022).

The Council has confirmed it remains committed to working with Sunderland Care and Support Ltd to ensure it remains a going concern.

Sunderland Care and Support's registered office is: City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA.

Together for Children Sunderland Ltd (subsidiary)

Operational from 1 April 2017 as a company limited by guarantee, Together for Children Sunderland Ltd delivers Early Help, Social Care and Education services for children and aims to develop an effective and responsive service that make a difference for children and families in Sunderland.

Whilst Together for Children Sunderland Ltd is a 100% council-owned company, the board of directors has day to day operational independence in respect of management of the company's business and operations.

The governance arrangements for the company are set out in the company's Articles of Association and its Scheme of Governance. A Service Contract details how Together for Children Sunderland Ltd will work with the Council to ensure the priorities and objectives specified within the contract are delivered, how decisions are made and how Together for Children Sunderland Ltd is held to account.

No assets or liabilities have been transferred to Together for Children Sunderland Ltd.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The initial value of the contract for the period was £75.285m, with the final contract value being £86.543m which includes £11.258m of grants received by the Council that have been included within the contract sum (£79.930m in 2021/2022).

In addition to contract related activity, the following transactions have occurred between the Council and Together for Children Sunderland Ltd:

- Grants received by the Council of £31.257m, which are not part of the contract, have been passed on to Together for Children Sunderland Ltd (£26.908m in 2021/2022). This excludes £16.651m which has been received by the Council and passed on to maintained schools via Together for Children Sunderland Ltd (£16.421m in 2021/2022);
- Partnership agreement funding received by the Council of £2.551m has been passed on to Together for Children Sunderland Ltd (£2.919m in 2021/2022). Together for Children Sunderland Ltd has paid partnership agreement funding to the Council of £0.512m (£0.482m in 2021/2022);
- Together for Children Sunderland Ltd bought back support, rent and other services from the Council, totalling £5.227m (£5.184m in 2021/2022), including agency costs of £0.325m relating to utility, telephone charges and purchase cards; and
- Other service costs incurred by the Council, including schools, total £2.199m (£2.469m in 2021/2022).

At the year end, Together for Children Sunderland Ltd owed the Council £2.633m (£0.388m in 2021/2022) and the Council owed Together for Children Sunderland Ltd £7.310m (£4.926m in 2021/2022).

The operational profit attributable to this subsidiary for 2022/2023 was £40.656m (£13.995m in 2021/2022).

The Council has confirmed it remains committed to working with Together for Children Sunderland Ltd to ensure it remains a going concern.

Together for Children Sunderland Ltd's registered office is: City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA.

Siglion LLP (subsidiary)

The Council owns 100% of Siglion LLP it has a wholly owned subsidiary (Siglion Nominee Limited). Siglion LLP and Siglion Nominee Limited formed two further LLPs. These are Siglion Investments LLP and Siglion Developments LLP.

The Council transferred a number of investment properties including ground leases, retail properties, industrial properties and managed workspaces, strategic asset management into Siglion. In consideration of this transaction, the Council received loan notes totalling £23.500m. These are split between Loan Note A (£5.000m) which is non-interest bearing and Loan Note B (£18.500m), which is interest bearing, with interest payable quarterly. The Council acquired Carillion (Maple Oak) Limited's member interest in March 2019 thus increasing its Loan Note A to £10.000m. Loan Note A is not anticipated to be repaid until Siglion is wound up. Loan Note B may be repaid and hence the value reduces over time as investment properties are disposed of. The current value of loan note B is £17.933m.

A £1.000m distribution was received for the year ended 31 December 2022 (£0.700m for the year ended 31 December 2021).

Siglion's primary purpose is to assist in the delivery of economic and regeneration benefits to Sunderland through its objectives of:

- improving the concentration of new economic activity in the city centre;
- creating a city centre that supports such higher value job creation;
- bringing dormant sites back into use;
- offering a wider choice of housing to the market; and
- positioning Sunderland as a place to invest.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Siglion's year end is 31 December. The information presented in the Council's accounts has therefore had to be restated to 31 March and includes three months of management accounts (January 2023 to March 2023).

At the year end, Siglion LLP owed the Council £1.090m (£3.616m in 2021/2022) and the Council owed Siglion LLP £0.157m (£2.532m in 2021/2022).

The operational profit attributable to this subsidiary for 2022/2023 was £6.681m (£8.253m operational profit in 2021/2022).

Siglion's registered office is: City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA.

Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd (joint venture)

In June 2015 the Council entered into a joint venture partnership, known as Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership (SLP), with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd (SLM), who operate under the brand Everyone Active, to manage and operate the City's leisure facilities. SLM (as operator) have entered into sub-contracting arrangements with SLM Fitness and Health Limited, SLM Food and Beverage Ltd and SLM Community Leisure Charitable Trust in order to sub-contract specific elements of the service.

The joint venture is a private company limited by shares and is owned by the Council and SLM in equal shares (50:50) and is managed by a board of directors with an equal number of representatives from each party.

The purpose of the joint venture is to:

- oversee SLM's (as the operator) delivery of the operating contract;
- act as landlord of the leisure facilities;
- provide strategic direction to further develop sports and leisure facilities and opportunities in the city; and
- to set an annual business plan for the joint venture and monitor performance of SLM (as operator) against that plan.

The key objectives in forming this partnership are:

- to contribute to the better physical and mental health and wellbeing, skill development and levels of attainment of Sunderland's citizens through increased participation in physical activity, sport and leisure;
- to develop a sport and leisure service that is self-sustaining (that requires no subsidy beyond the short term);
- to provide universal access to high quality sport and leisure facilities;
- to support sporting excellence; and
- to identify and develop additional commercial opportunities which contribute to the achievement of any of the above objectives.

In recognition of cost of living pressures and increase in utilities on the trading and operating performance of the contractor, additional payments by the Council were made in 2022/2023 of £1.057m (£1.855m in 2021/2022). Additional financial support arrangements are also in place for 2023/2024 to deal with the financial implications arising during this year, thus ensuring that SLP has adequate resources to continue to trade, operate and meet its obligations.

The total operational loss attributable to this joint venture for 2022/2023 was £0.173m (£0.178m operational loss in 2021/2022).

In order to help the joint venture to fund initial capital works, both the Council and SLM have provided interest bearing loans to the joint venture (£2.000m and £0.700m respectively), and SLM has also provided a cash equity investment of £0.500m. The Council's loan is repayable over 20 years with the first principal repayment occurring during 2016/2017. The final principal repayment is payable during 2035/2036. £1.300m is outstanding at 31 March 2023 (£1.400m at 31 March 2022).

The draft accounts for Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd for 2022/2023 show a net loss before taxation of £0.243m and indicates that no dividend is proposed (net loss before taxation of £0.253m with no dividends for 2021/2022).

Notes to the Financial Statements

Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership's registered office is: Sunderland Aquatic and Wellness Centre, Stadium Park, Sunderland.

IAMP LLP (Joint Venture)

IAMP LLP was jointly established with South Tyneside Council in order to deliver the International Advanced Manufacturing Park to the north of Nissan. Both parties own 50% of the LLP.

Sunderland Council and South Tyneside Council participate as members of the LLP to (amongst other things) carry on the business of the joint acquisition, promotion, development and delivery of an International Advanced Manufacturing Park on the site which comprises land in South Tyneside and Sunderland, together with the provision of all necessary infrastructure required for the delivery of the site.

The total operational profit attributable to this joint venture for 2022/2023 was £0.002m (£0.013m operational loss in 2021/2022).

IAMP's registered office is: Town Hall And Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, NE33 2RL.

Other Entities Influenced by the Council

Newcastle Airport

Under the Airport Act 1986, Newcastle International Airport Limited (NIAL) was formed and seven local authorities were allocated shares in consideration for all the property, rights and liabilities that were transferred into the new company. On 4 May 2001, the seven local authority shareholders of NIAL (the "LA7") entered into a strategic partnership with Copenhagen Airports A/S for the latter to purchase a 49% share of Newcastle International Airport. This involved the creation of a new company, NIAL Holdings Limited, which is 51% owned by the LA7 and 49% owned by InfraBridge (previously known as AMP Capital Investors Limited) following their purchase on 16 November 2012. The 51% holding is held in the Newcastle Airport Local Authority Holding Company Limited, a company wholly owned by the seven authorities. The Newcastle Airport Local Authority Holding Company Limited has a called-up share capital of 10,000 shares with a nominal value of £1 each. The Council originally held a shareholding of 1,845 shares representing an 18.45% interest in this company.

On 16 November 2012, Copenhagen Airports A/S sold its 49% holding to AMP Capital Investors Ltd. At the same time an internal sale of shares also took place within the LA7 group. The Council as a result acquired an additional 42 shares and now holds an 18.87% interest in Newcastle Airport Local Authority Holding Company Limited, valued at £16.508m (£16.508m in 2021/2022). These shares are not held for trading outside of the LA7.

The fair value for the shareholding is based on a combination of the discounted cash flow of income method together with the guideline public company method of the market approach to valuations and other observable and unobservable factors. The last full valuation took place at 31 March 2022.

The spread of the Covid-19 pandemic across the world towards the end of 2019/2020 led to a sudden decline in air travel prompting the value of the shareholding to be impaired. By the end of 2021/2022 the travel sector had experienced a resurgence in passenger numbers and most of the Covid-19 related impairment had been reversed.

Forecast earnings before interest, tax and depreciation (EBITDA) have been compared against the EBITDA used for the last full valuation at 31 March 2022 to calculate any required revaluation to the share value at 31 March 2023. No change to the valuation was considered necessary.

Through its shares in Newcastle Airport Local Authority Holding Company Limited the Council now has a revised effective shareholding of 9.62% in Newcastle International Airport Limited (and the group companies of NIAL Group Limited and NIAL Holdings Limited). The principal activity of Newcastle International Airport Limited (Registered Number 2077766) is the provision of landing services for both commercial and freight operators. No dividend was received for the year ended 31 December 2022 (nil for the year ended 31 December 2021).

Notes to the Financial Statements

Members of the LA7 entered into a loan agreement with NIAL Group Limited in 2012/2013, issuing £67.665m shareholder loan notes of which £13.415m is held by the Council at 31 March 2023. (£13.270m at 31 March 2022). The loan notes will be repayable in 2032 with interest normally being received up to that date on a 6-monthly basis.

Due to major curtailments in the Airport's operations as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council has agreed to modify the terms of these loans and has accepted that under the unprecedented circumstances the Airport can defer interest repayments for the following three years (four years in 2021/22) with catch up payments to be made in instalments over a later period. Under the loan agreement the Council is entitled to compound interest for any late payments and this has been factored into the repayments the Airport will make once the catch-up payments commence. This has resulted in a further restatement of the loan value with a cumulative modification loss of £0.806m (£1.063m in 2021/2022) being recognised. The decrease in loss recognised is credited to the Financing and Investment income and expenditure line of the CIES. Furthermore, the Council looked at several observable factors regarding the robustness of the Airport's operations going forward resulting in an increase in the expected lifetime loss provision of £0.112m (a reduction of £0.037m was made at 31 March 2022) in the event all repayments are not made or are further delayed at some point in the future.

Other than these loan notes there are no outstanding balances owed to or from NIAL at the end of the year.

NIAL Group Limited made a profit before tax of £0.135m and a loss after tax of £2.181m for the year ended 31 December 2022. In the previous year, the Group made a loss before tax of £31.306m and a loss after tax of £32.755 m.

Other Relevant Information

The Council provides support services (including financial support services) to the following organisations:

Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, Sunderland Empire Theatre Trust, Sunderland Care and Support Ltd, Together for Children Sunderland Ltd, Siglion LLP, a number of Academies, Voluntary Aided Schools, IAMP LLP and Pooled Budget arrangements with the Integrated Care Board.

Note 33 – 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 contracts), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Council, 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.

Notes to the Financial Statements

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
501,093	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	618,496
63,856	Recognition and Derecognition of Leased Assets	12,335
213	Recognition of PFI Assets	250
	<i>Capital Investment</i>	
95,017	Property, Plant and Equipment	125,238
923	Long Term Debtors	0
2,122	Intangible Assets	1,460
370	Heritage Assets	194
25,889	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	25,439
	<i>Sources of Finance</i>	
(2,691)	Capital Receipts	(6,373)
(49,561)	Government grants and other contributions	(62,923)
	Sums set aside from revenue:	
(5,717)	Direct revenue contributions	(8,134)
(13,018)	MRP	(16,290)
618,496	Closing Capital Financing Requirement	689,692
	<i>Explanation of movements in year</i>	
(632)	(Decrease) in underlying need to borrow (supported by government financial assistance)	(726)
60,209	Increase / (decrease) in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	67,560
62,767	Increase / (decrease) in underlying need to borrow (finance leases)	9,089
(4,941)	Increase / (decrease) in underlying need to borrow (PFI contracts)	(4,727)
117,403	Increase / (decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	71,196

Note 34 – Leases

a) Council as Lessee

Finance Leases

The Council has acquired a number of administrative buildings and vehicles under finance leases.

