BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Statement of Accounts 2021/2022

Audited July 2023

Finance

Contents

Narrative Report

(a) Revenue Outturn Position

It has been a challenging year for Bedford Borough Council with Covid-19 continuing to impact services, customer requirements and income received. The Council has continued to take on additional duties to help the residents and businesses of Bedford Borough. This work includes distributing grants to individuals and businesses, supporting the care sector and vulnerable individuals within the community and, through Public Health, providing an active and effective response to the Pandemic.

The revenue outturn for 2021/2022 for Bedford Borough Council shows an overall net underspend of £0.902 million. The outturn reflects all expenditure incurred and income due and relevant year-end accounting entries, including transfers to and from reserves. The table below sets out the revenue outturn position for each Directorate, as will be reported to the Mayor in June 2022. This compares to a net revenue underspend in 2020/2021 of £1.447 million.

Directorate	Net Budget £million	Net Outturn £million	Net Variance £million
Adults Services	50.578	48.460	(2.118)
Children's Services	33.895	34.896	1.001
Environment	25.027	25.466	0.439
Corporate Services	21.585	22.401	0.816
Transformation	(0.752)	0.265	1.017
Finance	2.350	2.343	(0.007)
Public Health	0.000	0.000	0.000
Operational Budgets	**132.683**	**133.831**	**1.147**
Corporate Budgets	(10.897)	(12.946)	(2.049)
Total Revenue Outturn	**121.787**	**120.885**	**(0.902)**
% of Total Net Budget			**(0.7%)**

The net operational costs of the council accounts for £132.683 million representing 109% of the Council's overall net budget. These budgets are primarily the day to day spending / service areas of the Council. The provisional outturn for operational services areas is £133.831 million representing an overspend of £1.147 million.

Non Operational budgets were underspent by £2.049 million. These amounts are subject to further adjustments that may arise following the completion of the financial statements closure and audit process.

The final budget for 2021/2022 was funded through Council Tax (including Council Tax surplus) of £95.449 million, retained business rates of £20.445 million and Revenue Support Grant of £5.893 million.

(b) Going Concern

The Council continues to operate as a Going Concern. The gross impact of Covid-19 on the General Fund is currently estimated to be a gross expenditure of £13.890 million in 2021/2022, mostly funded by grants from Government, and £2.713 million loss of income, partly mitigated by the funds received for income forgone. The net cost of Covid-19 for 2021/2022 is £1.706 million.

(c) General Fund

The Risk Assessment methodology has been undertaken to ensure that the recommended level of the General Fund Balance is appropriate and reflects the key issues facing the Council. There has been an initial review of Reserves as part of the 2021/2022 Outturn and as at the 31 March 2022 the General Fund has been reduced by £0.100 million to £17.675 million. A recommendation to Full

Council on 13 July 2022 will include a reduction to the General Fund Balance of £3.700 million to allocate to Council Priorities. This reduction will bring the balance to £13.975 million, which will be at the higher end of the risk assessed range of £12.000 million to £15.000 million.

Earmarked Reserves

A full review of all reserves, both the General Fund and earmarked reserves, will be undertaken during 2022/2023 as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to consider whether the current balance is sufficient to manage the financial risks going forward given the financial position and this will include an assessment of the Council's financial resilience.

(d) Capital Outturn

The Capital Outturn position in relation to the 2021/2022 Capital Programme is set out in the table below and shows a net underspend of £11.120 million.

Directorate	Budget £million	Outturn £million	Variance £million
Gross Expenditure			
Corporate Services	11.983	3.900	(8.083)
Transformation	2.395	2.176	(0.219)
Children's Services	8.062	5.393	(2.669)
Environment	39.519	29.602	(9.917)
Total Gross Expenditure	61.959	41.071	(20.888)
Net Expenditure			
Corporate Services	9.054	1.074	(7.980)
Transformation	2.395	1.650	(0.745)
Children's Services	0.454	0.637	0.183
Environment	11.116	8.538	(2.578)
Total Net Expenditure	23.019	11.899	(11.120)

Scheme budgets are subject to challenge during the year, with Directorates and Portfolio Holders meet to assess the current need for funding and to ensure that critical schemes are re-profiled accordingly. The outcome of these reviews is reported to the Executive for consideration as an integral part of the capital programme review process.

Capital is funded from a number of sources, including capital grants, contributions from external parties and revenue budgets, capital receipts and borrowing. Capital receipts received during the year were £2.826 million lower than forecast at Full Council on 2 February 2022 due to the delay in the timing of the receipt.

The breakdown of the Council's movement in Capital Financing Requirement is shown in **Note 35 Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing**, which shows expenditure on a gross expenditure basis.

(e) International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

The Council is required to report its Statement of Accounts using International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) that follow a prescribed layout which is different from that reported during the year, and discussed in Section (b) shown above. **The Expenditure and Funding Analysis** sets out these differences.

Due to various statutory instruments the Council is required to charge amounts to council tax payers (via the General Fund), and exclude others. For example, the **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)** follows a prescribed format on where and how spend should be reported. This statement also includes a number of technical accounting entries (such as depreciation, pension fund adjustments, that are subsequently reversed out in the **Movement in Reserves Statement**.

(f) Highlight Commentary on Core Statements and Notes to the Accounts

Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The objective of the Expenditure and Funding Analysis is to demonstrate to council tax payers how the funding available to the authority (i.e. government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) for the year has been used in providing services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. The Expenditure and Funding Analysis also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the council's directorates. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The statement shows the net deficit on Provision of Services of £4.072 million, reducing the General Fund Balance to £69.616 million. This differs from the net income shown in the CIES of £16.618 million. This difference comprises a number of technical accounting adjustments which the Council is required to make, including capital charges such as depreciation, actuarial pensions adjustments and adjustments to the Collection Fund. A reconciliation of these adjustments is shown in **Note 9**.

Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS)

The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the movement from the start of the year to the end on the different reserves held by the authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (ie those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other 'unusable reserves'. The Statement shows how the movements in year of the authority's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return to the amounts chargeable to council tax for the year.

During the year Usable Reserves, which are cash backed and readily available to support services, rose by £3.365 million across Revenue, Capital and Schools. A fall in total General Fund Reserves of £4.072 million was offset by an increase in Capital Grants Unapplied of £7.437 million.

In addition to this, Unusable Reserves rose by £155.076 million during the financial year. The most significant movement was the Pensions Reserve movement of £95.841 million representing a decrease in the net defined benefit pension liability obligations driven by an increase in the fair value of plan assets. Other movements include £21.569 million increase in revaluation reserve representing a rise in valuations during the year. Movements in Unusable Reserves have no immediate impact on the current resources available to the Council, but can illustrate potential long term underlying financial resourcing position.

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation. Authorities raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with statutory requirements; 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement recorded total income of £158.442 million during 2021/2022. Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure saw income of £141.824 million recorded; £118.862 million remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability; and £22.962 million upward revaluation in operational properties. Further details are enclosed within **Note 39** on the movement of the net defined benefit liability and **Note 14** on downward operational property revaluations.

The Council experienced a Surplus of £16.618 million on the Provision of Services as net income exceeded expenditure. The surplus/deficit is the equivalent figure to the outturn a private sector organisation would show in their published Statement of Accounts. This position is then amended by statutory adjustments to create the net balance funded by Council Tax for 2021/2022. The statutory adjustments are detailed within **Note 9**.

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet summarises an authority's financial position at 31 March each year. In its top half it contains the assets and liabilities that it holds or has accrued with other parties. As local authorities do not have equity, the bottom half is comprised of reserves that show the disposition of an authority's net worth, falling into two categories (Usable & Unsuable Reserves).

The Balance Sheet reconciles the movement in Total Reserves (increase of £158.443 million) resulting in a closing position as at 31 March 2022 of £313.969 million. This movement creates a corresponding increase in the Net Assets held by the Council at 31 March 2022.

Property, Plant and Equipment rose by £41.826 million resulting from upward revaluations in the Council's operational property and land estate and additions more than offset deprecation in the year. Investment property valuations also rose during the year.

Long Term Investments (the Council's strategic treasury investments) rose in value by £2.438 million in line with market conditions, recovering the losses experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic. Short Term Investments and Cash & Cash Equivalents rose by a combined £34.335 million resulting from higher levels of cash balances held.

Long Term Debtors fell by £8.154 million as the 3 year pre-paid pension deficit contribution is unwound. Short Term Debtors fell by £10.053 million driven by lower Central Government Debtors and Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates Debtors.

The most significant movement is Long Term Liabilities, which saw the net pension obligation fall by £95.841 million, partially offset by a net increase in Long Term Creditors and Finance Lease Long Term Liability of £8.644 million.

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the authority 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 authority are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the authority. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the authority'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 authority.

This statement restates the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement for cash items only, stripping out accruals and other items such as depreciation and pension fund charges. The 2021/2022 cash flow statement reiterates the reduction in the balance of cash and cash equivalents shown in the Balance Sheet. The movement is broken down into operating, investing and financing cash flows within **Notes 24, 25** and **26**.

The detailed notes highlight operating cash flows are positive. There were net cash outflows from financing activities that were partially offset by net cash inflows from financing activities. Overall the Council experienced net cash inflows and as a result cash and cash equivalents rose.

Collection Fund Statement

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to local authorities and the Government of council tax and non-domestic rates.

This statement represents the transactions of the Collection Fund, which is a statutory fund under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Acts 1988, 1992 and 2012. The fund covers all Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates collection in the Borough. The fund is accounted for as an agency arrangement with the Council Tax balances belonging to the billing authority and the major preceptors, and the Non-Domestic Rates balances belonging to the billing authority, Government and Fire Authority.

Council Tax collection currently holds a surplus of £5.600 million as at 31 March 2022, compared to a deficit of £0.330 million at 31 March 2021. The surplus will be allocated out to the precepting bodies, net of the residual Collection Fund deficit spreading scheme, in 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

After allowing for a prudent provision for appeals and uncollectable debts, National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) collection shows a deficit of £11.316 million as at 31 March 2022, compared to a deficit of £26.882 million at 31 March 2021. The deficit will be offset in the 2022/2023 financial year through additional Section 31 grants that were made available to compensate the precepting authorities for losses of business rates yields due to the extended relief schemes provided to businesses and organisations through the Covid-19 pandemic. Bedford Borough Council's share of the deficit will be met from Section 31 grants held in reserve.

Bedfordshire Pension Fund Statement

Bedford Borough Council is the Administering Authority for Bedfordshire Pension Fund. Therefore, Bedfordshire Pension Fund's Statement of Accounts, including supporting disclosure notes, are required to be incorporated into the Bedford Borough Council's Statement of Accounts.

The Fund looks after the current and future pension entitlements on behalf of over 200 employers including the three Unitary Councils (Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council), and a number of other universities, colleges, academies and service providers.

The accounts show the Net Asset Statement and the Fund Account (equivalent to the Income and Expenditure Account) of the Pension Fund. The Accounts do not include the Fund's long term liabilities. The Pension Fund's assets at 31 March 2022 stood at £3,013 million (£2,757 million 31 March 2021) an increase of £256 million (9.3%) on the previous year, as explained in the Fund Account.

Annual Governance Statement

A statement of the governance responsibilities and controls in place within the Council.

The Annual Governance Statement is a statutory document, which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively. Regulation 6 (1) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

The AGS reports publicly on the effectiveness of governance and internal control arrangements and how the Council has complied with its Local Code of Corporate Governance, including how it monitors effectiveness. The Governance Framework has been in place at Bedford Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual statement of accounts.