The assets acquired under these leases are carried as Property, Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet at the following net amounts:

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
45,221	Other Land & Buildings	45,116
2,999	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	4,747
48,220		49,863

The Council is committed to making minimum payments under these leases comprising settlement of the long-term liability for the interest in the property acquired by the Council and finance costs that will be payable by the Council in future years while the liability remains outstanding. The minimum lease payments are made up of the following amounts:

Notes to the Financial Statements

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
	Finance Lease Liabilities (net present value of minimum lease payments)	
2,871	Current	3,091
68,535	Non-current	72,361
22,775	Finance costs payable in future years	22,798
94,181	Minimum lease payments	98,250

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

31 March 2022			31 March 2023	
Minimum Lease Payments £'000	Finance Lease Liabilities £'000		Minimum Lease Payments £'000	Finance Lease Liabilities £'000
2,871	2,871	Not later than one year	3,091	3,091
9,154	9,154	Later than one year and not later than five years	9,970	9,970
59,381	59,381	Later than five years	62,391	62,391
71,406	71,406		75,452	75,452

The minimum lease payments do not include rents that are contingent on events taking place after the lease was entered into, such as adjustments following rent reviews. In 2022/2023 £0.060m contingent rents were payable by the Council (2021/2022 nil).

The Council has sub-let some of the assets held under these finance leases. At 31 March 2023 the minimum payments expected to be received under non-cancellable sub-leases was £8.848m (nil at 31 March 2022).

Operating Leases

The Council has not acquired any vehicles or equipment by entering into an operating lease.

The Council has use of a small number of properties by entering into operating leases. The annual payment in 2022/2023 was £0.429m (£0.480m in 2021/2022). The annual lease payments payable relating to leases that are due for renewal in the following periods are:

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
54	Not later than one year	53
199	Later than one year but not later than five years	149
227	Later than five years	227
480		429

b) Council as Lessor

Operating Leases

The Council leases out under operating leases for the following purposes:

- for the provision of community services; and
- for economic development purposes to provide suitable affordable accommodation for local businesses.

Notes to the Financial Statements

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

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
8,227	Not later than one year	8,997
21,458	Later than one year but not later than five years	22,203
125,354	Later than five years	117,226
155,039		148,426

The minimum lease payments receivable do not include rents that are contingent on events taking place after the lease was entered into, such as adjustments following rent reviews.

Note 35 – Private Finance Initiatives and Similar Contracts

PFI 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 Council 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 Council at the end of the contracts for no additional charge, the Council carries the assets used under the PFI contracts on its Balance Sheet as part of Property, Plant and Equipment. Non-current assets recognised on the Balance Sheet are revalued and depreciated in the same way as property, plant and equipment owned by the Council.

The amounts payable to the PFI operator each year are analysed into the following elements:

- fair value of the services received during the year;
- finance cost;
- contingent rent;
- payment towards liability; and
- lifecycle replacement costs.

Current PFI Schemes

- Sandhill View

The Council entered into Sandhill PFI Contract in September 2001 and the Sandhill View Academy and Community Learning Centre subsequently became operational as a multi community use facility in September 2002. The Council receives annual grant of £1.549m towards the cost of this 25-year scheme. Sandhill View school transferred to Academy status on 1 July 2015 and part of the asset operated by the Academy on a long-term lease transferred from the Council's Balance Sheet. The Council still retains the overall liability to the PFI contractor to pay the unitary charge for the entire facility with the cost relating to the school being subsequently recovered from the Academy.

- Replacement Street Lighting and Highway Signs

The Council entered into a PFI contract, on 12 August 2003, to provide replacement street lighting and highway signs, this includes ongoing maintenance, over a period of 25 years. The contract began on 1 September 2003 and will end 31 August 2028. The Council receives annual grant of £2.185m towards the cost of this scheme.

- Waste Management Partnership

The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership was established to enable the three partner authorities (Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside Councils) to jointly procure a service for the treatment and disposal of residual municipal waste. In April 2014, a 25-year Energy from Waste facility became operational under a PFI contract, led by Gateshead Council. The Council receives annual grant of £1.805m towards the cost of this scheme.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Property, Plant and Equipment Assets

The assets used to provide services under these PFI schemes are recognised on the Council's Balance Sheet:

2021/2022 Sandhill View £'000	2021/2022 Street Lighting £'000	2021/2022 Waste Partnership £'000		2022/2023 Sandhill View £'000	2022/2023 Street Lighting £'000	2022/2023 Waste Partnership £'000
1,712	36,724	54,878	Cost / Valuation	1,712	36,974	54,878
47	20,725	0	Accumulated Depreciation	93	22,218	3,119
1,665	15,999	54,878	Net Book Value	1,619	14,756	51,759

Service Concession Liabilities

The following transactions were processed during 2021/2022 and 2022/2023:

2021/2022 Sandhill View £'000	2021/2022 Street Lighting £'000	2021/2022 Waste Partnership £'000		2022/2023 Sandhill View £'000	2022/2023 Street Lighting £'000	2022/2023 Waste Partnership £'000
1,691	3,040	5,906	Provision of Services	1,920	3,491	5,108
0	431	1,186	Lifecycle costs	0	484	1,655
654	1,437	2,632	Repayment of Capital	668	1,552	2,273
514	1,105	907	Interest	454	985	855
382	74	440	Contingent rent	423	52	356
3,241	6,087	11,071	Total payment	3,465	6,564	10,247
(1,549)	(2,185)	(1,805)	PFI grant receivable	(1,549)	(2,185)	(1,805)
1,692	3,902	9,266	Net payment	1,916	4,379	8,442

Although the payments made to the contractor are described as unitary payments, they have been determined through competitive tendering to reflect the cost of the services and works provided, the capital expenditure incurred and interest payable whilst the capital expenditure remains to be reimbursed. The liability outstanding to be paid to the contractor for capital expenditure incurred is as follows:

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
65,219	Balance outstanding at the start of the year	60,496
0	Additions	0
(4,723)	Repayment of capital	(4,493)
60,496	Balance outstanding at the year end	56,003

Future Unitary Charge Payments

The unitary charge payments are subject to annual indexation in line with inflation and can be reduced if the contractor fails to meet prescribed availability and performance standards in any year, but which is otherwise fixed. Payments remaining to be made under the three PFI contracts at 31 March 2023 (excluding any estimation of inflation and availability / performance deductions) are as follows:

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Payment for Services £'000	Repayment of Capital £'000	Lifecycle costs £'000	Interest £'000	Total £'000
Payable in 2023/2024	10,760	4,810	2,378	2,672	20,620
Payable within 2 to 5 years	42,557	20,436	10,629	7,366	80,988
Payable within 6 to 10 years	28,045	13,634	10,475	2,507	54,661
Payable within 11 to 15 years	26,031	13,469	11,137	1,196	51,833
Payable within 16 to 20 years	5,252	3,654	1,389	73	10,368
Total	112,645	56,003	36,008	13,814	218,470

Significant contractual information – terms of the arrangement

- Sandhill View

Refinancing gains: should the PFI Contractor choose to refinance the contract, the Council would be entitled to a share of any savings arising of between 25% and 50% depending upon the value. The Council is required to provide consent where any proposed refinancing increases Senior Debt to more than 110% of Senior Debt shown in the Financial Model at the date of the proposed refinancing.

Market testing: every five years the contractor is required to carry out a Facilities Management (FM) benchmarking process to establish the revised price in respect of each FM service on an open book basis.

- Replacement Street Lighting and Highway Signs

Refinancing gains: should the contractor choose to refinance its debts (subject to the Council's prior written consent), the Council would be entitled receive a 50% share of any Refinancing Gain arising from a Qualifying Refinancing.

Market testing: The electricity contract is subject to market testing every two years. Market testing is the responsibility of the contractor. Following each market test, the unitary payment is adjusted to reflect the up to date electricity costs.

- Waste Management Partnership

Refinancing gains: should the contractor choose to refinance its debts (subject to the Councils' consent), the Councils would be entitled to a share of any gains of between 50%-70% depending upon the value.

Market testing: from service commencement, air pollution control residue (APCR) disposal and haulage costs are subject to market testing and benchmarking exercise every five years and the unitary charge must be adjusted accordingly.

Significant contractual information – rights to use specified assets

- Sandhill View

The Council (and the Academy) has the priority right to use the facility during the core hours as specified in the contract (up to maximum annual usage levels).

- Replacement Street Lighting and Highway Signs

The Council as the highway authority is the principal beneficiary of the services and assets.

- Waste Management Partnership

The Council has full rights to use the asset within the Contract for the treatment of residual municipal waste up to the maximum tonnage level set out within the Contract. An additional fee is payable to the contractor for the use of the Waste Transfer Station or the Education and Visitor Centre outside normal operating hours.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Significant contractual information – rights to expect provision of services

- Sandhill View

The Council has rights to expect the provision of the services in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract for a 25-year period up to 2027.

- Replacement Street Lighting and Highway Signs

The Council has rights to expect the provision of the services in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract for a 25-year period up to 2028.

- Waste Management Partnership

The Council has rights to expect the provision of residual waste treatment services for the duration of the contract.

Significant contractual information – rights to receive specified assets at the end of the concession period

- Sandhill View

The PFI contractor holds a head lease over the land and buildings for the duration of this agreement. The Council (and in turn the Academy) each hold an underlease over the relevant parts of the site from which they each occupy/operate.

At the end of the contract the PFI Contractor's head-lease will terminate and at this point the Academy will be granted a new head lease for the entire site for the remainder of the 125-year Academy lease term. The Council will simultaneously take an underlease back from the Academy for the office, library and crèche areas.

- Replacement Street Lighting and Highway Signs

The Council retains title in all pre-existing apparatus. Title in new, accrued and additional apparatus passes to the Council during the PFI upon acceptance under the terms set out in the contract.

- Waste Management Partnership

The Energy from Waste facility and waste transfer station is under the operational control of the contractor during the contract. The Council retains legal title to the land relating to its Waste Transfer Station and the asset will revert to the Council at the end of the contract period.

The Energy from Waste facility is constructed on land owned by the contractor. At the end of the contract there are a number of options around the asset whereby the agreement could be extended, or the asset would revert to the Councils to operate along with a lease of the underlying land.

Significant contractual information – renewal and termination options

- Sandhill View

The contract expires in September 2027. The Council has the right to terminate the contract early for contractor default (subject to the funder's step-in rights) or for convenience (i.e. no contractor default but subject to an early termination payment).

- Replacement Street Lighting and Highway Signs

The contract expires in August 2028. The Council has the right to terminate the contract early for contractor default (subject to the funder's step-in rights) or for convenience (i.e. no contractor default but subject to an early termination payment).

Notes to the Financial Statements

- Waste Management Partnership

The contract expires in April 2039. The Council can exercise an option to extend for a period of 5 years beyond the contractual expiry date. It allows the Councils to terminate the contract with 20 business days' notice or either party to terminate on the other party's default or in the event of a force majeure (for example, natural disaster). There are provisions within the contract allowing for compensation to be paid by the defaulting party to the other in the event of termination.

Note 36 – Impairment Losses

An impairment is the amount by which the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount. Examples of events or circumstances that indicate an impairment may have incurred include:

- A significant decline in an asset's carrying amount during the period
- Evidence of obsolescence or physical damage of an asset.

During 2022/2023 the Council recognised no impairment losses (£0.00m in 2021/2022).

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 37 – Termination Benefits

All costs relating to workforce planning are reflected within the Cost of Service on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement; however, it should be noted that this also includes technical accounting adjustments required by Accounting Standards with regard to past service pension costs.

The Council terminated the contracts of a number of employees in 2022/2023, incurring liabilities of £1.323m (£2.672m in 2021/2022). All exit packages with the total cost per band and the total cost of these packages are set out in the tables below:

2022/2023 Exit Packages:

Exit package cost band £'000	Number of agreed departures (Non-Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Non-Schools)			Number of agreed departures (Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Schools)			Total Cost of Exit Packages in each band		
		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000	Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000
<u>Compulsory</u>											
£0 - £20	18	75	0	75	15	60	0	60	135	0	135
£20 - £40	1	22	0	22	0	0	0	0	22	0	22
£60 - £80	1	20	44	64	0	0	0	0	20	44	64
£100 - £150	1	36	72	108	0	0	0	0	36	72	108
£250 - £300	1	58	236	294	0	0	0	0	58	236	294
	22	211	352	563	15	60	0	60	271	352	623
<u>Voluntary</u>											
£0 - £20	11	74	0	74	9	112	7	119	186	7	193
£20 - £40	3	50	30	80	0	0	0	0	50	30	80
£40 - £60	3	23	135	158	0	0	0	0	23	135	158
£60 - £80	0	0	0	0	1	23	47	70	23	47	70
£80 - £100	1	30	66	96	0	0	0	0	30	66	96
£100 - £150	1	25	78	103	0	0	0	0	25	78	103
	19	202	309	511	10	135	54	189	337	363	700
Total	41	413	661	1,074	25	195	54	249	608	715	1,323

Exit costs payable to the employee are treated as remuneration and are included in Note 28 Officers' Remuneration for those staff whose remuneration exceeds £50,000.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 37 – Termination Benefits

2021/2022 Exit Packages:

Exit package cost band £'000	Number of agreed departures (Non-Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Non-Schools)			Number of agreed departures (Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Schools)			Total Cost of Exit Packages in each band		
		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000	Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000
<u>Compulsory</u>											
£0 - £20	2	12	9	21	9	47	0	47	59	9	68
£60 - £80	1	64	0	64	0	0	0	0	64	0	64
£80 - £100	1	16	81	97	0	0	0	0	16	81	97
£150 - £200	1	30	131	161	0	0	0	0	30	131	161
	5	122	221	343	9	47	0	47	169	221	390
<u>Voluntary</u>											
£0 - £20	27	144	12	156	14	104	0	104	248	12	260
£20 - £40	7	174	43	217	2	54	0	54	228	43	271
£40 - £60	2	48	36	84	0	0	0	0	48	36	84
£60 - £80	10	167	479	646	1	62	0	62	229	479	708
£80 - £100	3	74	194	268	0	0	0	0	74	194	268
£100 - £150	1	24	110	134	0	0	0	0	24	110	134
£150 - £200	1	0	155	155	0	0	0	0	0	155	155
£400 - £450	1	68	334	402	0	0	0	0	68	334	402
	52	699	1,363	2,062	17	220	0	220	919	1,363	2,282
Total	57	821	1,584	2,405	26	267	0	267	1,088	1,584	2,672

Exit costs payable to the employee are treated as remuneration and are included in Note 28 Officers' Remuneration for those staff whose remuneration exceeds £50,000.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 38 – Pensions Schemes Accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Teachers employed by the Council are members of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). 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 a multi-employer defined benefit scheme. The scheme is unfunded, and the Department for Education uses a notional fund as the basis for calculating the employers' contribution rate paid by local authorities. Valuations of the notional fund are undertaken every four years.

The scheme has in excess of 3,700 participating employers and consequently the Council is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the Scheme with enough 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. As a proportion of the total contributions into the Teacher's Pension Scheme, the Council's own contributions equated to approximately 71.4% for 2022/2023 (71.4% for 2021/2022).

In 2022/2023, the Council paid £5.795m to Teachers' Pensions in respect of teachers' retirement benefits, representing 23.7% of pensionable pay. The figures for 2021/2022 were £6.357m and 23.7%. There were no contributions remaining payable at the year end. The contributions due to be paid in the next financial year are estimated to be £5.686m.

The Council is responsible for the costs of any additional benefits awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the teachers' scheme. These costs are accounted for on a defined benefit basis and detailed in Note 39.

The Council is not liable to the scheme for any other entities' obligations under the plan.

NHS Staff Pension Scheme

During 2013/2014, a number of Public Health functions transferred from the NHS to the Council. The staff who transferred to the Council maintained their membership in the NHS Pension Scheme. The scheme provides these staff with specified benefits upon their retirement and the Council contributes towards the cost of these benefits by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

The scheme is an unfunded defined benefit scheme. However, the Council is not able to identify its share of the underlying financial position and performance of the scheme with enough 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. As a proportion of the total contribution into the NHS Pension Scheme for staff employed by the Council, the Council's own contributions equated to approximately 60.1% for 2022/2023 (58.8% for 2021/2022).

In 2022/2023, the Council paid £0.141m to the NHS Pension Scheme in respect of former NHS staff retirement benefits, representing 16.9% of pensionable pay. The figures for 2021/2022 were £0.137m and 16.9%. There were no contributions remaining payable at the year end. The contributions due to be paid in the next financial year are estimated to be £0.140m.

No additional benefits have been awarded upon early retirement outside of the terms of the NHS scheme and the Council is not liable to the scheme for any other entities' obligations under the plan.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 39 – 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 (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Council participates in two types of post-employment schemes:

- the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered locally by South Tyneside Council – this 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; and
- arrangements for the award of discretionary post-retirement benefits upon early retirement – these are unfunded defined benefit arrangements, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. However, there are no investment assets built up to meet these pensions liabilities, and cash must be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due. These arrangements apply to both the Local Government Pension Scheme and the Teacher's Pension Scheme.

The Tyne and Wear pension scheme is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme and the governance of the scheme is the responsibility of the Pensions Committee of South Tyneside Council. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pension Fund Regulations.

The principal risks to the Council of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund the amounts required by statute as described in the accounting policies note.

Discretionary Post-Retirement Benefits

Discretionary post-retirement benefits on early retirement are an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. There are no plan assets built up to meet these pension liabilities.

Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The Council recognises 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 that is required to be made 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.

Following legal rulings relating to the Guaranteed Minimum Payment (GMP), the accounts include an allowance for full increases on GMP pensions for individuals reaching state pension age on or after 6 April 2016. This assumes that the Government will legislate to continue with interim arrangements which are currently in place. Additional details can be found in Note 3, Critical judgements in applying accounting policies.

Legal rulings have also been made regarding age discrimination arising from public sector pension scheme transition arrangements, in particular the 'McCloud' case, which affects judges' pension schemes, and the 'Sargeant' case, which affects firefighters' pension schemes. An allowance has been made in the accounts for estimated liabilities relating to potential remedies for age discrimination within the LGPS arrangements. Additional details can be found in Note 3, Critical judgements in applying accounting policies.

Notes to the Financial Statements

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:

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements	
	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement				
Cost of Services:				
Service cost comprising:				
Current service cost	40.37	38.83	0.00	0.00
Past service costs	1.60	1.18	0.00	0.00
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure:				
Net interest expense	11.43	9.16	0.64	0.71
Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	53.40	49.17	0.64	0.71
Other Post Employment Benefits Charged 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)	(53.54)	49.93	0.00	0.00
Actuarial (gains) and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(7.25)	0.00	(0.33)	(0.01)
Actuarial (gains) and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	(115.24)	(610.14)	(0.61)	(4.76)
Actuarial (gains) and losses arising from liability experience	(64.50)	136.24	(1.04)	2.39
Total Post Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(187.13)	(374.80)	(1.34)	(1.67)
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	35.84	30.79	(1.88)	(1.69)
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:				
Employers contributions payable to the scheme	17.56	18.38	2.52	2.40
Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	53.40	49.17	0.64	0.71

Notes to the Financial Statements

Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the Council's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements	
	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	1,763.51	1,332.68	27.82	23.75
Fair value of plan assets	1,415.04	1,377.39	0.00	0.00
Net (liability) / asset arising from defined benefit obligation	(348.47)	44.71	(27.82)	(23.75)

Pensions Net (Liability) / Asset

Following the pensions triennial valuation, the Council's actuary determined that the fair value of its pension plan assets outweighed the present value of the plan obligations at 31 March 2023.

IAS19 requires that the asset is measured as the lower of the surplus in the defined benefit plan and the asset ceiling. The asset ceiling being calculated as the net present value of future service costs less the net present value of future contributions. The surplus identified was lower than the asset ceiling therefore no adjustments to the value of the pension asset have been required.

This is the first time the Council's net position has been an asset rather than an obligation. This position may result in reduced pension contributions in the future.

The liability of the unfunded pensions obligation shows the underlying commitment by the Council to pay future retirement benefits. Statutory regulations for funding the deficit means that the deficit will be made good by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees, as assessed by the scheme actuary.

Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation)

	Funded Liabilities: Local Government Pension Scheme		Unfunded Liabilities: Discretionary Benefit Arrangements	
	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Opening balance at 1 April	1,912.06	1,763.51	31.68	27.82
Current service cost	40.37	38.83	0.00	0.00
Interest cost	39.70	47.03	0.64	0.71
Contributions from scheme participants	5.15	5.70	0.00	0.00
Remeasurement (gains) and losses:				
Actuarial (gains)/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	(7.25)	0.00	(0.33)	(0.01)
Actuarial (gains)/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	(115.24)	(610.14)	(0.61)	(4.76)
Actuarial (gains)/losses arising from liability experience	(64.50)	136.24	(1.04)	2.39
Net increase in liabilities arising from disposals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Past service costs (including curtailments)	1.60	1.18	0.00	0.00
Benefits paid	(48.38)	(49.67)	(2.52)	(2.40)
Closing balance at 31 March	1,763.51	1,332.68	27.82	23.75

Notes to the Financial Statements

Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefit Arrangements	
	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Opening fair value of scheme assets	1,358.90	1,415.04	0.00	0.00
Interest income	28.27	37.87	0.00	0.00
Remeasurement gain/(loss):				
The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	53.54	(49.93)	0.00	0.00
Net increase in liabilities arising from disposals	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contributions from employer	17.56	18.38	2.52	2.40
Contributions from employees into the scheme	5.15	5.70	0.00	
Benefits paid	(48.38)	(49.67)	(2.52)	(2.40)
Closing balance at 31 March	1,415.04	1,377.39	0.00	0.00

Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised:

	Fair value of scheme assets					
	2021/2022			2022/2023		
	Quoted %	Unquoted %	Total %	Quoted %	Unquoted %	Total %
Equities	47.8	9.2	57.0	40.1	11.1	51.2
Property	0.0	8.4	8.4	0.0	10.5	10.5
Government Bonds	2.0	0.0	2.0	1.3	0.0	1.3
Corporate Bonds	18.8	0.0	18.8	19.5	0.0	19.5
Multi Asset Credit	0	0.0	0.0	4.5	0.0	4.5
Cash	1.8	0.0	1.8	1.8	0.0	1.8
Other	4.8	7.2	12.0	0	11.2	11.2
Total assets	75.2	24.8	100.0	67.2	32.8	100.0

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc.

Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and discretionary benefit liabilities have been assessed by Aon Hewitt Limited, an independent firm of actuaries. Estimates for the Council fund have been based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2022.

The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Local Government Pension Scheme		Discretionary Benefits	
	2021/2022	2022/2023	2021/2022	2022/2023
Mortality assumptions:				
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners				
Males	21.5 years	21.6 years	21.8 years	21.6 years
Females	24.5 years	24.6 years	25.0 years	24.6 years
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners				
Males	22.8 years	22.9 years	n/a	n/a
Females	26.0 years	26.1 years	n/a	n/a
CPI	3.0%	2.7%	3.0%	2.7%
Rate of increase in salaries	4.5%	4.2%	n/a	n/a
Pension account revaluation rate	3.0%	2.7%	n/a	n/a
Rate of increase in pensions	3.0%	2.7%	3.0%	2.7%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	3.0%	4.7%	3.0%	4.7%
Long-term expected rate of return on assets in the scheme	3.0%	4.7%	n/a	n/a

Under IAS19 the long-term expected rate of return on assets is assumed to be the same as the discount rate.

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes to the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all the other assumptions remain constant. In practice, this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analyses have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analyses below did not change from those used in the previous period.

	Impact on the Defined Benefit Obligation in the Scheme	
	Increase in Assumption £m	Decrease in Assumption £m
Longevity (increase or decrease in 1 year)	34.65	34.65
Rate of increase in salaries (increase or decrease by 0.1%)	1.33	1.33
Rate of increase in pensions (increase or decrease by 0.1%)	19.99	18.66
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities (increase or decrease by 0.1%)	21.32	21.32

Impact on the Council's Cash Flows

The Council anticipates making £16.66m of contributions to the scheme in 2023/2024.

The weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation for scheme members is 15.8 years in 2022/2023 (19.4 years in 2021/2022).

Note 40 – Contingent Liabilities

The Environment Agency previously confirmed that they regarded the Council as one of a number of named organisations that are potential contributors to the costs of remediation of contaminated land at Halliwell Banks in Sunderland. The basis for including the Council in the list of "Appropriate Persons" was the fact that, historically, disposal of domestic waste on the site had been undertaken by two of its predecessor authorities, namely Sunderland Rural District Council (RDC) and Sunderland County Borough, with the Council being held liable for the activities of its predecessors. The cost of the remediation works, which could be significant depending upon the level of remediation

Notes to the Financial Statements

required, and the respective parties' share of such costs has not, to date, been capable of being accurately quantified. Considering recent case law, the Council's position is that it should no longer be regarded as being liable in law for the waste disposal activities of Sunderland RDC and Sunderland County Borough. Discussions are ongoing with the Environment Agency in this regard.

In November 2021 a diesel fuel tank at the South Hylton Depot failed and approx. 10,000L of Diesel escaped. Close liaison has been undertaken with the Environment Agency with regard to remedial action. Whilst no proceedings have been issued against the Council there remains the risk, until the remediation work is complete, that the Environment Agency may impose a fine. At this current stage the total cost and timing of any potential payments is uncertain.

Note 41 – Contingent Assets

Section 106 Agreements

Under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, developers make financial contributions to the Council relating to affordable housing, public open spaces including allotments and locally equipped play parks, educational facilities, highways and public transport improvements, sports and recreational facilities and environmental improvements.

The Council has several large agreements in place with probable future contributions of £10.882m as well as numerous smaller agreements with various developers, however the timing of contributions is uncertain as these are only payable to the Council when certain trigger points are met at the respective developments.