The Council has approved and adopted its Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) and Society of Local Authority Chief Executive's (SOLACE) Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Guidance Notes for English Authorities 2016. The Council's Local Code of Governance sets out the principles of good governance and describes the arrangements the Council has put in place to meet each of these principles:

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the Council directs and controls its activities, and how it leads, engages with and accounts to the community it serves.

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted the Council's service provision, residents, and workforce from March 2020. The Annual Governance Statement assesses the governance arrangements in place during 2021/22. The Covid-19 pandemic affected all of the 2021/22 financial year.

Internal Audit have carried out specific targeted Covid-19 fraud work, however this does not address all the potential risks of fraud posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Internal Audit team have remained alert to any Covid-19-specific risks in their day-to-day work, and have adjusted audit testing programmes accordingly.

Non-Financial Performance

Introduction

All services use data, analysis, business intelligence and performance measures to support the provision and development of services, this includes customer feedback provided through the Council's consultation, complaints and community engagement processes.

Corporate Plan

Due to the impact of the pandemic and a number of other uncertainties, the Council's current Corporate Plan: 'Bedford Borough, the place to grow' (our plan for growth) was extended for a further year, until March 2022.

The Council's new Corporate Plan 2022-2026 has four inter-connected goals, with 12 supporting priorities and two further overarching themes i.e. Climate Change Emergency and Wellbeing, these are central to our ambition. The strategic goals, drivers and priorities for the new Plan were also informed by consultation feedback and the implications of the pandemic. The new Corporate Plan 2022-2026 entitled 'Together Bedford Borough' will focus on Place, People, and Communities. The first report against the Corporate Plan 2022-2026 will be in September 2023.

Councils face continuing and growing demand in the coming years for services, acute cost pressures, and addressing the ongoing implications of the Covid-19 pandemic while at the same time needing to deliver good local services, increased value for money and strong leadership. Bedford Borough Council's priorities are to:

- Increasingly focus on strategic priorities related to our goals;
- Continue to deliver on our obligations and requirements as a local authority;

- Stop doing things if others can do them just as well without the need for Council funding;
- Minimise the resources, in the wider sense, required to operate the Council;
- Maximise the resources, in the wider sense, available to the Borough; and
- Build an operating model – a way of organising and working across the Council – that is fit for the future.

Four goals guide our current Corporate Plan 2017-*2022:

- **Support people** - We believe that vulnerable people of all ages should be treated as we would expect to be treated ourselves, and that means with respect and dignity. Our role is to reduce risks, support those in crisis, safeguard where necessary and help to maintain independence wherever possible;
- **Enhance places** - We believe that the quality of place matters to how people feel about Bedford Borough in their daily lives. Our role is to enhance the local areas we are responsible for, ensure others manage their spaces and places properly and to encourage positive activities;
- **Create wealth** - We believe that economic growth depends on a thriving local economy that benefits everyone. We will actively contribute by facilitating the development of the environment, infrastructure and skills that enable people to benefit from local and regional business growth; and
- **Empower communities** - We recognise that social growth requires individuals, communities and associations to come together to identify the assets that they have and work together to generate solutions to common problems.

The Council's transformation programme is aligned with the Council's Corporate Plan 2017-2021 (*extended until March 2022). The Corporate Plan sets out the changes to the operating model in relation to support and enabling activities and strategic core activities. How these are organised (structures), delivered (commissioned / procured) and process re-engineered (digital operating model) will reduce the cost of delivery.

Supporting the Corporate Plan requires a clear Performance Management Reporting Framework, which will provide an overview of how the Council is performing for residents and businesses. The key measures that underpin the Corporate Plan and support day-to-day business take into account the following factors around what makes a good indicator:

- Clearly linked to the strategy enabling an assessment about whether it is likely to succeed;
- Clear definition and articulation so what is being measured and what is good performance is easily understandable;
- Clarity on why the measure matters in terms of progress toward a specific strategic objective;
- Recognition that perception is important as it tracks how people feel regardless of the underlying performance;
- Trends are as valuable as absolutes indicating the direction of travel as an indication of the progress being made and assessment of the forward look;
- Measures may evolve over time - as a living plan we should expect the key measures to change as we progress; and
- Measures may be outside the control of the Council - for example relating to the performance of an overall system where we are dependent on working with others

Performance Management Arrangements

The Council (members and officers) monitor key performance indicators on a regular basis (including through various fora such as Executive, Management Team, Performance Clinics, Overview & Scrutiny Committees, Senior Leadership Teams, Health and Wellbeing Board etc.). We use performance management to improve services for local communities. Members and officers use this process to drive continuous improvement to help increase efficiency. Performance management is also used to ensure policy decisions are being implemented and that customers are receiving the standard of service they expect at a cost that represents good value for money.

Bedford Borough Council follows the sector-led approach in order to deliver effective performance management and accountability and therefore our emphasis is primarily focused on outcomes.

The Council places a high emphasis on ensuring that we have robust systems for collecting performance information and to ensure that these systems meet data quality standards; these standards are important for the quality of Council decision-making and for sharing information with residents, service users, local partners, and other local authorities. We are aware that poor data quality compromises the information available to decision makers, and compromises the quality of the decisions they make.

Bedford Borough Council's approach to performance management is designed to be transparent, rigorous and consistent to actively support the delivery and improvement of services and efficiency. The success of this approach to performance management is demonstrated through the improvements in services and outcomes for the people of Bedford Borough within the confines of the reducing resources and service pressures (including ongoing implications of the pandemic) we continue to face.

*Summary (Based on *Provisional Figures for 2021/2022)*

Key Performance Indicators outturn for 2020/2021 & 2021/2022:

	% Key Indicators for 2020/21				% Key Indicators for 2021/22			
RAG	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**
Green	72	67	67	72	69	69	66	65
Amber	16	17	20	16	16	18	20	17
Red	12	16	13	12	15	13	13	17
Green & Amber	88	84	88	88	85	87	87	83

For 2021/2022, provisional outturn is 83% (151 out of 183) of our key performance indicators rated as either 'Green' or 'Amber'. This is a noticeable decrease on last year's (2020/2021) outturn (88%); the decrease can be attributed to many pressures affecting the public sector including the impact of the pandemic and other uncertainties including financial pressures.

Note: There are an additional 94 indicators that are not RAG rated. The reasons for this include:

- Indicators that are for context only,
- Where a target has not been set (or it's not appropriate to set one), including indicators that are baseline (i.e. first year of reporting),
- Where there is a lag in data i.e. no data available for the current year.

Some key performance successes and challenges for 2021/22 include:

Successes:

- Safeguarding of the most vulnerable children in the Borough is one of our highest priorities. The percentage of children subject of a Child Protection plan in receipt of 10 working day visits that are up to date improved from 96.4% to 98.2% in 2021/2022.
- Average social worker caseload (low is good) decreased from 17.1 in 2020/2021 to 16.0 in 2021/2022, this ensures quality of practice and case management.
- Percentage of children looked after for 12 months or more with a health assessment across the year (for those under 5 years old) was 100% in 2021/2022; for children aged five and over the % was 93.8% which was in line with the good performance of the previous year.

- The 0-19 Healthy Child Programme, commissioned by Public Health, has continued to successfully support new mothers to breastfeed, with 52% still breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks in 2021/22 (national target 50%);
- Adult Social Care - Timeliness of social care packages following assessment within 28 days remained in line with the previous good performance 92.8% in 2020/2021 and 91.9% in 2021/2022;
- Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information improved from 41.9% in 2020/2021 to 48.3% in 2021/2022. Despite the improvement, the service will continue to monitor and engage with carer's in order to achieve a better understand of what level of support carers are seeking during the ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic;
- Fly-tipping - The number of Environmental Enforcement Actions, including: Investigations, Statutory Notice, Warning Letter, Fixed Penalty Notice, Duty of Care Inspection and others such as Stop & Search, Vehicles Seized, Formal Caution, Prosecution and Injunction are returning to pre Covid levels, 2,241 in 2021/2022 compared to 3,063 in 2020/202. Fly tipping actions are linked to fly tipping incidents and less incidents would generate less actions;
- Nearly all residual waste was collected as expected, this was in line with last year's excellent performance of 99.94%, In 2021/2022 performance was even better 99.99% (despite all the challenges of the pandemic);
- The rate (per 100,000 households) of standard refuse collections that were missed and the number of assisted refuse collections that were missed both saw a significant positive turnaround in performance compared to the previous year; the supervisory teams and crews have worked extremely hard with the overview of Senior Management to turn around challenges faced as a result of the pandemic;
- Bedford Borough saw an estimated 67% reduction in the number of rough sleepers, this was mostly impacted by the positive work undertaken during the pandemic to accommodate and safeguard this group;
- The number of days/shifts lost to the authority due to sickness absence (average days FTE per employee) was 7.8 days which is better than target although this is below the previous outturn (6.65 days) and potentially is an indication of the phased return to normality (i.e. more staff returning to Borough Hall);
- Local Land Charges Searches processed within 10 working days was 93.3% against a target of 95%. This improved considerably compared to 2020/2021 (82.5%). During the first quarter, search numbers were much higher due to the stamp duty holiday. There was also long-term sickness. The service secured experienced temporary staff who have ensured they achieved the target throughout the remainder of the year.

Challenges:

- Children's Services:
    - To reflect effective management of caseloads within Children's Social Care, the percentage of Single Assessments completed in less than 45 working days fell to 68.8% (from 90.7% previously). Performance was negatively impacted by vacancies, sickness and recruitment challenges, work continues on recruiting to vacancies in the Assessment Team and across the service.

- Public Health - There is a lag in reporting public health indicators, and a large number of public health indicators have been impacted by the pandemic, including:
    - The Stop Smoking Service has failed to achieve its annual target for the number of successful quitters, primarily due to reduced service activity in primary care during the pandemic. A service remodel is underway to address low referrals into the service. This will include targeted support for GPs in high deprivation areas and support for e-cigarettes as a smoking cessation aid;

  - The number of adults successfully completing the MoreLife weight management intervention did not achieve the annual target, however the provider has adapted their programmes and there has subsequently been an increase of referrals into the programme. There has been an increase in the average body mass index (BMI) of those peopled referred to the programme, meaning that practitioners are dealing with more complex needs. Behaviours developed during the pandemic - more takeaways, increased snacking and alcohol consumption, combined with more people working at home may have contributed to higher BMIs and made it more difficult for people to lose weight;
  - The number of children and young people successfully completing the MoreLife family weight management programme has been much lower than planned. As a result of COVID-19 many schools have had to repeatedly drop-out of the programme. The family weight management programme has been redesigned to engage more families, with a less intensive initial commitment and longer follow-up.

- Adults' Services - A large number of Adults' Services indicators were also impacted by the pandemic (including):

  - The number of service users receiving a review, as a percentage of all service users in receipt of support services was 46.5% against a target of 60% at the end of 2021/22.
    A low number of reviews is both a regional and national issue due to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic; this issue is currently being reviewed in a number of regional forums, as well as internally within BBC. At the same time, there has been significant workforce issues within Adults' Services. Pertaining to increased staff sickness levels, related to COVID 19, and significant difficulty recruiting and retaining staff. Again, this is a national issue, and covers locum workers, as a number of local authorities have moved away from the regionally agreed limits on the hourly rate. A number of avenues are being explored to reverse this position, which are due to be implemented soon.
  - Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care, i.e. people who remain at home 91 days after hospital discharge was 66.7% against a target of 80%. There has been a significant drop in the number of hospital discharges for those clients supported by the secondary mental health trust (ELFT) compared with the previous year. The council is working closely with both BLMK CCG & ELFT to embed remedial action to help rectify this issue.
  - Carers Survey - Overall satisfaction of carers with social services dropped to 35.3% and the proportion of Carers who find it easy to find information about services performance dropped to 54.8%. The pandemic has brought forward a number challenges for Adult Services, and this is partially reflected in these results. The service is conducting an additional piece of work in order to work more closely with carers by improving channels of communication and engagement with carers through both increased work with the communication's team and future development of adult services and how that "initial" engagement is undertaken more effectively.