Note 42 - Nature and Extent of Risk Arising from Financial Instruments

The Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks, including:

- credit risk - the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Council;
- liquidity risk - the possibility that the Council might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments;
- refinancing risk – the possibility that the Council might be requiring to renew a financial instrument on maturity at disadvantageous interest rates or terms; and
- market risk - the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Council as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates or stock market movements.

The Council's overall risk management programme focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the resources available to fund services. Risk management is carried out by a central treasury team, under policies approved by the Council in the annual treasury management strategy. The Council has fully adopted CIPFA's Code of Treasury Management Practices and has written principles for overall risk management, as well as written policies covering specific areas, such as interest rate risk, credit risk and the investment of surplus cash.

Credit Risk

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

Credit Risk Management Practices

The Council has considered its financial assets to determine whether their credit risk has increased significantly since initial recognition.

These have been grouped into two categories:

- investments with financial institutions, which have been considered collectively; and

Notes to the Financial Statements

- loans - which have been considered individually.

The credit risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy which is available on the Council's website at: [Annual Investment Strategy](#).

Deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria, as laid down by Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's Credit Ratings Services. The Annual Investment Strategy also imposes a maximum sum to be invested and time limits with a financial institution located within each category.

It is the Council's policy to only place deposits with a limited number of high-quality banks, building societies and money market funds that are on the Council's Approved Lending List. The counterparty criteria and associated investment limits for the financial year are set out in the table below, taking account of the credit ratings issued by all three credit rating agencies:

Fitch / S&P's Long Term Rating	Fitch Short Term Rating	S&P's Short Term Rating	Moody's Long Term Rating	Moody's Short Term Rating	Maximum Deposit £m	Maximum Duration
AAA	F1+	A-1+	Aaa	P-1	120	2 Years
AA+	F1+	A-1+	Aa1	P-1	100	2 Years
AA	F1+	A-1+	Aa2	P-1	80	2 Years
AA-	F1+	A-1+	Aa3	P-1	75	2 Years
A+	F1+	A-1	A1	P-1	70	365 days
A+	F1	A-1	A1	P-1	70	365 days
A	F1	A-1	A2	P-1	65	365 days
A-	F1	A-1	A3	P-1	50	365 days
A-	F2	A-2	A3	P-2	50	365 days
Local Authorities (limit for each local authority)					30	2 years
UK Government (including debt management office, gilts and treasury bills)					300	2 years
Money Market Funds (CNAV, LVNAV and VNAV) Maximum amount to be invested in Money Market Funds is £120m with a maximum of £50m in any one fund					120	Liquid Deposits
Local Authority controlled companies					40	20 years
Strategic Partners					Maximum deposit and duration of investments with strategic partners will be based on detailed business case and will be approved by Members prior to any investment taking place	

In addition to the criteria identified above limits are also placed on the country in which the institution is resident, the sector of the institution and if companies are members of a group of companies then a limit is placed on the group. Full details of these limits can be found in the Council's Treasury Management Policy and Strategy.

Customers for goods and services are assessed, considering their financial position, past experience and other factors, with individual credit limits being set in accordance with internal ratings in accordance with parameters set by the Council.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies of £243.427m cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. 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 the Council's deposits, but there was no evidence at 31 March 2023 that a default was likely to crystallise.

No credit limits were exceeded during the reporting period and the Council does not expect any loss from non-performance by any of its counterparties in relation to deposits and bonds.

The Council does not generally allow credit for local taxation (Council Tax and Business Rates). The amount due but not impaired for local taxation can be analysed by age as follows:

31 March 2022 (restated) £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
7,850	Less than three months	7,442
3,081	Three to six months	1,308
99	Six months to one year	2,405
18,209	More than one year	20,566
29,239		31,721

The Council however does allow credit for customers of up to 28 days. Unpaid invoices at 31st March 2023 total £25.205m, which includes £11.012m which is not yet overdue. The amount relating to customers can be analysed by age as follows:

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
19,461	Less than three months	19,844
1,561	Three to six months	1,858
1,236	Six months to one year	1,843
1,250	More than one year	1,660
23,508		25,205

The Council recognises the need to impair any debt assessed as overdue on a scaled approach, based on past experience and current market conditions. In addition, due to current economic conditions, the Council has also provided an additional small impairment allowance for all debt raised but not yet due.

The impairment relating to customers in 2022/2023 was £3.120m (£2.223m in 2021/2022).

In addition, the Council has also impaired the non-contractual debt which it holds relating to Housing Benefits, Council Tax and Business Rates.

The Council's overall impairment of doubtful debt is shown below:

Notes to the Financial Statements

	Amount at 31 March 2023	Historical Experience of default	Historical Experience adjusted for market conditions at 31 March 2023	Estimated maximum exposure to default and uncollectability at 31 March 2023	Estimated maximum exposure to default and uncollectability at 31 March 2022
	£'000	%	%	£'000	£'000
Customers	25,205	5.54	6.84	3,120	2,223
Housing Benefits	7,019	78.82	2.56	5,712	5,505
Adult Social Care House Sales	1,390	5.98	0.64	92	81
Council Tax	27,169	26.83	13.37	10,924	9,782
Business Rates	4,552	63.41	(4.51)	2,682	3,157
Financial Assets	65,335	26.31	8.17	22,530	20,748

Loans

Loans are generally issued to organisations that the Council has an interest in such as subsidiaries, joint ventures or other public sector and community related organisations. Each of the bodies to which loans have been issued have been considered to assess their ongoing financial stability and viability. Consideration has been given to whether there has been any late payment against contractual cashflows as well as looking at the current financial position of each organisation. An assessment of the likelihood of default within the next twelve months has subsequently been determined for each loan.

Amounts Arising from Expected Credit Losses

Except for the loans detailed below, the Council's financial assets have all been assessed as Stage 1 at both 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023 which means there has been no significant increase in their credit risk. No expected credit loss has been recognised for these assets.

At 31 March 2019, one community loan with an amortised cost gross value of £0.050m was assessed as at Stage 2 and a lifetime expected credit loss of £0.025m was recognised in the 2018/2019 accounts. No further credit loss adjustments have been required to this loan.

Due to major curtailments in Newcastle Airport's operations as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council had previously recognised an expected credit loss against commercial loan notes issued to the Airport of £0.242m. A review of several observable factors regarding the robustness of the Airport's operations going forward has resulted in an increase in the expected credit loss provision of £0.112m during 2022/2023 (this reduced by £0.037m during 2021/2022). This relates to loan notes with an amortised gross value of £13.769m at 31 March 2023.

Loss allowances made for all financial investments are as follows:

Notes to the Financial Statements

	12 month expected credit loss £'000	Lifetime expected credit loss - not credit impaired £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 31 March 2021	0	(309)	(309)
Community related loans transferred from lifetime expected credit losses	0	5	5
Commercial Loan Notes transferred to lifetime expected credit losses	0	37	37
Increase 2021/2022		42	42
Balance at 31 March 2022	0	(267)	(267)
Community related loans transferred from lifetime expected credit losses	0	0	0
Commercial Loan Notes transferred from lifetime expected credit losses	0	(112)	(112)
Decrease 2022/2023	0	(112)	(112)
Balance at 31 March 2023	0	(379)	(379)

No financial assets have been written off during 2022/2023 (also nil in 2021/2022).

Liquidity Risk

The Council manages its liquidity position through the setting and approval of prudential indicators and the approval of the treasury and investment strategy reports, as well as through a comprehensive cash flow management system, as required by the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. This seeks to ensure that cash is available when needed. If unexpected movements happen the Council has ready access to a facility to borrow from the Public Works Loan Board and from money markets. As a result, there is no significant risk that the Council will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments.

The Council has safeguards in place to ensure that a significant proportion of its borrowing does not mature for repayment at any one time in the future to reduce the financial impact of re-borrowing at a time of unfavourable interest rates. The maturity analysis of financial liabilities borrowing is as follows:

31 March 2022 £'000	Loans Outstanding	31 March 2023 £'000
38,092	Less than 1 year	32,525
1,874	Maturing in 1-2 years	4,080
5,013	Maturing in 2-5 years	1,828
15,002	Maturing in 5-10 years	15,000
0	Maturing in 10-20 years	0
15,000	Maturing in 20-30 years	26,000
74,500	Maturing in 30-40 years	83,500
365,135	Maturing in 40-50 years	395,125
514,616	Total	558,058

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

Refinancing and Maturity risk

The Council maintains a significant debt and investment portfolio. Whilst the cash flow procedures above are considered against the refinancing risk procedures, longer-term risk to the Council relates to managing the exposure to replacing financial instruments as they mature. This risk relates to both the maturing of longer-term financial liabilities and longer-term financial assets.

Notes to the Financial Statements

The approved treasury indicator limits for the maturity structure of debt and the limits placed on investments placed for greater than one year in duration are the key parameters used to address this risk. The Council's approved treasury and investment strategies address the main risks and the central treasury team address the operational risks within the approved parameters. This includes:

- monitoring the maturity profile of financial liabilities and amending the profile through either new borrowing or the rescheduling of the existing debt; and
- monitoring the maturity profile of investments to ensure enough liquidity is available for the Council's day to day cash flow needs, and the spread of longer-term investments provide stability of maturities and returns in relation to the longer-term cash flow needs.

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. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council, depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods. For instance, a rise in variable and fixed interest rates would have the following effects:

- borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise;
- borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the borrowing will fall;
- investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise; and
- investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall.

Borrowings are not carried at fair value on the Balance Sheet, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. 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 and affect the General Fund Balance. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments that have a quoted market price will be reflected in the Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Council has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. The Annual Treasury Management Strategy draws together the Council's prudential and treasury indicators and its expected treasury operations, including an expectation of interest rate movements. From this Strategy a treasury indicator is set which provides maximum limits for fixed and variable interest rate exposure. The central treasury team monitor market and forecast interest rates within the year to adjust exposures appropriately. For instance, during periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate investments may be taken for longer periods to secure better long-term returns, similarly the drawing of longer-term fixed rates borrowing would be postponed.

According to this assessment strategy, at 31 March 2023, if all interest rates had been 1% higher (with all other variables held constant) the financial effect would be:

Notes to the Financial Statements

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
(376)	Increase in interest payable on variable rate borrowings	(471)
2,582	Increase in interest received on variable rate borrowings	2,534
2,206	Impact on Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	2,063
0	Decrease in fair value of fixed rate investment assets	0
0	Impact on Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	0
104,548	Decrease in fair value of fixed rate borrowing liabilities (no impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure)	56,240

The approximate impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as above but with the movements being reversed.

Price Risk

The Council does not generally invest in equity shares but does have shareholdings to the value of £16.508m (£16.508m in 2021/2022) in Newcastle Airport which is not listed on the stock exchange, a £12.350m (£12.350m in 2021/2022) equity share in its subsidiary, Siglion, and a £0.500m (£0.500m in 2021/2022) equity share in its Leisure Joint Venture, Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership.

Whilst these holdings are generally illiquid and are not anticipated to be sold the Council is consequently exposed to losses arising from movements in the prices of the shares.

As the shareholdings have arisen in the acquisition of specific interests, the Council is not able to limit its exposure to price movements by diversifying its portfolio. Instead, it generally only acquires shareholdings in return for 'open book' arrangements with the company concerned so that the Council can monitor factors that might cause a fall in the value of specific shareholdings.

The fair value for Newcastle Airport is based on a combination of the discounted cash flow of income method together with the guideline public company method of the market approach to valuations and other observable and unobservable factors. The last full valuation took place at 31 March 2022.

Forecast earnings before interest, tax and depreciation (EBITDA) have been compared against the EBITDA used for the last full valuation at 31 March 2022 to ensure an appropriate share value at 31 March 2023.

The investment in the Airport has been elected as 'fair value through other comprehensive income', meaning that all movements in price will impact on gains and losses recognised in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

The equity shares in Siglion LLP are carried at cost in the Council's accounts. Siglion's financial statements at 31 March 2023 show the value of Siglion's assets as exceeding the value of the investment held within the Council's Balance Sheet.

The Council's equity share in Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership has been carried at cost. Any gain or loss would not be material to the Council's financial position.

The Council also holds a small number of investment bonds with a value at cost of £0.018m (£0.014m in 2021/2022) which are classified as 'financial assets at fair value through profit and loss', meaning that all movements in price impact on the gains and losses recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Foreign Exchange Risk

The Council has no financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies and thus has no exposure to loss arising from movements in exchange rates.

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 43 – Prior Period Adjustments / Restatements

In accordance with the Council's accounting policies, a number of disclosures relating to 2021/2022 have been restated.

There have been no prior period adjustments but, following amendments to the Council's management reporting structure in May 2022, comparative Portfolio data has been restated for 2021/2022 to facilitate comparison with 2022/2023.

The table below shows the impact of the changes between Portfolios as presented in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

	2021/2022		
	As per 2021/2022 accounts £'000	Portfolio changes £'000	Restated position £'000
Leader	3,858	(975)	2,883
Deputy Leader	63,093	(26,128)	36,965
Cabinet Secretary	66,683	9,338	76,021
Children, Learning and Skills	93,365	373	93,738
Vibrant City	11,833	(104)	11,729
Healthy City	42,099	2,308	44,407
Dynamic City	15,002	15,188	30,190
Cost of Services	295,933	0	295,933

Collection Fund Statement

Collection Fund Statement for Year Ended 31 March 2023

2021/2022				2022/2023		
Council Tax £'000	Business Rates £'000	Total £'000		Council Tax £'000	Business Rates £'000	Total £'000
(126,199)	0	(126,199)	Income	(134,701)		(134,701)
(2,704)	0	(2,704)	Council Tax Payers	(180)		(180)
			Transfer for Transitional Relief, S13A(1)(C) Reliefs and discount for prompt payment			
0	(75,878)	(75,878)	Business Ratepayers	0	(77,441)	(77,441)
			Contributions to Previous Years' Deficit			
(2,211)	(20,096)	(22,307)	Sunderland City Council	0	(12,101)	(12,101)
(126)	(410)	(536)	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	0	(247)	(247)
(206)	0	(206)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	0		0
0	(20,506)	(20,506)	Central Government	0	(12,348)	(12,348)
(131,446)	(116,890)	(248,336)		(134,881)	(102,137)	(237,018)
			Expenditure			
			Apportionment of Previous Years' Surplus			
0	0	0	Sunderland City Council	1,295	0	1,295
0	0	0	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	70	0	70
0	0	0	Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	120	0	120
0	0	0		1,485	0	1,485
108,165	43,140	151,305	Precepts, Demands and Shares:			
5,998	880	6,878	Sunderland City Council	114,765	39,784	154,549
10,075	0	10,075	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	6,303	812	7,115
0	1,035	1,035	Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	11,101	0	11,101
0	44,020	44,020	Central Government - Transitional Protection Payable	0	403	403
0	44,020	44,020	Central Government - Share	0	40,596	40,596
124,238	89,075	213,313		132,169	81,595	213,764
0	1,267	1,267	Charges to Collection Fund:			
0	330	330	Disregarded Amounts - Enterprize Zone'	0	1,591	1,591
294	239	533	Cost of Collection - Business Rates	0	329	329
1,488	548	2,036	Write Offs	486	742	1,228
0	(4,004)	(4,004)	Impairment of Debtors Allowance	1,400	(970)	430
			Provision for Business Rate Appeals	0	(3,238)	(3,238)
1,782	(1,620)	162		1,886	(1,546)	340
(5,426)	(29,435)	(34,861)	Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	659	(22,088)	(21,429)
5,227	41,320	46,547	Balance brought forward as at 1 April	(199)	11,885	11,686
(199)	11,885	11,686	Fund Balance Carried Forward as at 31 March	460	(10,203)	(9,743)
			Fund allocated to			
(176)	5,824	5,648	Sunderland City Council	396	(4,999)	(4,603)
(6)	119	113	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority	25	(102)	(77)
(17)	0	(17)	Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria	39	0	39
0	5,942	5,942	Central Government	0	(5,102)	(5,102)
(199)	11,885	11,686		460	(10,203)	(9,743)

Collection Fund Statement

The Council has a statutory requirement to operate a Collection Fund as a separate account to the General Fund. The purpose of the Collection Fund, therefore, is to isolate the income and expenditure relating to Council Tax and Business Rates. The administrative costs associated with the collection process are charged to the General Fund.

Collection Fund surpluses or deficits declared by the billing authority in relation to Council Tax are apportioned to the relevant precepting bodies in the subsequent financial year. For Sunderland, the Council Tax Precepting Bodies are the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority.

Business Rates surpluses or deficits declared by the billing authority in relation to the Collection Fund are also apportioned to the relevant bodies in the subsequent financial year in their respective proportions.

A Collection Fund accounting change took place in 2020/2021 relating to the phasing of Collection Fund deficits. The intention to implement the three-year local tax Collection Fund deficit phasing was announced by the Secretary of State on 2 July 2020. The Local Authorities (Collection Fund: Surplus and Deficit) (Coronavirus) (England) Regulations 2020 were laid before Parliament on 5 November 2020 and came into force on 1 December 2020. The regulations amend the rules governing the apportionment of Collection Fund surpluses and deficits for Council Tax and Business Rates set out in the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations 1992 and the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013. The three-year phasing of deficits does not include any amount brought forward into the Collection Fund, relating to previous years surpluses or deficits.

Note 1 – Income from Council Tax

Council Tax income derives from charges raised according to the value of residential properties, which have been classified into nine valuation bands. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund by the Council and dividing this by the Council Tax base.

The basic amount of Council Tax for a Band D property, inclusive of major preceptors, was £1,830.78 for 2022/2023 (£1,772.92 for 2021/2022), is multiplied by the proportion specified for the particular band to give an individual amount due.

The Council Tax Base for 2022/2023 was 72,161 (70,045 in 2021/2022). It was approved by Cabinet on 11 January 2022 and was calculated as follows:

Band	Chargeable Dwellings	Proportion of Band D Tax	Equivalent Band D Dwellings
(A)	207	5/9	115
A	77,683	6/9	51,789
B	18,874	7/9	14,680
C	17,156	8/9	15,250
D	9,160	1	9,160
E	3,387	11/9	4,140
F	1,141	13/9	1,648
G	657	15/9	1,095
H	22	18/9	44
Net effect of Premiums and Discounts			(24,287)
Total			73,634
Anticipated Collection Rate			98.0%
Tax Base for the Calculation of Council Tax			72,161

Collection Fund Statement

Note 2 – Income from Business Ratepayers

The Council collects Business Rates for its area based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) multiplied by a uniform business rate set nationally by Central Government.

For 2022/2023, the total Business Rates rateable value at the year-end is £227.165m (£228.402m in 2021/2022). The national multipliers for 2022/2023 were 49.9p (49.9p for 2021/2022) for qualifying small businesses, and the standard multiplier was 51.2p (51.2p for 2021/2022) for all other businesses.

Note 3 – Council Tax/Business Rates Impairment of Debtors Allowance

The Collection Fund provides for impairment of bad debts on arrears based on prior years' experience, and a formulaic approach to outstanding debt levels.

Once all actions to recover outstanding debt have been exhausted, the Council will write off uncollectable debt in accordance with proper accounting practice. Most of these sums relate to bankruptcy, death and where all actions have failed to collect the debt over a period of years. The total level of arrears for Council Tax and Business Rates has increased during 2022/2023, the impairment of debtors allowance has been increased accordingly. It should be noted that the amounts written off were already included in the accounts as an impairment of debtors allowance and as such have already been accounted for in a previous period.

In respect of Council Tax, as at 31 March 2023, the impairment of debtors allowance was estimated at £12.666m (£11.266m at 31 March 2022).

In respect of Business Rates, as at 31 March 2023, the impairment of debtors allowance was estimated at £5.473m (£6.443m at 31 March 2022).

The impairment of debtors allowance is allocated to the relevant preceptors, in proportion to their share.

Note 4 – Business Rate Provision for Valuation Appeals

The Collection Fund also provides for provision for appeals against the rateable valuation set by the VOA not settled as at 31 March 2023.

A large number of cases were settled or withdrawn during the year. As at 31 March 2023, the provision for appeals was estimated at £11.616m (£14.854m at 31 March 2022). The appeals provision is allocated to the relevant preceptors, in proportion to their share.

Group Financial Statements - Narrative Statement

The Council's standard financial statements consider the Council only as a single entity. However, the Council delivers some of its activities through several wholly owned subsidiaries and joint ventures, thus the full extent of the Council's economic activity and financial position is not reflected in the Council's single entity accounts. Group accounts are therefore produced to present the full picture. The group accounts consolidate the results and balances of the Council with those organisations considered to be part of the group:

- Subsidiaries
 - Sunderland Care and Support (Holding Company) Ltd;
 - Together for Children Sunderland Ltd;
 - Siglion LLP; and
 - Siglion Holdings Ltd.
- Joint Ventures
 - Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd; and
 - IAMP LLP.

Further detail on the relationship between the Council and these organisations is presented in Note 32, Related Parties, of the Council's single entity accounts.

Preparation of Group Accounts

The group accounts have been prepared in accordance with the 'Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/2023' (based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)) known more commonly as the Code. The Code constitutes 'proper accounting practice' under the terms of the Local Government Act 2003 and The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

In preparing the group accounts all statutory main group statements have been incorporated, along with specific notes where transactions and balances are materially different from those within the Council's accounts.

The financial statements required under the Code are detailed below:

1. Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS)

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

2. Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This reports the net cost for the year of all group functions and demonstrates how that cost has been met from general government grants and income from local taxpayers.

3. Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the group. The net assets of the group (assets less liabilities) are matched by reserves held by the group.

4. Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the group during the reporting period.

5. Notes to the Accounts

Group Financial Statements - Movement in Reserves Statement

This statement shows the movement from the start of the year to the end of the year on the different reserves held by the Group, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and 'unusable reserves'.

The Statement shows how the movement in year of the Group's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice, and the statutory adjustments required to return to the amounts chargeable to Council Tax for the year.

The Increase / Decrease line shows the statutory General Fund Balance movement in the year following those adjustments. The table below shows the details for both 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

Group Financial Statements - Movement in Reserves Statement

	Council						Council's share of Subsidiaries and Joint Venture Reserves £'000	Total Group Reserves £'000
	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000		
Balance at 31 March 2021	22,742	167,969	9,386	4,085	204,182	(13,124)	(42,348)	148,710
Movement in reserves during 2021/2022:								
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(53,064)	0	0	0	(53,064)	253,698	35,113	235,747
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	62,747	0	337	1,860	64,944	(64,944)	0	0
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	(10,643)	10,643	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adjustment between group accounts and Council's single entity accounts	0	0	0	0	0	0	(5,382)	(5,382)
(Increase) / Decrease in 2021/2022	(960)	10,643	337	1,860	11,880	188,754	29,731	230,365
Balance at 31 March 2022	21,782	178,612	9,723	5,945	216,062	175,630	(12,617)	379,075
Movement in reserves during 2022/2023:								
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(52,957)	0	0	0	(52,957)	459,206	74,996	481,245
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations	49,794	0	1,020	(244)	50,570	(50,570)	0	0
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	569	(569)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adjustment between group accounts and Council's single entity accounts *	0	0	0	0	0	0	(1,183)	(1,183)
(Increase) / Decrease in 2022/2023	(2,594)	(569)	1,020	(244)	(2,387)	408,636	73,813	480,062
Balance at 31 March 2023	19,188	178,043	10,743	5,701	213,675	584,266	61,196	859,137

* Please see Note 3, Group Property, Plant and Equipment for further information

Group Financial Statements - Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

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

The statement is presented in line with the Council's Portfolio responsibilities which were in place between May 2022 and May 2023. 2021/2022 has been restated to reflect this structure and detail of changes can be found in Note 14. The roles and responsibilities of each Portfolio are detailed in the Council's Constitution.

2021/2022 (restated)				2022/2023		
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
3,211	(263)	2,948	Leader	3,827	(703)	3,124
49,550	(11,851)	37,699	Deputy Leader	53,574	(13,292)	40,282
190,273	(108,313)	81,960	Cabinet Secretary	152,453	(100,063)	52,390
226,409	(127,721)	98,688	Children, Learning and Skills	230,575	(130,521)	100,054
14,494	(2,691)	11,803	Vibrant City	15,809	(2,561)	13,248
190,904	(148,240)	42,664	Healthy City	199,380	(140,690)	58,690
87,474	(66,787)	20,687	Dynamic City	88,011	(60,750)	27,261
762,315	(465,866)	296,449	Cost of Services	743,629	(448,580)	295,049
15,236	(1,047)	14,189	Other operating expenditure	34,852	0	34,852
31,037	(969)	30,068	Financing and investment income and expenditure	33,212	(8,115)	25,097
0	(282,355)	(282,355)	Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure	0	(298,883)	(298,883)
808,588	(750,237)	58,351	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	811,693	(755,578)	56,115
0	3,742	3,742	Joint ventures accounted for on an equity basis	0	121	121
0	(4,424)	(4,424)	Tax expenses of subsidiaries	0	22,687	22,687
808,588	(750,919)	57,669	Group (Surplus) / Deficit	811,693	(732,770)	78,923
		(8,304)	(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of non current assets			(32,132)
		(4,602)	(Surplus) or deficit from investments in equity instruments designated at fair value through comprehensive income			0
		(276,888)	Re-measurements of the defined benefit liability / (asset)			(528,036)
		(289,794)	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(560,168)
		(232,125)	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(481,245)

Group Financial Statements - Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value at 31 March of the assets and liabilities recognised by the group. The net assets of the group (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the group. Reserves are reported in two categories.

The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the group may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudential level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt).