- Environment, Economic Development/Growth:

  - The percentage & number of refuse/recycling containers delivered within target times, was 27.3% in 2021/2022 compared to 87.8% in 2020/2021, this was impacted significantly by COVID-19 and the national shortage of LGV drivers; the service is keen to prioritise the use of all HGV drivers to keep the frontline bin collections going. In addition, the service also hired smaller vehicles but the smaller capacity and backlog was too challenging to catch up.

- Average Weekly Town Centre Footfall, this was 163,037 in 2021/2022 compared to 126,037 in 2020/2021. Although this is below target, it indicates a positive return direction for footfall since the end of the Covid restrictions.
- The percentage of retail space vacant was 26% against a target of 10.3%. Vacancy rate by sq. ft. has increased significantly due to the pandemic exaggerating the number of empty units within Bedford town centre. The rate by unit count however is 13%, which is lower than the national average. These numbers show that Bedford has larger units that are vacant rather than a higher number of units vacant.
- Active participation (attendance) at Leisure facilities was 401,379 in 2021/2022 compared to 29,813 in 2020/2021. This is a shortfall of just over 48k against the annual target. Fusion Lifestyle attribute this to the impact of the Omicron variant that could not be taken into account when targets were set. There is also a slower than expected COVID recovery rate and customer return to "normal" is an industry-wide concern. The Council have asked Fusion Lifestyle to produce a clear strategy for recovery that outlines how they will drive up an increase in participation by all key groups in the community.

- Corporate:

    - The percentage of households for whom homelessness was prevented was 12.7% against a target of 20% (high is good). The Bedford Homeless Partnership consisting of multiple organisations and a common desire to meet wider strategic aims to tackle homelessness in Bedford Borough. This includes:
        - Brining service providers, stakeholders and other interested parties together in order to share information and work together effectively.
        - Keeping the needs of the individuals, we are working with at the forefront to ensure positive change occurs in people's lives.
        - Collaborating to improve services to existing and potential service users with the main aim of preventing and reducing homelessness in Bedford Borough.

The anticipated and ongoing adverse impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on performance was taken into consideration during the target setting process for 2021/2022. Target setting for 2022/2023 will be undertaken in June/July 2022 and will reflect the changing situation. Overall, taking into consideration the challenging but realistic targets that had been set, we are pleased that in the current financial and public health climate and period of considerable change we have been able to sustain strong performance against our strategic objectives.

Future Prospects

The Covid-19 pandemic had a direct, or indirect impact on performance for a number of indicators due to national lockdowns, closures, limitations, reduced staffing numbers (due to self-isolation or social distancing) or otherwise adapting to conform to Government and Public Health guidelines.

The ongoing challenges facing Bedford Borough Council specifically due to legacy issues of the pandemic is likely to influence the key indicator outturn for 2022/2023 and this will therefore most likely also impact on the objectives within the new Corporate Plan 2022-2026.

Statement of Responsibilities for 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 secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. At Bedford Borough Council that officer is the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer.
- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.
- Approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer's Responsibilities

The Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Council's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper accounting 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 Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent;
- complied with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code).

The Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer has also:

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

Certification

This statement of accounts presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Bedford Borough Council at 31 March 2022 and income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Signed: JulieMcCabe

Date: 25 September 2023

Julie McCabe, Interim Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer

Approval

I confirm that the Statement of Accounts was approved by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 28 June 2023.

Signed

Date: 25 September 2023

Chair of Audit Committee

Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how annual expenditure as funded from taxation (council tax, business rates and general government grants) is used by the authority in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by the authority in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's directorates also. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

	*Restated 2020/21				2021/22	
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance	**Adjustme-nts**	**Net Expenditure in the Compre-hensive Income and Expenditure Statement**		**Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance**	**Adjustme-nts**	**Net Expenditure in the Compre-hensive Income and Expenditure Statement**
£000	**£000**	**£000**		**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
48,051	360	48,411	Adults Services	49,751	1,402	51,153
32,546	7,850	40,396	Childrens Services	36,604	4,986	41,590
5,520	33,108	38,629	Corporate	2,710	31,156	33,866
35,412	20,527	55,939	Environment	28,379	10,868	39,247
3,730	232	3,962	Finance	3,077	568	3,645
4,108	(4,579)	(471)	Financing	8,532	(4,851)	3,681
469	51	520	Public Health	(242)	76	(166)
261	400	662	Transformation	293	1,169	1,462
130,095	**57,951**	**188,046**	**Net Cost of Services**	**129,104**	**45,374**	**174,478**
(151,537)	(30,689)	(182,226)	Other (Income) and Expenditure	(125,033)	(66,063)	(191,096)
(21,442)	**27,262**	**5,821**	**(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services**	**4,072**	**(20,689)**	**(16,618)**
(52,246)			Opening Combined General Fund Balance	(73,687)		
(21,442)			Plus / less (Surplus) or Deficit on the General Fund Balance for the Year (Statutory basis)	4,072		
(73,687)			**Closing Combined General Fund Balance**	**(69,616)**		

2020/2021 is restated to reflect the change in reporting structure described in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis is not a primary statement but a note to the financial statements, however, it is positioned here as it provides a link from the figures reported in the Strategic Report to the CIES.

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation (or rents). Authorities raise taxation (and rents) to cover expenditure in accordance with statutory requirements; 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.

Restated 2020/21				2021/22		
Expenditure £000	**Income £000**	**Net £000**		**Expenditure £000**	**Income £000**	**Net £000**
81,515	(33,104)	48,411	Adults Services	87,350	(36,198)	51,153
142,743	(102,348)	40,396	Childrens Services	151,289	(109,699)	41,590
88,509	(49,880)	38,629	Corporate	87,764	(53,898)	33,866
71,791	(15,852)	55,939	Environment	61,676	(22,429)	39,247
6,029	(2,068)	3,962	Finance	6,057	(2,412)	3,645
5,470	(5,941)	(471)	Financing	6,300	(2,618)	3,681
10,816	(10,296)	520	Public Health	11,081	(11,246)	(166)
662	0	662	Transformation	1,462	0	1,462
407,535	**(219,488)**	**188,046**	**Cost of Services**	**412,978**	**(238,499)**	**174,478**
2,523	(1)	2,522	Other Operating Expenditure (Note11)	2,696	(59)	2,637
12,975	(16,041)	(3,066)	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure (Note 12)	21,168	(25,834)	(4,666)
0	(181,682)	(181,682)	Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income (Note 13)	0	(189,067)	(189,067)
423,032	**(417,212)**	**5,821**	**(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services**	**436,841**	**(453,459)**	**(16,618)**
		8,662	(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment (Note 23)			(22,962)
		136,058	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability / asset (Note 39)			(118,862)
		144,720	**Other Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure**			**(141,824)**
		150,541	**Total Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure**			**(158,442)**

*2020/2021 is restated to reflect the change in reporting structure as follows:
- Business Transformation and Organisational Development has been renamed Corporate Services and also encompasses the old Chief Executives service area
- Enabling has been renamed Finance. Economic Growth and Property has been split and has moved to Environment and Corporate Services
- Corporate has been renamed Financing
- Childrens and Adults are largely unchanged

Movement in Reserves Statement

The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the movement from the start of the year to the end on the different reserves held by the authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (ie those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other 'unusable reserves'. The Statement shows how the movements in year of the authority's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return to the amounts chargeable to council tax for the year. The Net Increase/Decrease line shows the statutory General Fund Balance movements in the year following those adjustments.

	General Fund Balance £000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £000	Total General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Un-applied Account £000	Total Usable Reserves £000	Unusable Reserves £000	Total Reserves £000
Balance at 31 March 2021	(17,775)	(55,912)	**(73,687)**	**0**	**(14,438)**	**(88,125)**	(67,402)	**(155,526)**
Movement in reserves during 2021/22								
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	(16,618)	0	**(16,618)**			**(16,618)**		**(16,618)**
Other Comprehensive Income / Expenditure							(141,824)	**(141,824)**
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	**(16,618)**	**0**	**(16,618)**	**0**	**0**	**(16,618)**	**(141,824)**	**(158,442)**
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations	20,689		**20,689**		**(7,437)**	**13,252**	(13,252)	**0**
Net (Increase) or Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	**4,072**	**0**	**4,072**	**0**	**(7,437)**	**(3,365)**	**(155,076)**	**(158,442)**
Transfers to / from Earmarked Reserves	(3,972)	3,972	**0**			**0**		**0**
(Increase) or Decrease in 2021/22	**100**	**3,972**	**4,072**	**0**	**(7,437)**	**(3,365)**	**(155,076)**	**(158,442)**
Balance at 31 March 2022	**(17,675)**	**(51,940)**	**(69,615)**	**0**	**(21,875)**	**(91,491)**	**(222,478)**	**(313,969)**
			Note 10		Note 22		Note 23	

	General Fund Balance	Earmarked General Fund Reserves	Total General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Un-applied Account	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2020	**(16,316)**	**(35,929)**	**(52,246)**	**0**	**(14,611)**	**(66,857)**	(239,210)	**(306,067)**
Movement in reserves during 2020/21								
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	5,821		**5,821**			**5,821**		**5,821**
Other Comprehensive Income / Expenditure							144,720	**144,720**
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	**5,821**	**0**	**5,821**			**5,821**	**144,720**	**150,541**
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations	(27,262)		**(27,262)**	0	174	**(27,088)**	27,088	**0**
Net (Increase) or Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	**(21,442)**	**0**	**(21,442)**	**0**	**174**	**(21,268)**	**171,809**	**150,541**
Transfers to / from Earmarked Reserves	19,983	(19,983)	**0**			**0**	0	**0**
(Increase) or Decrease in 2020/21	**(1,458)**	**(19,983)**	**(21,442)**	**0**	**174**	**(21,268)**	**171,809**	**150,541**
Balance at 31 March 2021	**(17,775)**	**(55,912)**	**(73,687)**	**0**	**(14,438)**	**(88,125)**	**(67,402)**	**(155,526)**
			Note 10		Note 22		Note 23	

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the authority. The net assets of the authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the authority. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the authority 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 is those that the authority is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves Statements 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'.

31 March 2021		Note Ref	31 March 2022
£000			£000
596,642	Property, Plant and Equipment	14	638,468
6,554	Heritage Assets	43	6,554
61,951	Investment Property	15	73,775
9,564	Intangible Assets	16	8,584
34,912	Long-Term Investments	17	37,350
9,776	Long-Term Debtors	17A	1,622
719,399	**Long Term Assets**		**766,353**
0	Short Term Investments	17A	10,004
11,530	Current Assets Held for Sale Investment Property	15	9,813
52,794	Short-Term Debtors	18	42,741
24,312	Cash and Cash Equivalents	19	48,663
88,636	**Current Assets**		**111,221**
(3,730)	Short-Term Borrowing	17A	(5,942)
(79,974)	Short-Term Creditors	20A	(81,725)
(10,696)	Provisions	21	(10,557)
(94,400)	**Current Liabilities**		**(98,224)**
(2,532)	Provisions	21	(2,787)
(64,853)	Long-Term Borrowing	17	(59,584)
(467,210)	Other Long-Term Liabilities	20B	(380,012)
(962)	Donated Assets Account	33	(962)
(22,553)	Grants Receipts in Advance - Capital	33	(22,036)
(558,110)	**Long Term Liabilities**		**(465,381)**
155,526	**Net Assets**		**313,969**
(88,125)	Usable Reserves	10 & 22	(91,492)
(67,402)	Unusable Reserves	23	(222,478)
(155,526)	**Total Reserves**		**(313,969)**

I certify that the Balance Sheet represents a true and fair view of the Authority's finanical position as at 31 March 2022. These financial statements replace the unaudited financial statements certified by the s151 officer on 15 June 2022.

Signed:
Date: 25 September 2023
Julie McCabe, Interim Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer

Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the authority 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 authority are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the authority. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the authority's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (ie borrowing) to the authority.

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
5,821	Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	(16,874)
(53,399)	Adjustment to surplus or deficit on the provision of services for noncash movements	(46,958)
30,029	Adjustment for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities	31,742
(17,549)	**Net cash flows from operating activities**	**(32,090)**
3,610	Net cash flows from investing activities	15,165
12,509	Net cash flows from financing activities	(7,425)
(1,430)	**Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents**	**(24,350)**
22,882	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	24,312
24,312	**Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period**	**48,663**

The cash flow movements above are broken down into detail disclosure notes identifying operating, investing and financing activities within **Notes 24, 25** and **26**

Note 1 - Accounting Policies

A GENERAL

The Statement of Accounts summarises the authority's transactions for the 2021/2022 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2022. The authority is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which those Regulations require to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices under Section 21 of the 2003 Act primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/2022, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and statutory guidance issued under section 12 of the 2003 Act.

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.

Due to rounding, numbers presented throughout this document may not add up precisely to the totals provided and percentages may not precisely reflect the absolute figures.

B ACCOUNTING CONCEPTS

In general the accounts are prepared on the basis of historical cost modified by the revaluation of land, buildings, vehicles and plant subject to and in accordance with the fundamental accounting concepts set out below:

Relevance

The accounts are prepared so as to provide readers with information about the Council's financial performance and position that is useful for assessing the stewardship of public funds.

Reliability

The accounts are prepared on the basis that the financial information contained in them is reliable, i.e. they are free from material error, systematic bias, complete within the bounds of materiality and represent faithfully what they intend to represent. Where there is uncertainty in measuring or recognising the existence of assets, liabilities, income and expenditure then caution and prudence has been used as a basis to inform the selection and application of accounting policies and estimation techniques.

Comparability

The accounts are prepared so as to enable comparison between financial periods as far as possible. To aid comparability the Council has applied its accounting policies consistently both during the year and between years.

Understandability

Every effort has been made to make the accounts as easy to understand as possible. Nevertheless, an assumption has been made that the reader will have a reasonable knowledge of accounting and local government. Where the use of technical terms has been unavoidable an explanation has been provided in the glossary of terms.

Materiality

Certain information may be excluded from the accounts on the basis that the amounts involved are not material either to the fair presentation of the financial position and transactions of the Council or to the understanding of the accounts.

Accruals

With the exception of the Cash Flow Statement, the accounts are prepared on an accruals basis. The accruals basis of accounting requires the non-cash effect of transactions to be reflected in the accounts for the year in which those effects are experienced and not in the year in which the cash is actually received or paid.

Going Concern

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting confirms that the local authority accounts must be prepared on a going concern basis; that is, on the assumption that the functions of the Council will continue in operational existence for 12 months from the date that the accounts are authorised for issue. Furthermore, the Code requires that local authorities prepare their accounts on a going concern basis, as they can only be discontinued under statutory prescription . For these reasons, the Council does not consider that there is material uncertainty in respect of its ability to continue as a going concern for 12 months from the date of the approval of the accounts and therefore the accounts have been prepared on an ongoing basis.

In forming the conclusion that it is appropriate for the accounts to be prepared on a going concern for the period to 30 September 2024, the Council has carried out, and continues to undertake, detailed assessment of its financial position and performance during 2023/2024 and beyond. This includes consideration of:

- Loss of income due to temporary closures, reductions in demand, and the increased collection losses, being given consideration on a service and department basis.
- Additional expenditure incurred on a service by service basis, e.g. provision of new and expanded services in response to the crisis (such as additional costs relating to temporary accommodation for the homeless), and additional costs associated with changes to working practices (such as remote working).
- Incorporating all changes to government policy, e.g. changes to business rate reliefs, guidance on supplier relief, additional funding for local authorities, and additional responsibilities which then sit alongside this.
- The impact on the Council's capital programme, e.g. whether there is a need to rephase work, including where delays are as a result of government restrictions.
- The impact of all of the above on the Council's cash flow and treasury management, including availability of liquid cash, impact on investment returns, and availability of external borrowing if required.
- The estimated overall impact on the Council's General Fund Reserves.

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), the Council's key financial planning document sets out the strategic approach to the management of its finances and Council Tax levels over the medium term, thereby allowing sufficient lead time to develop services consistent with the forecast resource envelope. As part of the MTFS process the Council considers a range of scenarios that may impact upon its medium term forecast position; the report sets out the following risks that inform these scenarios, these being economic, demand led, climate change and funding risks. These, in turn, provide four reported scenarios being optimistic, pessimistic, negative economic view and the central case (this is the position that is utilised as the benchmark level).

The General Fund balance is considered as part of the MTFS as it relates to financial resilience. The risk assessment for the General Fund was updated to reflect the perceived risk profile. This included reference to (i) History – given recent outturn positions, the Section 25 report (forming part of the annual budget process) and the embedded financial control was no longer deemed a driver of risk, (ii) Legislative risk being changes over the medium term that may impact upon the Council's operating costs and additionally includes climate related risk at corporate level.

The Council undertakes cash flow forecasting and assesses the adequacy of liquidity regularly. The current projection through to 30 September 2024 shows a positive cash position throughout the Going Concern period, albeit at a reducing level.

Projections in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, approved by Full Council 1 February 2023, indicate a possible need for short-term in-year borrowing commencing 2024/2025 through to 2029/2030 in order to sustain current long-term investments and sufficient liquidity for operational activity. Borrowing may be sourced from other local authorities or from the PWLB. At 30 June 2023 there was £76.6 million headroom between actual borrowing of £59.8 million and the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) forecast for 31 March 2025 of £136.4 million. In addition to this the Council's Operational Boundary and Authorised Borrowing Limit is £160 million and £170 million respectively which gives sufficient headroom to borrow should it be required.

By way of further context, the General Fund Balance as at 31 March 2023 stood at £10.075 million, below the risk assessed minimum level. A recommendation to Full Council on 12 July 2023 to transfer £0.933 million from the Direct Revenue Funding Reserve into the General Fund will ensure it is brought up to the lower end of the risk assessed range of £11.0 million to £14.000 million. The Council also has other earmarked reserve balances of £34.4 million (excluding Schools, Public Health, and other ring-fenced reserves), which could be called upon if necessary. The General Fund balance is projected to be £11.008 million at 31 March 2025, and earmarked reserve balances that could be called upon are forecast to be £13.7 million. These forecasts assume the revenue budget is balanced during 2023/2024. Any resulting overspend will therefore have a detrimental impact on the level of reserves and cash flow.

Therefore, there is significant headroom within the General Fund and other Earmarked Reserves to provide financial resilience over the going concern period to 30 September 2024. Therefore, the accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

C ACCRUALS 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 gap between the date supplies are received and 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. No accrual will be made for flexi leave, maternity leave or sickness, if the amounts are deemed immaterial.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue 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.

D ACQUIRED AND DISCONTINUED OPERATIONS

Income and expenditure directly related to acquired and discontinued operations, when material, are shown separately on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statements (CIES).

E AGENCY AND PRINCIPAL

In presenting income and expenditure, the Council takes a view as to whether the income and expenditure it incurs is on an Agency basis or a Principal basis.

Agency basis is where the Council incurs income and expenditure on behalf of a third party, usually due to statutory rules and regulations. An example is the collection of Council Tax on behalf of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire and the Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority.

Principal basis is where the Council incurs income and expenditure on behalf of a third party, but under contract and where risks and rewards are taken. An example is the provision of social care on behalf of other authorities under a Service Level Agreement.

F 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 investments that mature in 28 days or less from the Balance Sheet date and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

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.

G PROVISIONS, CONTINGENT ASSETS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

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 that could eventually result in the payment of a negotiated settlement or the payment of compensation.

Existing provisions are reviewed annually alongside consideration for new provisions. They reflect the best estimate when the accounts are prepared. Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the CIES 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, taking into account 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 of 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.

Provisions are classified on the Balance Sheet as short term (due to be settled within 12 months of the financial year end) or long term (due to be settled over 12 months of the financial year end). For long term provisions where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount of a provision is the present value of the expenditures expected to be required to settle the obligation. The unwinding of the discount due to the passage of time is recognised as interest within Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of services.

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.

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.

H 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. For these, the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events;
- those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period. For these, 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.

I EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS

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

J FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT

The authority measures some of its non-financial assets such as surplus assets and investment properties and majority of its financial instruments 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:

- in the principal market for the asset or liability, or

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

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

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the authority takes into account 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 authority uses valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient 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 authority'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 authority 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
- Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

K FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and 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 (CIES) 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 borrowings that the authority has, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest); and interest charged to the CIES is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Where premiums and discounts have been charged to the CIES, regulations allow the impact on the General Fund Balance to be spread over future years. The authority 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 CIES 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 has no Financial Assets in the category.

The authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost, except for those whose contractual payments are 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 on the Balance Sheet when the authority 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 (CIES) 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 authority, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest) and interest credited to the CIES is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

When soft loans are made (loans at less than market rates), a loss is recorded in the CIES (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 CIES at a marginally higher effective rate of interest than the rate receivable, 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 CIES 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.

Where the value of soft loans is considered immaterial, this guidance is not followed and the amounts recorded in the balance sheet reflect the cash amounts.

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 CIES.

Expected Credit Loss Model

The authority recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost, 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 authority.

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 the basis of 12-month expected losses.

Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit of Loss

Financial assets that are measured at FVPL are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the authority 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 arrive in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. Statutory provisions (ending 31 March 2023) require fair value movements in pooled investment funds to be taken to a separate unusable reserve instead of the General Fund. This is managed by a transfer to or from the usable reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The fair value measurements of the financial assets are based on the following techniques:

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

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 authority can access at the measurement date.
- Level 2 inputs – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 inputs – unobservable inputs for the asset.

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.

L FINANCIAL GUARANTEES

The Council may give financial guarantees requiring payments to be made to reimburse the holder of a debt if a debtor fails to make a payment when due in accordance with the terms of a contract. Where these guarantees are given they are to be included in the accounts at fair value. Where guarantees are given to unrelated parties, the fair value is the premium received unless that sum does not represent a reliable estimate of the fair value. Where no premium is received the fair value of the guarantee is estimated by assessing the likelihood of the guarantee being called against the likely amount payable.

At 31 March 2022 the Council had given no financial guarantees but may do so in the future.

M 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 CIES until all terms and conditions attached to the grant or contributions have been satisfied.

Monies advanced as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried in the Balance Sheet as creditors for revenue grants and contributions or capital grants receipts in advance for capital grants and contributions. 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 (non-ring-fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the CIES.

Where capital grants are credited to the CIES, 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 the grant has been used to finance capital expenditure, 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 in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The authority has elected to charge a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The levy will be charged on new builds (chargeable developments for the authority) with appropriate planning consent. The council charges for and collects the levy, which is a planning charge. The income from the levy will be used to fund a number of infrastructure projects (these include transport, flood defences and schools) to support the development of the area.

CIL is received without outstanding conditions; it is therefore recognised at the commencement date of the chargeable development in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in accordance with the accounting policy for government grants and contributions set out above. CIL charges will be largely used to fund capital expenditure. However, a proportion of the charges may be used to fund revenue expenditure.