The second category of reserves, unusable reserves, is those that the group is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

Group Financial Statements - Balance Sheet

31st March 2022 £'000		Notes	31st March 2023 £'000
1,161,209	Property, Plant and Equipment	3	1,252,408
12,823	Heritage Assets		12,986
0	Investment Property / Land		0
3,399	Intangible Assets		3,791
0	Long Term Pensions Asset	4	30,510
16,522	Long Term Investments		16,526
43	Investments in Joint Ventures		(78)
42,072	Long Term Debtors		41,051
1,236,068	Long Term Assets		1,357,194
210,254	Short Term Investments		167,447
1,401	Inventories		1,489
105,168	Short Term Debtors		88,419
0	Assets Held for Sale		0
61,259	Cash and Cash Equivalents	2	75,459
378,082	Current Assets		332,814
(38,092)	Short Term Borrowing		(32,525)
(91,330)	Short Term Creditors		(85,179)
(7,364)	Short Term PFI and Finance Lease Liability		(7,900)
(912)	Short Term Provisions		(1,026)
(7,020)	Grant Receipts in Advance - Revenue		(3,986)
(15,325)	Grant Receipts in Advance - Capital		(34,461)
(160,043)	Current Liabilities		(165,077)
(476,524)	Long Term Borrowing	4	(525,533)
(464,208)	Long Term Pensions Liability		(6,660)
(124,538)	Long Term PFI and Finance Lease Liability		(123,554)
(9,762)	Long Term Provisions		(7,711)
0	Deferred Tax Liability		(2,336)
(1,075,032)	Long Term Liabilities		(665,794)
379,075	Net Assets		859,137
21,782	General Fund		19,188
178,612	Earmarked General Fund Reserves		178,043
9,723	Capital Receipts Reserve		10,743
5,945	Capital Grants Unapplied		5,701
216,062	Usable Reserves relating to Sunderland City Council		213,675
(457)	Investments in Joint Ventures		(578)
(19,309)	Sunderland Care and Support Ltd		8,471
(45,651)	Together for Children Sunderland Ltd		(4,995)
12,977	Siglion LLP / Siglion Holdings Ltd		20,055
(52,440)	Profit and Loss relating to subsidiaries and Joint Ventures		22,953
175,630	Unusable Reserves relating to Sunderland City Council		584,266
33,437	Revaluation Reserve relating to Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd	3	32,254
6,386	Revaluation Reserve relating to Siglion LLP / Siglion Holdings Ltd		5,989
215,453	Unusable Reserves		622,509
379,075	Total Reserves		859,137

Group Financial Statements - Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the group during the reporting period. The statement shows how the group 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 group are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the group. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute towards the group'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 group.

2021/2022 £'000		Notes	2022/2023 £'000
58,351	Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services		56,115
(130,713)	Adjust net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non cash movement		(114,028)
59,004	Adjust for items included in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities		67,247
(13,358)	Net cash flows from operating activities		9,334
137,179	Investing activities		(7,079)
(99,290)	Financing activities		(23,878)
24,531	Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(21,623)
85,790	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		53,836
61,259	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	2	75,459

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Note 1 – Accounting Policies

The group accounting policies are largely the same as those specified within the Council only statements, however there are some slight divergences from these policies within the group. These are detailed below:

- **Group Transactions**
The Council both commissions services from and provides support services to the subsidiary companies.
- **Consolidation of Subsidiaries**
Subsidiaries have been consolidated using the acquisition accounting basis. This is a full, line by line consolidation of the financial transactions and balances of the Council and its subsidiaries. To avoid overstating the figures within the group financial statements, all transactions and balances between members of the group (the Council and its subsidiaries) have been eliminated.
- **Consolidation of Subsidiaries with different financial year end**
Siglion's year end is 31 December. The information presented in the Group accounts has therefore had to be restated to 31 March and includes three months of management accounts (January 2023 to March 2023).
- **Consolidation of Joint Ventures**
Joint Ventures have been consolidated using the equity method. An investment is brought into the group Balance Sheet and adjusted by the Council's share in the joint venture's net asset movement. The Council's share of the joint venture's operating results for the year is included within the group income and expenditure account.
- **Capital Expenditure**
The de-minimus level for capital expenditure for the subsidiary companies is £5,000 which is lower than that of the Council.
- **Accounting Standards**
The accounts for the subsidiary companies have been prepared in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. Other than where specifically addressed in the accounts, differences between these standards and the Code would have no material effect on the Group Statements.
- **Deferred Tax**
Deferred tax is recognised in respect of an obligation to pay more tax in the future or a right to pay less tax in the future as at the Balance Sheet date. This represents differences between the company's taxable profits and its results as stated in the financial statement.

Deferred tax is measured at the average tax rates that are expected to apply in the periods in which timing differences are expected to be resolved, based on tax rates and laws that have been enacted or substantially enacted by the Balance Sheet date. Deferred tax is measured on a non-discounted basis.

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Note 2 – Group Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
(27,537)	Cash held by the Council	(521)
88,796	Bank current accounts and Money Market Funds	75,980
61,259	Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	75,459

Note 3 – Group Property, Plant and Equipment

The Property, Plant and Equipment balance is made up of the following elements:

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
1,103,886	Sunderland City Council	1,180,003
33,437	Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd	32,254
23,886	Siglion LLP	40,151
1,161,209	Total	1,252,408

Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd

On 1 June 2015 the Council transferred several leisure assets to Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership, its leisure joint venture partnership with Sports and Leisure Management Ltd.

As these assets were transferred under a long-term lease, the Council has written these assets out of its accounts, reducing assets by £52.289m in 2015/2016. Under the accounting requirements applicable to Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership, the Joint Venture has accounted for these assets at the present value of the minimum lease payments.

In order to comply with the Council's accounting requirements, within the Group Statements, the Council's share of these assets (50%) has been re-instated onto the Group Balance Sheet at £32.254m at 31 March 2023 (£33.437m at 31 March 2022).

Reflecting these assets within the Group Statements is a departure from the Code of Practice for joint venture consolidation which should normally be on an equity accounting basis i.e. the Group Statements should simply reflect 50% of Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership's profit or loss for the year. As the assets are not held on Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership's Balance Sheet, standard equity accounting would understate the Group Balance Sheet.

The reduction of £1.183m during 2022/2023 related to depreciation charges for 2022/2023 and is reflected on the Movement in Reserves Statement as an adjustment between the group accounts and the Council's single entity accounts.

Siglion LLP

The following property, plant and equipment owned by Siglion LLP is included within the Group Balance Sheet:

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
23,886	Investment Property	31,409
0	Assets under Construction	8,742
23,886	Total	40,151

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Revaluation of Group assets is reflected in the Unusable Reserves - Revaluation Reserve lines on the Group Balance Sheet.

Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2023, in addition to the Council's capital commitments, other members of the Group had entered into capital contracts budgeted to cost £0.995m (£0.089m at 31 March 2022). This relates to IAMP site infrastructure works.

Note 4 – Group Reserves

Pensions Reserve

The accounts have been prepared incorporating the requirements of IAS19, Retirement Benefits, for the treatment of pension costs. IAS19 requires that pension costs are recorded in the year in which the benefit entitlements are earned by the employees rather than the year in which the pensions and the employer's contributions are actually paid. The Pension Reserve represents the net liability for future pension costs.

It should be noted that the Financial Statements for the Council's subsidiary companies should be prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', however, the financial position under FRS102 is not significantly different under IAS19.

The Pensions Reserves within the subsidiary companies are subsets of the Profit and Loss Reserves for those companies and are therefore shown on the Balance Sheet within Usable Reserves. The Pension Reserve held by the Council is shown on the Balance Sheet under Unusable Reserves. The table below presents the Pension Reserve activity for each member of the group.

2021/2022					2022/2023			
Council £'000	SCAS £'000	Together for Children £'000	Total Group £'000		Council £'000	SCAS £'000	Together for Children £'000	Total Group £'000
(584,840)	(40,680)	(69,412)	(694,932)	Balance at 1 April	(376,290)	(27,050)	(60,868)	(464,208)
242,510	17,070	17,308	276,888	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)	426,350	39,360	62,326	528,036
(54,040)	(5,460)	(13,393)	(72,893)	Items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(49,880)	(4,760)	(13,152)	(67,792)
20,080	2,020	4,629	26,729	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	20,780	2,000	5,034	27,814
(376,290)	(27,050)	(60,868)	(464,208)	Balance at 31 March	20,960	9,550	(6,660)	23,850

Share Capital Reserve

Two ordinary shares of £1 have been allotted and fully paid for in Sunderland Care and Support (Holding Company) Ltd and Siglion Holdings Ltd. All subsidiaries in the group are ultimately owned 100% by the Council.

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Note 5 – Group Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The risks arising from financial instruments across the group are not materially different from those within the Council only statements.

Note 6 – Group 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 (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Council participates in two post-employment schemes:

- the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered locally by South Tyneside Council – this 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; and
- arrangements for the award of discretionary post-retirement benefits upon early retirement – this is an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. However, there are no investment assets built up to meet these pensions liabilities, and cash must be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due.

A proportion of employees of Sunderland Care and Support Ltd and Together for Children Sunderland Ltd are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Tyne and Wear Pension Scheme is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme and the governance of the scheme is the responsibility of the pensions committee of South Tyneside Council. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pension Fund Regulations.

The principal risks to the Council of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund the amounts required by statute as described in the accounting policies note.

Discretionary Post-Retirement Benefits

Discretionary post-retirement benefits on early retirement are an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. There are no plan assets built up to meet these pension liabilities.

Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The Council recognises 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 the Council is 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 and is presented within the Council's unusable reserves.

The subsidiary companies within the group do not raise Council Tax receipts and therefore the costs of post-employment / retirement benefits are not transferred to unusable reserves. These future liabilities are reflected within each company's Profit or Loss position on the Balance Sheet.

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Note 7 – Group Termination Benefits

All costs relating to workforce planning are reflected within the Cost of Service on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement; however, it should be noted that this also includes technical accounting adjustments required by Accounting Standards with regard to past service pension costs.

The Group terminated the contracts of a number of employees in 2022/2023, incurring liabilities of £1.449m (£2.867m in 2021/2022). All exit packages with the total cost per band and the total cost of these packages are set out in the tables below:

2022/2023 Exit Packages:

Exit package cost band £'000	Number of agreed departures (Non-Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Non-Schools)			Number of agreed departures (Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Schools)			Total Cost of Exit Packages in each band		
		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000	Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000
<u>Compulsory</u>											
£0 - £20	22	111	0	111	15	60	0	60	171	0	171
£20 - £40	1	22	0	22	0	0	0	0	22	0	22
£60 - £80	1	20	44	64	0	0	0	0	20	44	64
£100 - £150	1	36	72	108	0	0	0	0	36	72	108
£250 - £300	1	58	236	294	0	0	0	0	58	236	294
	26	247	352	599	15	60	0	60	307	352	659
<u>Voluntary</u>											
£0 - £20	23	111	0	111	9	112	7	119	223	7	230
£20 - £40	3	50	30	80	0	0	0	0	50	30	80
£40 - £60	4	76	135	211	0	0	0	0	76	135	211
£60 - £80	0	0	0	0	1	23	47	70	23	47	70
£80 - £100	1	30	66	96	0	0	0	0	30	66	96
£100 - £150	1	25	78	103	0	0	0	0	25	78	103
	32	292	309	601	10	135	54	189	427	363	790
Total	58	539	661	1,200	25	195	54	249	734	715	1,449

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Note 7 – Group Termination Benefits

2021/2022 Exit Packages:

Exit package cost band £'000	Number of agreed departures (Non-Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Non-Schools)			Number of agreed departures (Schools)	Cost of Exit Packages in each band (Schools)			Total Cost of Exit Packages in each band		
		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000		Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000	Employee Costs £'000	Pension Costs £'000	Total Cost £'000
<u>Compulsory</u>											
£0 - £20	14	50	9	59	9	47	0	47	97	9	106
£20 - £40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
£40 - £60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
£60 - £80	1	64	0	64	0	0	0	0	64	0	64
£80 - £100	1	16	81	97	0	0	0	0	16	81	97
£150 - £200	1	30	131	161	0	0	0	0	30	131	161
	17	160	221	381	9	47	0	47	207	221	428
<u>Voluntary</u>											
£0 - £20	31	157	12	169	14	104	0	104	261	12	273
£20 - £40	10	212	96	308	2	54	0	54	266	96	362
£40 - £60	3	57	80	137	0	0	0	0	57	80	137
£60 - £80	10	167	479	646	1	62	0	62	229	479	708
£80 - £100	3	74	194	268	0	0	0	0	74	194	268
£100 - £150	1	24	110	134	0	0	0	0	24	110	134
£150 - £200	1	0	155	155	0	0	0	0	0	155	155
£400 - £450	1	68	334	402	0	0	0	0	68	334	402
	60	759	1,460	2,219	17	220	0	220	979	1,460	2,439
Total	77	919	1,681	2,600	26	267	0	267	1,186	1,681	2,867

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Note 8 – Group Officers’ Remuneration

Employees of the group receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions) are shown below:

2021/2022	Remuneration	2022/2023
Non-Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff
90	£50,000 - £54,999	103
46	£55,000 - £59,999	67
25	£60,000 - £64,999	30
10	£65,000 - £69,999	19
12	£70,000 - £74,999	9
5	£75,000 - £79,999	13
1	£80,000 - £84,999	2
3	£85,000 - £89,999	2
6	£90,000 - £94,999	1
7	£95,000 - £99,999	5
0	£100,000 - £104,999	1
8	£105,000 - £109,999	3
1	£110,000 - £114,999	4
0	£115,000 - £119,999	1
1	£135,000 - £139,999	1
1	£150,000 - £154,999	1
1	£165,000 - £169,999	0

Only the position relating to non-teaching staff is affected by remuneration within subsidiaries. Therefore, the table above does not include Teaching staff or Senior Officers of the Council whose remuneration costs are disclosed in Note 28 of the Council's single entity accounts.