N 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) are capitalised (above a de minimis limit of £4,000 for schools and £10,000 for non-schools) when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Council. Intangible Assets are amortised to the relevant service line(s) in the CIES over the economic life of the asset (between 5 and 10 years).

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 CIES. 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 CIES. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the CIES.

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.

When Intangible assets are amortised to zero, it will be assumed there is no existing operational use for the asset, unless there is evidence to the contrary. The Gross Book Value and Accumulated Amortisation will be treated as a disposal and removed from the Fixed Asset Register.

O INTERESTS IN COMPANIES AND OTHER ENTITIES

The Council has an interest in a wholly owned private housing development company called Benedict Bedford Limited (BBL). The Council's main objective for creating the company is to generate a financial return to the Council by operating a commercial enterprise to develop underutilised and surplus land assets to generate value. There was no significant or material activity undertaken by BBL and it did not have any assets or liabilities at 31 March 2022, so Group Accounts have not been prepared.

Trust Funds

The main funds for which the Council acts as sole trustee are listed in **Note 44**. Group Accounts have not been prepared as these interests are not considered material.

P INVENTORIES AND LONG TERM CONTRACTS

Inventories are to be included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value where they are material. The Council does not hold any material values of inventories, instead values are expensed to the Surplus of Deficit on the Provision of Services.

Long term contracts are accounted for on the basis of charging the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services with the value of works and services received under the contract during the financial year.

Q HERITAGE ASSETS

Heritage assets are assets that are held by the authority principally for their contribution to knowledge or culture.

Heritage assets are measured at valuation in the balance sheet where practical and material, but are otherwise disclosed by means of narrative. There is no depreciation charged on the heritage assets because it has been estimated that the assets have a useful life of such length that any depreciation charge on the asset will be negligible and can be ignored on the basis of materiality.

Civic Regalia and Art Museum artefacts have been valued on the basis of the last insurance valuation.

Statues and Memorials, Heritage Properties (e.g. Bromham Mills, Stevington Windmill) and the Crystal Archive Collection have been valued on the basis of Historic Cost (when previously held as Community Assets).

The Council has not recognised any other Archived assets as it is of the view that obtaining valuations for the vast majority of these collections would involve a disproportionate cost of obtaining the information in comparison to the benefits to the users of the Council's financial statements – this exemption is permitted by the Code.

R 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 held for sale are those where there is a high likelihood of sale within the next year.

Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Investment Property is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Authority and the cost or fair value of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an assets potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred.

Where part of an investment property is replaced (above a de minimis level of £100,000), the cost of the replacement is recognised in the carrying value of the investment property and the carrying amount of those parts that are replaced is derecognised.

Measurement

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, based on the amount at which the asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable parties at arms-length (i.e. market value). Where an Investment Property is held under a lease (i.e. the Council is the lessee), the measurement is based on the lease interest. Properties are not depreciated but are revalued annually according to market conditions at 1 January. Where there has been material capital expenditure in excess of £100,000 on an asset a further revaluation is undertaken at the year end (31 March).Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal. Investment Properties are not permitted to be reclassified as Assets Held for Sale.

An investment property under construction is measured at fair value if the Council is able to measure reliably the fair value of the investment property; otherwise these assets are measured at cost.

Rental Income and Disposals

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the Financing and Investment Income line and result in a gain for the General Fund Balance. However, 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.

S JOINTLY CONTROLLED OPERATIONS AND JOINTLY CONTROLLED ASSETS

Jointly controlled operations are activities undertaken by the Council in conjunction with other organisations that involve the use of the assets and resources of the organisations rather than the establishment of a separate entity. The Council recognises on its Balance Sheet the assets that it controls and the liabilities that it incurs and debits and credits the CIES with a share of the expenditure it incurs and income it earns from the activity of the operation. The Council accounts for a number of jointly controlled operations which have been entered into with local authorities in the region.

Jointly controlled assets are items of property, plant or equipment that are jointly controlled by the Council and other organisations, with the assets being used to obtain benefits for the organisations. The joint venture does not involve the establishment of a separate entity. The Council accounts for only its share of the jointly controlled assets, the liabilities and expenses that it incurs on its own behalf or jointly with others in respect of its interest in the joint venture and income that it earns from the venture.

T 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.

The Council as Lessee

Finance Leases

Property, Plant and Equipment or Investment Property 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 CIES).

Property, Plant and Equipment and Investment Property recognised under finance leases is accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, for Property, Plant and Equipment 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 Fund Balance, known as the 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.

Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the CIES as an expense of the services benefitting 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).

An Investment Property held under an operating lease is accounted for as if it was a finance lease.

The Council as Lessor

Finance Leases

Where the Council grants a finance lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the relevant asset is written out of the Balance Sheet as a disposal. At the commencement of the lease, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether Property, Plant and Equipment or Investment Property) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the CIES as part of the gain or loss on disposal. A gain, representing the Council's net investment in the lease, is credited to the same line in the CIES 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), matched by a lease (long-term debtor) asset in the Balance Sheet.

Lease rentals receivable are apportioned between:

- a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property – applied to write down the lease debtor (together with any premiums received); and
- finance income (credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES).

The gain credited to the CIES on disposal is not permitted by statute to increase the General Fund Balance and is required to be treated as a capital receipt. Where a premium has been received, this is posted out of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Receipts Reserve, in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the amount due in relation to the lease asset is to be settled by the payment of rentals in future financial years, this is posted out of the General Fund Balance to the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When the future rentals are received, the element for the capital receipt for the disposal of the asset is used to write down the lease debtor. At this point, the deferred capital receipts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against council tax, as the cost of fixed assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are therefore appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Under transition to IFRS, the Council reclassified a number of operating leases to finance leases. In order to mitigate the impact of this reclassification on council tax, regulations (SI 2010 No. 454) required the Council not to classify the repayment of the principal element as a capital receipt for leases entered into on or before 31 March 2010, but to retain it in the General Fund as income

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 CIES. 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.

Lease Type Arrangements

Where the Council enters into an arrangement, comprising a transaction or a series of related transactions, that does not take the legal form of a lease but conveys a right to use an asset (e.g. an item of property, plant or equipment) in return for a payment or series of payments, the arrangement is accounted for as a lease as detailed above.

U OVERHEADS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The costs of overheads and support services are charged to service segments in accordance with the authority's arrangements for accountability and financial performance.

V 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 (above a de minimis limit of £4,000 for schools and £10,000 for non-schools) on an accruals basis, provided that 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. Expenditure that maintains but 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 when it is incurred.

The de minimis level for capitalisation, referred to above, is not applicable to a project if it is part of a larger scheme of works which has a combined value exceeding the de minimis.

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.

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

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.

Assets are then carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Infrastructure, Community Assets and Assets Under Construction – depreciated historical cost;
- All other assets – fair 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 fair value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of fair value.

Where non-property assets that have short useful lives or low values (or both), depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for fair value.

The valuation of land and buildings is undertaken by professionally qualified valuers.

New capital projects are treated as assets under construction until they are formally handed over to the service as completed and ready for use. Capital expenditure in year is added to the carrying value of the asset until it is next revalued with the exception of material works on assets (£100,000 or over), which will be revalued at the end of the financial year.

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at fair value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their fair value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Revaluations are completed as at 1 January in the year of valuation and are reviewed for material changes as at the reporting date 31 March. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. Gains are credited to the appropriate line(s) in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services (up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised) where they arise from the reversal of a revaluation loss previously charged to the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services, for the same asset.

Where decreases in value are identified (revaluation loss), 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)
- 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 Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services.

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.

When an asset is re-valued (revaluation gain and revaluation loss), any accumulated depreciation and impairment at the date of valuation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount restated to the re-valued amount of the asset.

Revaluation gains and revaluation 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 (MIRS) and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Closed Landfill Site

The Council owns one closed landfill site. The future statutory costs of maintaining this site have been set aside in a provision and capitalised. These costs have then been revalued downwards and charged to the CIES. The revaluation losses are then credited in the MIRS and debited in the Capital Adjustment Account.

The provision will be held at the discounted cash value determined by a relevant PWLB borrowing rate. The unwinding of the discounted provision will create an interest charge being made to the CIES. Any expenditure incurred in the statutory obligations of the site, whether capital or revenue, will be charged to the outstanding provision.

Impairment

Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated and, 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);

- 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 Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services.

In exceptional cases where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently on the same asset, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(s) in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

Revaluation gains and impairment 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.

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 (i.e. assets under construction).

Assets are depreciated based on the value and life at the start of the financial year (before any revaluations) on a straight-line basis using the following life periods:

Asset Type	Depreciation Range
Building	Between 0 and 100 years
Land	No Depreciation
Plant, Vehicles and Equipment	Between 5 and 15 years
Highways Infrastructure	30 years
Other Infrastructure	Between 10 and 20 years

Depreciation is recognised in the appropriate lines in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services.

Depreciation is not permitted to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The depreciation is, therefore, reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account.

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 in the Balance Sheet.

Residual Value

Residual values are not used as asset values are assumed to be fully consumed over their useful life.

Componentisation

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment is of significant value in relation to the overall asset portfolio and has major components whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the asset, the components are depreciated separately.

The Council applies a de minimis limit (£6 million) below which assets will not be componentised because the asset is not considered significant in relation to the overall value of the Council's asset portfolio. For those assets above this de minimis limit, there will be a separate de minimis to only consider those components that are significant in relation to the total cost of the asset (20% or above of the total cost). These de minimis limits will be assessed on a regular basis so ensure that the levels are appropriate and do not materially affect the depreciation calculation.

Componentisation for depreciation purposes is applicable to enhancement and acquisition expenditure incurred, and revaluations carried out.

Where part of a Property, Plant and Equipment asset is replaced (above a de minimis level of £100,000), the cost of the replacement is recognised in the carrying value of the asset and the carrying amount of those parts that are replaced is derecognised. This recognition and derecognition takes place regardless of whether the replaced part had been depreciated separately.

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 CIES. 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 on the same asset (up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised). Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale. Where assets are expected to be sold within 12 months of the end of the financial year they are classified as Current Assets Held for Sale.

Revaluation gains and revaluation 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.

If assets no longer meet the criteria to be classified as Assets Held for Sale, they are reclassified back to non-current assets (Property, Plant and Equipment or Investment Property) 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 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 CIES as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals (if any) are credited to the same line in the CIES 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 and credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve (disposals of £10,000 or below are treated as revenue). Capital receipts can then only be used for new capital investment (or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow). 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 fixed 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.

Reclassifications to Investment Property

Where Property, Plant and Equipment meet the criteria for Investment Property, the asset is reclassified to Investment Property. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification to Investment Property with any remaining balance on the Revaluation Reserve is 'frozen' until such time it is reclassified.

Schools

The capital assets of certain schools in the Borough are not owned by the Council and hence it is not probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the asset will flow to the Council. Neither does the Council control the assets and hence there is no service concession or lease type arrangement. As a result, the value of the assets is not included in the Council's Balance Sheet. Those schools not included are: Academy, Voluntary Aided (VA) and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools (though the playing fields of VA / VC schools are included). Foundation Trust and Community Schools are included in the Council's Balance Sheet.

Highways Infrastructure Assets

These include carriageways, footways and cycle tracks, structures (eg bridges), street lighting, street furniture (eg illuminated traffic signals, bollards) and traffic management systems which together form a single integrated network.

They are generally measured at depreciated historical cost. However for some of the balances transferred from Bedfordshire County Council on 1 April 2009 this is a modified form of historical cost. Balances transferred consist of our 33% share of the balance with the rest being transferred to Central Bedfordshire Council. The balance transferred from Bedfordshire County Council includes an element which was originally recorded in their balance sheet at the amount of capital undischarged for sums borrowed as at 1 April 1994, this being deemed at the time to be historical cost.

W EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Benefits Payable During Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled 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 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 earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. For the accounts, flexi-time and leave accrued during maternity leave and long term sickness are excluded if deemed immaterial.

The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out to the Accumulated Absences Account through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits 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. The cost is charged on an accruals basis to the Non Distributed Costs line in the CIES when the Council is demonstrably committed to the termination of the employment of an officer or group of officers.

Post-Employment Benefits (Pension Costs)

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

- The Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered nationally by the Teachers' Pensions Agency
- The NHS Pension Scheme, administered nationally by the NHS Pensions
- The Local Government Pensions Scheme, administered by Bedford Borough 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' and NHS pension schemes mean that liabilities for these benefits cannot be identified to the Council. These schemes are, therefore, accounted for as if they were defined contributions schemes – no liability for future payments of benefits is recognised in the Balance Sheet and the Children's and Education Services and Public Health lines in the CIES are charged with the employer's contributions payable to their respective pension funds in the year.

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

The liabilities of the Bedfordshire Pension Scheme 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 projections of estimated earnings for current employees.

Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate of 2.6% (based on the indicative rate of return on high quality corporate bonds).

The assets of the Bedfordshire pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their market value:

- quoted securities – market bid price
- unquoted securities – professional valuations
- unitised securities – current bid price quoted by fund manager
- property – current bid price quoted by fund manager

The change in the net pension's liability is analysed into seven components:

(1) current service cost – the increase in liabilities as result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the CIES to the revenue accounts of services for which the employees worked

(2) 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 CIES as part of Non Distributed Costs

(3) net interest cost – the expected increase in the present value of liabilities during the year as they move one year closer to being paid – debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES

(4) expected return on plan assets – the annual investment return on the fund assets attributable to the Council, based on an average of the expected long-term return, net of administration costs related to the management of plan assets – credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the CIES

(5) gains/losses on settlements and curtailments – the result of actions to relieve the Council of liabilities or events that reduce the expected future service or accrual of benefits of employees – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services in the CIES as part of Non Distributed Costs

(6) 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 – debited to the Pension Reserve

(7) contributions paid to the Bedfordshire 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 in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations 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 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 are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

X PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENTS, CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICIES, ESTIMATES AND ERRORS

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

Y 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 fixed assets during the year:

- 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 .
- amortisation of intangible fixed assets attributable to the service.

The Council is not required to raise Council Tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisations. 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 (MRP). Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisations are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund Balance (MRP), by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

Z COUNCIL TAX AND NON-DOMESTIC RATES

Billing authorities act as agents, collecting council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) on behalf of the major preceptors (including government for NDR) and, as principals, collecting council tax and NDR for themselves. Billing authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate fund (i.e. the Collection Fund) for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and NDR. 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 NDR collected could be less or more than predicted.

Accounting for Council Tax and NDR

The council tax and NDR 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 NDR 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 NDR relating to arrears, impairment allowances for doubtful debts, overpayments and prepayments and appeals.

AA RESERVES

The Council maintains earmarked reserves to fund future expenditure on specific policy priorities as well as to provide funds to meet various contingency requirements the Council may have to face. The Executive has undertaken a review to ensure they are still required for the purpose set out and that the balance is still appropriate.

Amounts set aside for purposes falling outside of the definition of provisions or contingent liabilities are treated as reserves and transfers to and from them are distinguished from service expenditure.

Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year and therefore included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the CIES. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against council tax for the expenditure.

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

BB REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE (REFCUS)

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but does not result in the creation of non-current assets (e.g. grants to third parties for capital purposes) has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the CIES 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 to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses out the amounts charged, so that there is no impact on the level of council tax.

CC VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)

VAT payable is included as an expense in the CIES whether of a capital or revenue nature only to the extent that it is not recoverable from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs. VAT receivable is not included as income in the CIES.

Note 2 - Accounting Standards Issued, Not Adopted

Paragraph 3.3.2.13 of the Code requires changes in accounting policy to be applied retrospectively unless alternative transitional arrangements are specified in the Code. Paragraph 3.3.4.3 requires an authority to disclose information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted by the Code for the relevant financial year. The standards that may be relevant for additional disclosures that will be required in the 2021/2022 financial statements in respect of accounting changes that are introduced in the 2022/2023 Code (i.e. that are relevant to the requirements of paragraph 3.3.4.3) are:

a) IFRS 16 Leases – (but only for local authorities that have decided to adopt IFRS 16 in the 2022/2023). The Council will adopt IFRS 16 in 2023/2024, so this is not relevant at this time.

b) Annual Improvement to IFRS Standards 2018-2020. The annual IFRS improvement programme notes 4 changed standards none of which have an effect on these financial statements.

Note 3 - Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

In applying the accounting policies set out in the Accounting Policies, the authority 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 as follows.

- There continues to be a high degree of uncertainty regarding future levels of funding for local government, which may affect the Council's Corporate Plan and associated strategies and policies. Changes such as the proposed localisation of business rates from 50% to 100% and the accompanying transfer of responsibilities from Central to Local Government brings further risk and greater volatility. The Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Authority might be impaired because of a need to close facilities and reduce the levels of service provision. There is no impact on the going concern assessment.

- The Council maintains a prudent level of reserves to mitigate financial risk and ensure financial stability in the medium term. The General Fund Balance and Transformation Reserves in particular are reviewed at both budget setting and as part of the closure of accounts to ensure there is financial resilience and sufficient funding to support the Council's Transformation Programme.

- Where there are amounts in dispute with other parties, the Council has accounted for the amount it believes is correct. Where appropriate, a provision is set up to account for doubtful amounts.

- Valuation of property is subject to a number of professional judgements. Valuations are carried out by a qualified valuer, and their assumptions are set out in the Property, Plant and Equipment Note.

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 authority about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 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
Pensions Liability	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. The Council's Actuaries provide expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.	The effects on the Net Pensions Liability of changes in individual assumptions have been calculated as being: ▪ A decrease in the Discount Rate of 0.1% would increase the employer liability by approximately 2.0% (£18.3 million) ▪ An increase in the salary increase rate of 0.1% would increase the employer liability by approximately 0.1% (£1.3 million) ▪ An increase in the pension increase rate of 0.1% would increase the employer liability by approximately 1.8% (£16.9 million)
Arrears	At 31 March 2022, debtors (excluding Collection Fund) totalled £36.672 million. A review of significant balances suggested that an impairment of doubtful debts of £6.689 million 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, a doubling of the amount of the impairment of doubtful debts would require an additional £6.689 million to set aside as an allowance.
Fair Value Measurements	When the fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities 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 similar assets or liabilities in active markets or the discounted cash flow (DCF) model). Where possible, the inputs to these valuation techniques are based on observable data,	The authority uses the discounted cash flow (DCF) model to measure the fair value of some of its investment properties and financial assets. The significant unobservable inputs used in the fair value measurement include

	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 authority's assets and liabilities. Where Level 1 inputs are not available, the authority employs relevant experts to identify the most appropriate valuation techniques to determine fair value. Information about the valuation techniques and inputs used in determining the fair value of the authority's assets and liabilities is disclosed in notes 16 and 18 below.	management assumptions regarding rent growth, vacancy levels (for investment properties) and discount rates – adjusted for regional factors (for both investment properties and some financial assets). Significant changes in any of the unobservable inputs would result in a significantly lower or higher fair value measurement for the investment properties and financial assets.
Property Plant & Equipment	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on maintaining assets, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned. Assets are valued by professional staff qualified by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Nevertheless, there is an inherent element of subjectivity with any asset valuation.	If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the asset falls. It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge would increase by £2.7 million if the useful lives were reduced by one year.
Non- Domestic Rates (NDR) Appeals	The Council has set aside a provision to cover successful appeals lodged against NDR banding with the Valuations office, based on a professional estimate of outstanding appeals.	If the provision is incorrect, there would be an impact on the Collection Fund balance. Any impact would be split between the Council and preceptors, with 49% of this amount impacting the Council and the provision of £5.897 million. If collection rates were to deteriorate further, for every 1% reduction in collection rate, an extra £0.029 million would be required to be set aside as an allowance.

Note 5 - Material Items of Income and Expense

The following material item of income and expense recognised in Net Cost of Services with the surplus or deficit on the provision of services is detailed below.

During 2021/2022, the CIES incurred depreciation impairment charges of £19.342 million (£18.948 million in 2020/2021) and net revaluation decrease of £6.503 million (£13.847 million increase in

2020/2021). However, these have no impact on the General Fund as these are reversed out as required under statutory regulations (see **Note 9**). Other material items of income and expense are disclosed in **Notes 11, 12 and 13**.

Note 6 - Events After the Balance Sheet Date

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Interim Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) & Chief Finance Officer on 25 September 2023. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information. There are no events known to the Council which would need to be registered as events after the Balance Sheet date.

Note 7 - Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

This note reconciles the accounting adjustments column included in the Expenditure and Funding Analysis Statement included at the beginning of the accounts.

	2021/22			
	Net Capital Statutory Adjustments	**Net Pensions Statutory Adjustments**	**Other Statutory Adjustments**	**Total Adjustments**
	£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Adults Services	(213)	1,689	(74)	**1,402**
Children's Services	(694)	4,852	829	**4,986**
Corporate	3,375	1,900	25,881	**31,156**
Environment	8,735	2,939	(806)	**10,868**
Finance	0	595	(27)	**568**
Financing Directorate	(5,165)	1,855	(1,541)	**(4,851)**
Public Health	(110)	178	9	**76**
Transformation	1,123	42	3	**1,169**
Net Cost of Services	**7,050**	**14,050**	**24,274**	**45,374**
Other Income and Expenditure	(36,256)	8,972	(38,779)	(66,063)
Difference between the Statutory Charge and the Surplus or Deficit in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	**(29,206)**	**23,022**	**(14,505)**	**(20,689)**

	Restated 2020/21 Net Capital Statutory Adjustments	Net Pensions Statutory Adjustments	Other Statutory Adjustments	Total Adjustments
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adults Services	(257)	331	286	360
Children's Services	7,613	903	(666)	7,850
Corporate	3,811	371	28,926	33,108
Environment	20,087	563	(123)	20,527
Finance	0	113	119	232
Financing Directorate	(3,671)	502	(1,410)	(4,579)
Public Health	0	25	26	51
Transformation	381	7	13	400
Net Cost of Services	**27,964**	**2,816**	**27,171**	**57,951**
Other Income and Expenditure	(19,784)	7,162	(18,067)	(30,689)
Difference between the Statutory Charge and the Surplus or Deficit in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	**8,180**	**9,978**	**9,104**	**27,262**

2020/2021 is restated to reflect the change in reporting structure implemented in the first quarter of the year.

Note 1) Net Capital Statutory Adjustments

Adjustments for capital purposes – this column adds in depreciation and impairment and revaluation gains and losses in the services line, and for:

- **Capital charges to Net Cost of Services** – annual charges for depreciation, amortisation and property revaluations as stipulated under generally accepted accounting practices.
- **Revenue Expenditure Funded Capital Under Statute** – revenue expenditure, and associated external funding, funded by capital means charged to the CIES under generally accepted accounting practices.
- **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 practices.
- **Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure** – capital grants are adjusted for income not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices. 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.

Note 2) Net Pensions Statutory Adjustments

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

- For **services** this represents the removal of the employer pension contributions made by the authority as allowed by statute and the replacement with current service costs and past service costs.
- For **Financing and investment income and expenditure** — the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the CIES.