Note 9 – Reconciliation of the Single Entity Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This table shows how the group entities have contributed to the overall Comprehensive Income and Expenditure position:

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

2021/2022 £'000		2022/2023 £'000
(200,634)	Total comprehensive income on the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(406,249)
	Add operational (profit) / loss attributable to subsidiaries:	
(12,985)	Sunderland Care and Support Ltd (reflected on the Healthy City Portfolio)	(27,780)
(13,995)	Together for Children Ltd (reflected on the Children, Learning and Skills Portfolio)	(40,656)
(8,253)	Siglion LLP / Siglion Holding Ltd (reflected on the Dynamic City Portfolio)	(6,681)
	Add operational (profit) / loss attributable to joint ventures:	
113	Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd	122
7	IAMP LLP	(1)
	Add revaluation loss attributable to joint venture:	
3,622	Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership Ltd *	0
(232,125)	Total	(481,245)

* Additional information relating to revaluation of Sunderland Lifestyle Partnership assets can be found in Note 3, Group Property, Plant and Equipment.

Note 10 - Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

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

The Council's position is shown in Note 4 of the single entity accounts. In addition, there are the following risks of material adjustment relating to subsidiaries and joint ventures:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment – valuations	Assets are valued, in accordance with Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) valuation standards and involve the use of a number of estimation techniques including various property indices.	The gross book value (GBV) of the subsidiaries and joint ventures' land and buildings portfolio is £62.480m at 31 March 2023. A 1% change in asset valuations would equate to a £0.625m change in the GBV.

Note 11 – Events after the Balance Sheet date

Adjusting Events after the Balance Sheet date

Where events take place after 31 March which provide information about conditions existing at 31 March, the financial statements and notes are adjusted to reflect the impact of this information. At the time of publishing the accounts no such events have taken place.

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

Non-adjusting Events after the Balance Sheet date

Where events take place after 31 March which do not relate to conditions at 31 March, but which provide information that is relevant to an understanding of the Council's financial position, the financial statements and notes are not adjusted but the relevant information is disclosed. At the time of publishing the accounts no such events have taken place.

Note 12 – Group Short Term Debtors

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
67,944	City of Sunderland	84,495
8,528	Sunderland Care and Support Ltd	2,318
19,092	Together for Children Sunderland Ltd	1,012
9,604	Siglion LLP	594
105,168	Total	88,419

This analysis is after inter-group activity has been removed in accordance with Group Accounting Policies.

Note 13 – Group Short Term Creditors

31 March 2022 £'000		31 March 2023 £'000
(76,404)	City of Sunderland	(75,475)
(6,320)	Sunderland Care and Support Ltd	(1,836)
(11,012)	Together for Children Sunderland Ltd	(2,319)
2,406	Siglion LLP	(5,549)
(91,330)	Total	(85,179)

This analysis is after inter-group activity has been removed in accordance with Group Accounting Policies.

Note 14 – Group Prior Period Adjustments / Restatements

In accordance with the Council's accounting policies, a number of disclosures relating to 2021/2022 have been restated.

There have been no prior period adjustments but, following amendments to the Council's management reporting structure in May 2022, comparative Portfolio data has been restated for 2021/2022 to facilitate comparison with 2022/2023.

The table below shows the impact of the changes between Portfolios as presented in the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Notes to the Group Financial Statements

	2021/2022		
	As per 2021/2022 accounts £'000	Portfolio changes £'000	Restated position £'000
Leader	3,900	(952)	2,948
Deputy Leader	64,725	(27,026)	37,699
Cabinet Secretary	70,806	11,154	81,960
Children, Learning and Skills	98,315	373	98,688
Vibrant City	11,907	(104)	11,803
Healthy City	40,356	2,308	42,664
Dynamic City	6,440	14,247	20,687
Cost of Services	296,449	0	296,449

Glossary of Terms

Accrual

A sum included in the accounts to cover income or expenditure attributable to an accounting period for goods received or work done, but for which receipt/payment has not been received/made by the year end.

Accounting Policies

Those principles, bases, conventions, rules and practice applied by the Council which specify how the effects of transactions and other events are to be reflected in its financial statements through:

- recognising;
- selecting measurement bases for; and
- presenting assets, liabilities, gains, losses and changes to reserves.

Accounting policies define the process whereby transactions and other events are reflected in financial statements. For example, an accounting policy for a particular type of expenditure may specify whether an asset or a loss is to be recognised; the basis on which it is to be measured; and where in the revenue account or Balance Sheet it is to be presented.

Actuarial Gains and Losses

Changes in the net pensions 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 Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Agency Services

Services which are performed by or for other councils or bodies, where the council/body responsible for the service reimburses the council carrying out the work for the cost of the work carried out.

Amortisation

Is the process of writing-off an intangible asset over its projected life. It is equivalent to depreciation of tangible non-current assets.

Appropriations

Are transfers to/from the Council's reserves from the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. In addition, appropriations include the reconciling transactions needed to convert expenditure to amounts required from Council Tax.

Assets

An asset is "a resource controlled by the Council as a result of past events and from which future economic benefits are expected to flow to the entity" (International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) definition). Current assets are ones that may change in value on a day-to-day basis (e.g. Inventories). Non-current assets are tangible assets that yield benefit to the Council and the services it provides for a period of more than one year (e.g. Land and Buildings).

Available for Sale Assets

Are non-operational assets that meet the following criteria:

- they are available for immediate sale in their present condition subject to terms that are usual and customary for sales of such assets (or disposal groups);
- the sale is highly probable, with the Council committed to a plan to sell the asset;
- an active programme to locate a buyer and complete the plan has been initiated; and
- the asset (or disposal group) must be actively marketed for a sale at a price that is reasonable in relation to its current fair value. The sale should be expected to qualify for recognition as a completed sale within one year of the date of classification and action required to complete the plan should indicate that it is unlikely that significant changes to the plan will be made or that the plan will be withdrawn.

Balance Sheet

A statement of the recorded assets, liabilities and other balances at the year end.

Glossary of Terms

Balances

The capital or revenue reserves of the Council made up of the accumulated surplus of income over expenditure on the General Fund or any other fund.

Business Rates (also known as Non-Domestic Rates)

All non-domestic properties are valued by the Valuation Office Agency and the Government determines a national rate poundage every year which is applicable to all local authorities. Local authorities continue to collect the non-domestic rate with the proceeds shared between Central Government, the Council and Tyne and Wear Fire Authority on a defined basis.

Capital Expenditure

Is expenditure on the acquisition of a non-current asset or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing non-current asset.

Capital Financing

The annual charge to the Revenue Account in respect of the minimum revenue provision and interest on money borrowed together with leasing rentals.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The capital financing requirement is one of the indicators that must be produced as part of the CIPFA prudential code. This measures the Council's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose. In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and the next two financial years.

Capital Grants

Are funds provided by the government or other bodies to undertake work of a capital nature (i.e. to create a non-current asset).

Capital Receipts

Money received from the sale of land or other capital assets. Capital receipts are held by the Council and can be used to pay for capital expenditure, to repay debt, to meet premiums on early debt repayments and to meet liabilities under credit arrangements. Additional flexibility allows capital receipts to be used to fund transformational costs.

Cash

Comprises cash in hand and on demand deposits, including uncleared BACS payments and unrepresented cheques.

Cash Equivalents

Are short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

CIPFA (the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy)

Provides guidance in the interest of public services. It is the professional body for accountants working in the UK public sector (and local government in particular). It provides financial and statistical information for local authority and other public sector bodies and advises central government and other bodies on public finance.

Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK

'The Code' specifies the principles and practices of accounting to give a 'true and fair' view of the financial position and transactions of the Council.

Collection Fund

The fund maintained by the Council into which are paid the amounts of Council Tax and Business Rates which it collects and out of which are to be paid precepts issued by major precepting authorities, central government and its own demands.

Glossary of Terms

Community Assets

These are assets that the Council intends to hold in perpetuity, which have no determinable finite useful life and in addition may have restrictions on their disposal. An example would be parks.

Componentisation

Is the allocation of the overall value of a significant non-current asset into separate components with materially different useful lives. This ensures that the depreciation charged more accurately reflects the consumption of economic benefits, recognising that some components will wear out more quickly than others. There is no minimum requirement for the number of components for a non-current asset, and the number will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the asset.

Constructive Obligation

An obligation that derives from the Council's action where by an established pattern of past practice, published policies or a sufficiently specific current statement, the Council has indicated to other parties that it will accept certain responsibilities and as a result, the Council has created a valid expectation on the part of those other parties that it will discharge those responsibilities.

Contingencies

Are funds set aside as a reserve to meet the cost of unforeseen items of expenditure, shortfalls in income and to provide for inflation. This is not included in individual budgets because the precise value cannot be determined in advance.

Contingent Asset

A contingent asset is a probable asset arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control.

Contingent Liabilities

Are either:

- Possible obligations arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control; or
- Present obligations arising from past events where it is not probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required, or the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with enough reliability.

Contingent Rents

Are lease payments that change as a result of changes occurring subsequent to the inception of the lease, other than the passage of time (such as indexation of a long-term contract).

Contributions paid to the Pension Fund

Cash paid as employer's contributions to the Pension Fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

Council Tax

The form of local taxation operated from April 1993, based on domestic properties.

Creditors

Are amounts owed by the Council for goods and services received but where payment has not been made at the end of the financial year (i.e. 31 March). Creditors also include receipts in advance, where the Council receives income from external bodies or individuals in advance of service provision.

Current Assets

Are items that can readily be converted into cash. These include items such as cash, debtors (net of impairment of debtors allowance), investments, stock and work in progress.

Current Liabilities

Are amounts owed to individuals or organisations that will be paid within twelve months of the Balance Sheet date.

Glossary of Terms

Current Service Cost (Pensions)

Is the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the Services for which the employees worked.

Debtors

Are amounts owed to the Council for goods and services supplied but where payment has not been received at the end of the financial year. The technical definition is: financial assets not traded in an active market with fixed or determinable payments that are contractual rights to receive cash or cash equivalents.

Defined Benefit Scheme (Pensions)

A pension or other retirement benefit scheme other than a defined contribution scheme. Usually, the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable, and the benefits are not directly related to the investments of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded (including notionally funded).

Defined Contribution Scheme (Pensions)

A pension or other retirement benefit scheme into which an employer pays regular contributions fixed as an amount or as a percentage of pay and will have no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions if the scheme does not have enough assets to pay all employee benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Depreciation

Is the systematic allocation of the depreciable amount of a non-current asset over its useful life, and reflects the economic benefits consumed by the asset during the financial year.

Discretionary Benefits

Retirement benefits which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award and which are awarded under the Council's discretionary powers, such as The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996.

EBITDA

EBITDA, or earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation, is an alternate measure of profitability to net income. By stripping out the non-cash depreciation and amortisation expense as well as taxes and debt costs dependent on the capital structure, EBITDA attempts to represent cash profit generated by the company's operations.

Estimation Techniques

The methods adopted by an entity to arrive at estimated monetary amounts, corresponding to the measurement bases selected, for assets, liabilities, gain losses and changes to reserves.

Estimation techniques implement the measurement aspects of accounting policies. An accounting policy will specify the basis on which an item is to be measured. Where there is uncertainty over the monetary amount corresponding to that basis, the amount will be arrived at by using an estimation technique. Estimation techniques include, for example:

- methods of depreciation, such as straight line and reducing balance, applied in the context of a particular measurement basis, used to estimate the proportion of the economic benefits of a tangible non-current asset consumed in a period; and
- different methods used to estimate the proportion of debts that will not be recovered, particularly where such methods consider a population as a whole rather than individual balances.

Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Are those events, favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the Balance Sheet date and the date when the Statement of Accounts are authorised for issue.

Exceptional Items

Material items that derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the authority and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give fair presentation of the accounts.

Glossary of Terms

Expected Rate of Return on Pension Assets (For a funded defined benefit scheme)

The average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

Expenditure

Amounts paid by the Council for goods received or services rendered of either a capital or revenue nature. This does not necessarily involve a cash payment - expenditure is deemed to have been incurred once the goods or services have been received, even if they have not yet been paid for (in which case the supplier is a creditor of the Council).

Fair Value

The fair value of an asset is the price at which it could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction less, where applicable, any grants receivable towards the purchase or use of the asset.

Financial Instruments

Are contracts that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity.

General Fund

This accounts for the services of the Council except for the Collection Fund. The net cost is met by Council Tax, Government Grants and Business Rates.

Government Grants

Assistance by government and inter-government agencies and similar bodies, whether local, national or international, in the form of cash transfers of assets to the Council in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Council.

Grants

Are assistance by other bodies in the form of cash or transfers of assets to the Council in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Council.

Gross Expenditure

Is the total cost of providing the Council's services before taking into account income.

Historical Cost

Refers to the original monetary value of an asset.

International Accounting Standards (IAS)

Are accounting pronouncements issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). They have been adopted by the UK public sector in a move to make it more comparable with both the private sector and the international community.

Impairment

Is the amount by which the carrying value of an asset (i.e. its current value in the accounts) exceeds its recoverable amount, caused either by a consumption of economic benefits (e.g. obsolescence, damage or adverse change in statutory environment), or a general fall in prices or collectability.

Impairment Allowance for Doubtful Debts

Doubtful debts are those debts which are uncollectable, due to debtors going bankrupt or absconding; impairment allowances are funds set aside to provide for debtors failing to pay.

Income

Amounts due to the Council for goods supplied or services rendered of either a capital or a revenue nature. This does not necessarily involve a cash payment - income is deemed to have been earned once the goods or services have been supplied even if the payment has not been received (in which case the recipient is a debtor to the Council).

Glossary of Terms

Infrastructure Assets

These are non-current assets which cannot be sold or given away; expenditure on which is recoverable only by continued use of the asset created. Examples of such assets are highways, footpaths and bridges.

Intangible Assets

Are identifiable, non-monetary, non-current assets without physical substance. Examples include software licences, patents and copyrights.

Interest Cost (Pension)

For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period is the present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

Standards issued by the IASB which present the Council's accounts in a consistent and comparable format with other organisations internationally.

Investments (Pension Fund)

The investments of the pension fund will be accounted for in the statements of that fund. However, the Council is required to disclose, as part of the disclosures relating to retirement benefits, the attributable share of pension scheme assets associated with their underlying obligations.

Investment Properties

Interest in land and/or buildings in respect of which construction work and development have been completed; and which is held for its investment potential, any rental income being negotiated at arm's length.

Investments (Non-Pensions Fund)

A long-term investment is an investment that is intended to be held for use on a continuing basis in the activities of the authority. Investments should be so classified only where an intention to hold the investment for the long term can clearly be demonstrated or where there are restrictions as to the investor's ability to dispose of the investment.

Investments other than those in relation to the pension fund, that do not meet the above criteria should be classified as current assets.

Joint Ventures

A Joint Venture exists where the Council and another party exercise joint control over an entity with decisions relating to the organisation requiring unanimous consent by the parties sharing control.

Leasing

The method of financing the provision of various capital assets to discharge the Council's functions outside normal borrowing procedures but within criteria laid down in the Local Authorities (Capital Finance) Regulations 1990. There are different types of leases available of which the following are most commonly used:

Finance Leases - are leases that transfer substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of a non-current asset to the lessee. Such a transfer of risks and rewards may be presumed to occur if, at the inception of the lease, the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any initial payment, amounts to substantially all the fair value of the leased asset.

Operating Leases – are all leases other than a finance lease.

Levies

Like precepts, these sums are paid to other bodies. However, these amounts are not collected through Council Tax as with precepting bodies; they are items of expenditure on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.

Glossary of Terms

Liabilities

Amounts due to individuals or organisations which will have to be paid at some time in the future. Current liabilities are usually payable within one year of the Balance Sheet date.

Loans Outstanding

The total amounts borrowed from external lenders for capital and temporary revenue purposes but not repaid at the Balance Sheet date.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

Is a nationwide public sector pension schemes for employees working in local government. It is administered locally for participating employers through many regional pension funds. The Tyne and Wear Pension Fund manages the Council's pension assets and liabilities.

Long Term Contracts

A contract entered into for the design, manufacture or construction of a single substantial asset or the provision of a service (or a combination of assets or services which together constitute a single project), where the time taken substantially to complete the contract is such that the contract activity falls into different accounting periods. Some contracts with a shorter duration than one year should be accounted for as long-term contracts if they are sufficiently material to the activity of the period.

Minimum Lease Payments

Are payments over the lease term that the lessee is or can be required to make, excluding contingent rent, costs for services and taxes to be paid by and reimbursed to the lessor, together with:

- a) For a lessee, any amounts guaranteed by the lessee or by a party related to the lessee; or
- b) For a lessor, any residual value guaranteed to the lessor by:
 - (i) The lessee;
 - (ii) A party related to the lessee; or
 - (iii) A third party unrelated to the lessor that is financially capable of discharging the obligations under the guarantee.

Minimum Revenue Provision

Is the minimum amount which must be charged to the Council's revenue account each year and set aside as a provision for credit liabilities, as required by the Local Government Act 1989.

Net Book Value

The amount at which non-current assets are included in the Balance Sheet, that is their historical cost of current value less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation.

Net Interest on the Net Defined Benefit Liability/Asset, i.e. net interest expense for the authority

Is 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. 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 - considering any changes in the net defined benefit liability / asset during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.

Net Realisable Value

Is the open market value of an asset in its existing use (or open market value in the case of non-operational assets) less the expenses to be incurred in realising the asset.

Non-current Assets

Are those that yield benefits to the Council and the services it provides for a period of more than one year.

Non-Operational Assets

Non-current assets held by a Council but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services. Examples of non-operational assets are investment properties and assets that are surplus to

Glossary of Terms

requirements, pending sale or redevelopment.

Operational Assets

Non-current assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Council in the direct delivery of those services for which it has either a statutory or discretionary responsibility.

Past Service Costs (Pensions)

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years - debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non-Distributed Costs.

Pension fund

An employees' pension fund is maintained by an authority, or group of authorities, in order to make pension payments on retirement of participants. It is financed from contributions from the employing authority, the employee and investment income.

Post Balance Sheet Events

Those events, both favourable and unfavourable, which occur between the Balance Sheet date and the date on which the Statement of Accounts is signed by the responsible financial officer.

Precept

The amount levied by various authorities (i.e. the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria) which is collected by the Council on their behalf.

Prior Period Adjustments

Those material adjustments applicable to prior periods arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of material errors. A material error is one that is of such significance as to destroy the validity of the financial statements. They do not include normal recurring corrections or adjustments of accounting estimates made in prior years.

Projected Unit Method

An accrued benefits valuation method in which the pension scheme liabilities make allowance for projected earnings. An accrued benefits valuation method is a valuation method in which the scheme liabilities at the valuation date relate to:

- the benefits for pensioners and deferred pensioners (i.e. individuals who have ceased to be active members but are entitled to benefits payable at a later date) and their dependants, allowing where appropriate for future increases; and
- the accrued benefits for members in service on the valuation date.

The accrued benefits are the benefits for service up to a given point in time.

Provisions

These are sums set aside to meet liabilities or losses which it is anticipated will be incurred but where the amount and / or the timing of such costs is uncertain.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI)

PFI's are methods of funding / acquiring assets such as schools where the supplier of the asset is an appointed contractor, usually over a 25-year term, who also provides services to the Council in relation to that asset. The Council pays for the use of the asset by means of a unitary charge and can acquire the asset after this term if included in the terms of the contract. Up until this point the Council does not own the asset and simply pays for its use. Government grant is available to assist authorities who enter into these arrangements.

Prudential Framework

One of the principal features of the Local Government Act 2003 was to provide the primary legislative requirements to introduce a new prudential regime for the control of council capital expenditure. The regime relies upon both secondary legislation in the form of regulations, and a prudential code which has been published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

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Under the prudential framework councils are free to borrow without specific government consent if they can afford to service the debt without extra government support. The basic principle is that councils will be free to invest if their capital spending plans are affordable, sustainable and prudent. As a control mechanism to ensure this occurs all councils must follow the prudential code published by CIPFA. This involves setting various prudential limits and indicators that must be approved by the council before the start of the relevant financial year as part of its budget setting process.

Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd

As independent company incorporated by the Local Government Association. The company is responsible for appointing auditors to Local Government, Police and Fire Authorities. Before April 2015, its responsibilities were discharged by the Audit Commission.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

A Central Government agency, which lends money to councils at lower interest rates than those generally available from the private sector. Councils can borrow a proportion of their requirements to finance capital spending from this source.

Related Parties

Two or more parties are related parties when at any time during the financial period:

- one party has direct or indirect control of the other party; or
- the parties are subject to common control from the same source; or
- one party has influence over the financial and operational policies of the other party to an extent that the other party might always be inhibited from pursuing its own separate interests; or
- the parties, in entering a transaction, are subject to influence from the same source to such an extent that one of the parties to the transaction has subordinated its own separate interests.

Examples of related parties of a council include:

- central government;
- councils and other bodies precepting or levying demands on the Council Tax;
- its subsidiary and associated companies;
- its joint ventures and joint venture partners;
- its members;
- its chief officers; and
- its pension funds.

Examples of related parties of a pension fund include its:

- administrating authority and its related parties;
- scheduled bodies and their related parties; and
- trustees and advisors.

These lists are not intended to be exhaustive.

For individuals identified as related parties, the following are also presumed to be related parties:

- members of the close family, or the same household; and
- partnerships, companies, trusts or other entities in which the individual, or a member of their close family or the same household, has a controlling interest.

Related Party Transaction

Is a transfer of resources or obligations between a reporting entity and a related party, regardless of whether a price is charged. Related party transactions exclude transactions with any other entity that is a related party solely because of its economic dependence on the authority or the government of which it forms part.

Reserves

These are sums set aside to meet possible future costs where there is no certainty about whether the costs will be incurred.

Glossary of Terms

Residual value

Is the net realisable value of a non-current asset at the end of its useful life. Residual values are based on prices prevailing at the date of the acquisition (or revaluation) of the asset and do not take account of expected future price changes.

Retirement Benefits (Pensions)

All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after completion of employment. Retirement benefits do not include termination benefits payable as a result of either:

- an employer's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date; or
- an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits, because these are not given in exchange for services rendered by employees.

Return on plan assets

Shows the difference between the actual return and interest income on pension fund assets notionally allocated to the Council (separate to the amount disclosed within Net Interest). It is charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability/asset.

Revenue Contributions

The method of financing capital expenditure directly from revenue. The Council may determine that certain capital schemes should be financed in this way or alternatively may include a prescribed sum in the revenue budget for this purpose.

Revenue Expenditure

Expenditure incurred on the day-to-day running of the Council, the costs principally include employee expenses, capital financing charges and general running costs.

Revenue Expenditure Funded by Capital under Statute

This is expenditure that is legally allowed to be classified as capital for funding purposes when it does not result in the expenditure being carried on the Balance Sheet as a non-current asset; for example, improvement grants.

Revenue funding

Is grant funding used to support the revenue expenditure of the Council. It may be 'ringfenced' to specific areas or may be general.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

A grant paid by Central Government to Local Authorities to help to finance their expenditure generally and not specific services. The grant helps to bridge the gap between Council Tax and Business Rates income and the Council's revenue expenditure.

Scheme Liabilities (Pensions)

The liabilities of a defined benefit scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured using the projected unit method reflects the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

Settlement (Pensions)

An irrecoverable action that relieves the employer (or the defined benefit scheme) of the primary responsibility for a pension obligation and eliminates significant risks relating to the obligation and the assets used to affect the settlement. Settlements include:

- a lump-sum cash payment to scheme members in exchange for their rights to receive specified pension benefits;
- the purchase of an irrecoverable annuity contract enough to cover vested benefits; and
- the transfer of scheme assets and liabilities relating to a group of employees leaving the scheme.

Specific Grants

Government grants to councils in aid of particular services.

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Strain on the fund

When a member of the LGPS is allowed to retire early (e.g. efficiency, redundancy or with the Council's consent), employee and employer pension contributions stop but benefits become payable earlier than assumed and will be paid for a longer period. To meet the additional cost to the fund, the employer must make additional payments called strain costs.

Subsidiaries

A subsidiary exists where the Council exercises control and gains benefits / exposure to risk arising from this control.

Support services or overheads

Are those that support the delivery of front-line services. Support services include finance, administration, ICT, legal and other central services.

Unsupported Borrowing

Under the Prudential Framework, the facility to undertake what is known as 'unsupported borrowing' is available. This is borrowing to fund capital expenditure where no support or provision is made by the government to fund this borrowing. In deciding upon whether to undertake unsupported borrowing regard is required to be had to:

- the prudential indicators which are designed to assess whether capital investment needs are affordable, sustainable and prudent; and
- the effect on the revenue budget of any additional costs incurred.

Unusable reserves

Are those reserves that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses, where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences.

Usable reserves

Are 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. They can also be described as 'cash-backed'.

Useful Life

The period over which the Council will derive benefits from the use of a non-current asset.