Note 3) Other Statutory Adjustments and Differences

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

- For **services** contributions to and from reserves have been transferred out of the CIES and movements in the employees benefits accrual recognised as specified under generally accepted accounting practices in the Code.
- For **Financing and investment income and expenditure** the other differences column recognises adjustments to the General Fund for the timing differences for premiums and discounts.
- The charge under **Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure** represents the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations for council tax and NDR that was projected to be received at the start of the year and the income recognised under generally accepted accounting practices in the Code. This is a timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future Surpluses or Deficits on the Collection Fund.

The transfer of income and expenditure included in service management accounts which are designated as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in in accordance with the Code.

- **Other Income and Expenditure** – Parish precepts and payments for levies.
- **Financing Income and Expenditure** – Interest payable, investment income and commercial property income and expenditure.
- **Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure** – Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates and non-specific government grants.

Note 8 - Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

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

2020/21 £000	Nature of Expenditure or Income	2021/22 £000
(58,495)	Fees, charges and other service income	(66,736)
(13,304)	Interest and investment income	(12,683)
(119,398)	Income from local taxation	(133,580)
(227,487)	Government grants and contributions	(231,571)
145,092	Employee benefits expenses	159,841
1,216	Support service recharge expenditure	1,216
227,008	Other service expenses	237,510
32,060	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	7,645
18,495	Interest payments	20,748
2,523	Precepts and levies	2,559
(1,889)	Gain or loss on disposal of non-current assets	(1,567)
5,821	**Surplus or Deficit for Year**	**(16,618)**

Note 9 - 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 authority 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 authority to meet future capital and revenue expenditure. The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

2021/2022	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Movement in Unusable Reserves £000
Adjustments to the 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:				
Pension cost (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve)	(23,022)			23,022
Financial Instruments (transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustments Account)	9			(9)
Changes in fair value of pooled investments	2,438			(2,438)
Council tax and NDR (transfers to or from the Collection Fund)	12,574			(12,574)
Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences reserve)	(516)			516
Reversal of entries 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)	17,231		(13,636)	(3,595)
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	**8,714**	**0**	**(13,636)**	**4,922**
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources:				
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	1,705	(1,789)		85
Statutory Provision for the repayment of debt (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	3,901			(3,901)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	6,369			(6,369)
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	**11,975**	**(1,789)**	**0**	**(10,186)**
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure		1,803		(1,803)
Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure			6,199	(6,199)
Cash payments in relation to deferred capital receipts		(14)		14
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	**0**	**1,789**	**6,199**	**(7,988)**
Total Adjustments	**20,689**	**(0)**	**(7,437)**	**(13,253)**

2020/2021	General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Movement in Unusable Reserves £000
Adjustments to the 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:				
Pension cost (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve)	(9,978)			9,978
Financial Instruments (transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustments Account)	19			(19)
Changes in fair value of pooled investments	3,361			(3,361)
Council tax and NDR (transfers to or from the Collection Fund)	(11,752)			11,752
Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences reserve)	(732)			732
Reversal of entries 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)	(25,647)		(6,721)	32,368
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	**(44,729)**	**0**	**(6,721)**	**51,450**
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources:				
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	6,651	(6,651)		
Statutory Provision for the repayment of debt (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	3,949			(3,949)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	6,867			(6,867)
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	**17,467**	**(6,651)**	**0**	**(10,816)**
Adjustments to Capital Resources				
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure		11,425		(11,425)
Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure			6,895	(6,895)
Cash payments in relation to deferred capital receipts		(4,775)		4,775
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	**0**	**6,651**	**6,895**	**(13,546)**
Total Adjustments	**(27,262)**	**0**	**174**	**27,088**

General Fund Balance - The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of an authority are required to paid and out of which all liabilities of the authority 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 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.

Note 10 - Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

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

Restated Balance 31 March 2020 £000	Restated Transfers Out £000	Restated Transfers In £000	Restated Balance 31 March 2021 £000	Reserve Description	Balance 31 March 2021 £000	Transfers Out £000	Transfers In £000	Balance 31 March 2022 £000
(2,137)	1,017	(1,417)	(2,537)	Adults Services	(2,537)	0	0	(2,537)
(626)	0	(152)	(778)	Childrens Services	(778)	366	(548)	(959)
(1,685)	537	(730)	(1,877)	Corporate Services	(1,877)	779	(429)	(1,527)
(1,854)	400	(984)	(2,437)	Environment	(2,437)	840	(2,150)	(3,747)
(4,589)	242	(30)	(4,377)	Finance	(4,377)	400	(53)	(4,030)
(10,730)	4,235	(5,745)	(12,241)	Financing	(12,241)	7,166	(9,638)	(14,713)
(798)	332	(929)	(1,395)	Public Health	(1,395)	150	(552)	(1,797)
(6,425)	0	(1,954)	(8,379)	Transformation	(8,379)	240	0	(8,139)
0	0	(13,179)	(13,179)	*Business Rates Deficit & Council Tax Income Guarantee	(13,179)	13,179	(6,452)	(6,452)
(28,843)	**6,763**	**(25,119)**	**(47,199)**	**Earmarked Reserves**	**(47,199)**	**23,120**	**(19,821)**	**(43,901)**
(4,515)	372	(2,197)	(6,340)	Schools Reserves	(6,340)	1,739	(1,208)	(5,809)
(2,571)	1,531	(1,333)	(2,373)	Schools Reserves – DSG	(2,373)	917	(772)	(2,228)
(35,929)	**8,666**	**(28,649)**	**(55,912)**	**Earmarked Reserves (Including Schools)**	**(55,912)**	**25,776**	**(21,802)**	**(51,938)**
(16,317)	0	(1,457)	(17,774)	General Fund Balance	(17,774)	1,000	(902)	(17,676)
(52,246)	**8,666**	**(30,106)**	**(73,686)**	**Total General Fund Reserves**	**(73,686)**	**26,776**	**(22,704)**	**(69,615)**

*During 2020/2021 the Council received S31 grants to offset the reliefs given to businesses during lockdown and irrecoverable losses for council tax. Under the Collection Fund accounting rules, the S31 grant received was discharged against the Collection Fund deficit in 2021/2022 and held in a reserve at 31 March 2021. At 31 March 2022 £6.452 million was held in this reserve representing Business Rates Relief which will be discharged against the Collection Fund in 2022/2023.

2020/2021 is restated to reflect the change in reporting structure implemented in the first quarter of the year.

Note 11 - Other Operating Expenditure

Other Operating Expenditure includes corporate costs to the Authority which are not allocated to specific service lines within the Net Cost of Services.

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
1,835	Precepts	1,867
687	Levies	692
(1)	Gains/losses on the Disposal of Non-Current Assets	78
2,522	**Total Other Operating Expenditure**	**2,637**

Note 12 - Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

Financing and investment income and expenditure includes corporate income and expenditure associated with capital financing, investment properties and pension IAS19 adjustments.

2020/21 £000		2020/21 £000
3,229	Interest payable and similar charges	3,139
7,162	Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset)	8,972
(1,839)	Interest receivable and similar income	(1,608)
(8,257)	*(Income) and expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value	(12,731)
(3,361)	(Gains)/losses on revaluation of pooled funds	(2,438)
(3,066)	**Total**	**(4,666)**

* Includes fair value increase of £7.185 million (£2.652 million 2020/2021). Gain on disposal of £1.645 million (£1.888 million 2020/2021) and net income of £3.901 million (£3.717 million 2020/2021).

The value of financial instruments increased by £2.438 million in line with market conditions, compared to an increase of £3.361 million in 2020/2021.

Note 13 - Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income

Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income note incorporates all non-service specific financing sources including, Council Tax, National Non-Domestic Rates, Revenue Support Grant, Non-service specific grants and Capital Grants recognised during the financial year.

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
(96,888)	Council tax income	(102,262)
(22,509)	Non-domestic rates income and expenditure	(31,318)
(47,041)	Non-ringfenced government grants	(27,983)
(15,243)	Capital grants and contributions	(27,504)
(181,682)	**Total**	**(189,067)**

When compared with 2020/2021, **non-domestic rates** income rose by £8.809 million. This predominantly reflects the reduction in extended reliefs provided in 2021/2022 by the government to support businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic that, in turn, reduces the level of business rates income received by the authority. However, the authority receives Section 31 grants from the government to compensate for the reduction in yield as a result of these measures. **Non-specific government grants** fell by £19.058 million reflecting the governments reduction in Covid-19 support measures compared with 2020/2021. **Capital grants and contributions** rose by £12.261 million reflecting an increase in grant income recognised. See **Note 33 Grant Income** for analysis.

Note 14A - Property, Plant and Equipment

31st March 2021 Total £'000		31st March 2022 Total £'000
197,714	Infrastructure assets (Note 14a)	205,010
398,928	Other PPE assets (Note 14b)	433,457
596,642	**Total PPE assets**	**638,467**

Note 14B – Infrastructure Assets Movements

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
186,729	**Net carrying amount at start of year**	**197,714**
19,946	Additions	16,730
(8,959)	Depreciation for the period	(9,434)
(2)	Reclassifications	0
197,714	**Net carrying amount at end of year**	**205,010**

In accordance with the Temporary Relief offered by the Update to the Code on infrastructure assets this note does not include disclosure of gross cost and accumulated depreciation for infrastructure assets because historical reporting practices and resultant information deficits mean that this would not faithfully represent the asset position to the users of the financial statements.

The authority has chosen not to disclose this information as the previously reported practices and resultant information deficits mean that gross cost and accumulated depreciation are not measured accurately and would not provide the basis for the users of the financial statements to take economic or other decisions relating to infrastructure assets.

The authority has determined in accordance with Regulation 30M of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England/Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 that the carrying amounts to be derecognised for infrastructure assets when there is replacement expenditure is nil.

Note 14C – Other Property, Plant and Equipment

Movements to 31 March 2022

	Land and Buildings £000	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment £000	Community Assets £000	Surplus Assets £000	Assets Under Construction £000	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £000
Cost or Valuation						
at 1 April 2021	**353,278**	**48,350**	**5,964**	**2,791**	**7,721**	**418,104**
Depreciation written out on revaluation	(6,062)	0	0	(11)	0	**(6,073)**
Additions	3,711	3,390	0	0	10,380	**17,481**
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	23,218	0	0	(255)	0	**22,963**
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	6,537	0	0	(34)	0	**6,503**
Derecognition – disposals	0	(589)	0	0	0	**(589)**
Derecognition – other	(19)	(120)	0	0	(40)	**(179)**
Reclassifications and transfer	8,116	11	0	250	(10,849)	**(2,472)**
Other movements in cost or valuation	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
at 31 March 2022	**388,779**	**51,042**	**5,964**	**2,741**	**7,212**	**455,738**
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment						
at 1 April 2021	**(1,003)**	**(18,127)**	**0**	**(46)**	**0**	**(19,176)**
Depreciation written out on revaluation	6,062	0	0	11	0	6,073
Depreciation charge	(5,686)	(4,216)	0	(6)	0	(9,908)
Derecognition – disposals	0	510	0	0	0	510
Derecognition – other	1	120	0	0	0	121
Reclassifications and transfers	111	(1)	0	(11)	0	99
Other movements in depreciation and impairment	0	0	0	0	0	0
at 31 March 2022	**(515)**	**(21,714)**	**0**	**(52)**	**0**	**(22,281)**
Net Book Value						
at 31 March 2022	**388,264**	**29,328**	**5,964**	**2,689**	**7,212**	**433,457**
at 31 March 2021	**352,275**	**30,223**	**5,964**	**2,745**	**7,721**	**398,928**

Movements to 31 March 2021 - Restated

	Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total Property, Plant and Equipment
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Cost or Valuation						
at 1 April 2020	**385,018**	**50,419**	**5,960**	**2,827**	**716**	**444,940**
Depreciation written out on revaluation	(10,391)	0	0	0	0	**(10,391)**
Additions	913	2,149	4	0	7,188	**10,254**
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(8,521)	0	0	(142)	0	**(8,662)**
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(14,047)	0	0	201	0	**(13,847)**
Derecognition – disposals	0	(58)	0	(95)	0	**(153)**
Derecognition – other	0	(3,439)	0	0	0	**(3,439)**
Reclassifications and transfer	96	2	0	0	(184)	**(86)**
Other movements in cost or valuation	211	(723)	0	0	0	**(512)**
at 31 March 2021	**353,278**	**48,350**	**5,964**	**2,791**	**7,721**	**418,104**
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment						
at 1 April 2020	(5,300)	(18,250)	0	(41)	0	**(23,591)**
Depreciation written out on revaluation	10,391	0	0	0	0	10,391
Depreciation charge	(5,886)	(4,096)	0	(6)	0	(9,989)
Derecognition – disposals	0	58	0	0	0	58
Derecognition – other	0	3,439	0	0	0	3,439
Reclassifications and transfers	3	0	0	0	0	3
Other movements in depreciation and impairment	(211)	723	0	0	0	512
at 31 March 2021	**(1,003)**	**(18,127)**	**0**	**(46)**	**0**	**(19,176)**
Net Book Value						
at 31 March 2021	**352,275**	**30,223**	**5,964**	**2,745**	**7,721**	**398,928**
at 31 March 2020	**379,718**	**32,169**	**5,960**	**2,786**	**716**	**421,349**

This Note has been restated to remove Infrastructure Assets which are now disclosed in a separate table above.

Depreciation

The useful lives used in the calculation of depreciation are given within the Accounting Policies for Property, Plant and Equipment.

Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2022, the Council had entered into a number of contracts for the construction for enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2022/2023 and future years. The major commitments are:

31 March 2021 £000	Capital Scheme	31 March 2022 £000
20,256	Highways Works	11,667
4,504	Temporary Accommodation Works	2,520
1,139	Marston Vale Business Park Infrastructure	0
2,271	Depot Enhancements	0
0	Superfast Broadband Project	565
0	Green Energy Innovation Park	913
0	Average Speed Cameras	510
28,170	**Total**	**16,175**

Effects of Changes in Estimates

There are no material effects or changes in estimates.

Revaluations

The Council carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment required to be measured at fair value is revalued at least every five years. All valuations were carried out internally. 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 historic prices.

The significant assumptions applied in estimating the fair values are:

- Internal services (e.g. electrics, heating or other building service apparatus) are assumed to be in good repair and condition.
- Service installations will not be tested and it is assumed that they are of adequate supply and capacity, in satisfactory working order and comply with statutory requirements.
- Inspections undertaken will typically be external only and it is assumed that the inspection of assets or parts of assets that have not been inspected would not cause the valuer to alter their initial opinion of value
- It has been assumed that no deleterious or hazardous substances are present and that no latent defects exist.
- It is assumed that there are no contamination issues on individual properties but should it subsequently be identified that contamination, pollution or seepage exists or that the property is being put to a contaminative use this would likely reduce the values reported.
- No title check or local search are to be carried out and it is assumed that the property and its value are unaffected by any matters which would be revealed by a local search or inspection of any register, nor subject to any unusual or especially onerous restrictions, encumbrances or outgoings and that the use and occupation are lawful.

- Any mineral value is excluded unless specifically reflected in the valuation.
- Where an asset has been damaged by an insured peril it is assumed that the asset is reinstated with a new facility utilising any insured losses.
- It is assumed that non-operational freehold properties will be well maintained that there is no significant backlog and that the asset will have a useful life in excess of 50 years. For leased out properties it is assumed that the parties to the lease/agreement have complied with the required repairing and decorating covenants.
- It is assumed that the Authority will continue to provide sufficient maintenance resources to enable the operational properties to continue to provide the existing level of service for the medium term, unless otherwise stated. All permanent operational properties are considered to have a useful life of 100 years or as stated individually.
- It is assumed that there is no breach of planning regulations relating to the properties being valued. The planning position on specific properties has not been researched although consideration has been given to potential alternative uses under the Local Plan in respect of some properties where considered appropriate. Any specifics or planning assumptions have been stated on the individual valuation.
- It is assumed that ground lease rents will revert to open market values, either rental or capital, upon reversion whenever that may be.
- It is also assumed that commercial leases will be renewed on expiry unless specifically stated in the individual valuation.
- For the valuation of long ground leases of industrial buildings held freehold it is assumed that at the end of the lease the building will no longer be fit for use, or alternatively will not be of a construction type or design suitable for modern requirements. Thus there will be no demand for the building in the market and its value shall be that of the site only.
- No allowance has been made in respect of the costs of sale unless the property is classified as ‘Assets Held For Sale’, or as stated on the individual property valuation.
- Where capital expenditure on an asset is considered to have no effect on the value of the asset a valuation may not have been undertaken purely as a result of such expenditure having been incurred.
- It is assumed that the properties are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, The Equality Act 2010, The Fire Precautions Act 1971, The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, et al.

The table below shows the values of assets split by type and according to the year in which they were formally valued.

	Other Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Carried at historical cost	325	29,328	205,009	5,952		7,212	**247,826**
Valued at current value as at:							
31/03/2022	369,273			12	2,296		**371,581**
31/03/2021	12,482				158		**12,640**
31/03/2020					235		**235**
31/03/2019	3,716						**3,716**
31/03/2018	2,468						**2,468**
Total Cost or Valuation	**388,264**	**29,328**	**205,009**	**5,964**	**2,689**	**7,212**	**638,466**

Note 15 - Investment Properties

Income and Expenditure

The following items of income and expense have been accounted for in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

31 March 2021 £000	Investment Property Income and Expenditure	31 March 2022 £000
(4,210)	Rental income from investment property	(4,320)
492	Direct operating expenses from investment property	420
0	Other income and expenditure	0
(3,718)	**Net (gain)/loss**	**(3,901)**

The Council would expect to be able to realise the value and receive the proceeds of disposal inherent in its investment property if disposed of in a strategic manner over a period of time and typically receives income as defined by the existing lease arrangements. The Council has varying repair and maintenance responsibilities associated with leases that require works to be undertaken periodically.

Balance Sheet Fair Values

The following table summarises the movement in the fair value of investment properties:

31 March 2021 Current £000	31 March 2021 Non-Current £000	Investment Properties Movements in Year	31 March 2022 Current £000	31 March 2022 Non-Current £000
9,250	**65,013**	Opening Balance	**11,530**	**61,951**
		Additions:		
739	409	Purchases	429	120
(4,667)	0	Disposals	0	0
4,325	(1,674)	Net gains/(losses) from fair value adjustments	3,865	3,320
		Transfers:		
0	0	to/(from) Current / Non Current	(6,011)	6,011
1,883	(1,798)	(to)/from Property Plant and Equipment	0	2,373
11,530	**61,951**	**Balance at the end of the year**	**9,813**	**73,775**

Gains or losses arising from the changes in the fair value of the investment property are recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services – Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line.

The majority of Current Assets Held for Sale Investment Property relates to four development sites at Bedford Commercial Park, Lodge Hill, Carlton and Dallas Road which are being actively marketed.

Fair Value Hierarchy

Detail of the authority's investment properties and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 31 March 2022 are as follows:

Recurring fair value measuring usage	Quoted Prices in active markets for identical assets (Level 1) £000	Other significant observable inputs (Level 2) £000	Significant unobservable inputs (Level 3) £000	Fair value as at 31 March 2022 £000
	0	**65,263**	**18,392**	**83,589**

Transfers between Levels of the Fair Value Hierarchy

There were no transfers between the Levels 1 and 2 during the year.

Valuation Techniques used to Determine Level 2 and 3 Fair Values for Investment Properties

Significant Observable Inputs – Level 2

The fair value for the properties classified as Level 2 has been based on the market approach using current market conditions and recent sales prices and other relevant information for similar assets in the local authority area. Market conditions are such that similar properties are actively purchased and sold and the level of observable inputs are significant, leading to the properties being categorised at Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy.

Significant Unobservable Inputs – Level 3

The properties classified as Level 3 located in the local authority area are measured using the income approach, by means of the discounted cash flow method, where the expected cash flows from the properties are discounted (using a market-derived discount rate) to establish the present value of the net income stream or by the means of direct market comparisons . Both methods have been developed using the authority's own and relevant market data requiring it to factor in assumptions such as the duration and timing of cash inflows and outflows, rent growth, occupancy levels, bad debt levels, maintenance costs, etc. The relevant property valuations are therefore categorised as Level 3 in the fair value hierarchy as the measurement technique uses significant unobservable inputs to determine the fair value measurements (and there is no reasonably available information that indicates that market participants would use different assumptions).

Highest and Best Use of Investment Properties

In estimating the fair value of the authority's investment properties, the highest and best use of the properties is their current use.

Valuation Techniques

There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for investment properties.

Reconciliation of Fair Value Measurements (using Significant Unobservable Inputs) Categorised within Level 3 of the Fair Value Hierarchy

£13.943m of commercial properties which were previously classified as level 3 are now considered by the valuers to be level 2. The reconciliation in the table below shows the movement of all level 3 investment properties.

31 March 2021 £000	Investment Property Movements in Year	31 March 2022 £000
11,158	Opening Balance	**26,930**
1,123	Inclusion of Commercial Properties	0
18,767	Reclassifications into Investment Properties at Level 3	1,643
(400)	Reclassifications out of Investment Properties at Level 3	(13,943)
(469)	Total gains or losses for the period included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services resulting from changes in fair value	3,333
739	Additions	429
(3,987)	Disposals	0
26,930	**Balance at the end of the year**	**18,392**

Quantitative Information about the Fair Value Measurement of Investment Properties using Significant Unobservable Inputs – Level 3

Commercial

84 of the 92 property valuations classified as commercial are based on observable inputs evidenced by strong market information. The remaining 8 valuations, totalling £1.783 million are for sites which are unique in their characteristics and require professional judgements to be made. Each Commercial Property valuation incorporates unique and varying judgements which are not easily summarised and are not considered material in nature.

Development

All development Properties, are classified as Level 3 and have a total valuation of £14.628 million as at 31 March 2022. The valuation of these sites is based on an income approach using a discounted cash flow (DCF) technique and direct market comparisons of similar site transactions. This technique is supported by a number of unobservable inputs such as % of land estimated to be viable for development, infrastructure obligations, discount rate and overall scheme risk.

Rural

29 of the 31 property valuations classified as rural are based on observable inputs evidenced by strong market information. The remaining 2 valuations, totalling £1.981 million are for sites which are unique in their characteristics and require professional judgements to be made. Each rural property valuation incorporates unique and varying judgements which are not easily summarised and are not considered material in nature.

Valuation Process for Investment Properties

The fair value of the authority’s investment property is measured annually at each reporting date as a minimum. All valuations are carried out internally, in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The authority’s valuation experts work closely with finance officers reporting directly to the chief financial officer on a regular basis regarding all valuation matters.

Note 16 - Intangible Assets

The authority accounts for its software as intangible assets, to the extent that the software is not an integral part of a particular IT system and accounted for as part of the hardware item of property, plant and equipment. The intangible assets include both purchased licenses and internally generally software. All software is given a finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the authority.

31 March 2021 Total £000		31 March 2022 Total £000
	Balance at start of year:	
13,250	Gross carrying amounts	15,217
(3,862)	Accumulated amortisation	(5,653)
9,388	**Net carrying amount at start of year**	**9,564**
	Additions:	
2,118	Purchases	1,011
0	Reclassifications and transfers	0
(1,942)	Amortisation for the period	(1,991)
0	Amortisation written out on reclassifications and transfers	0
9,564	**Net carrying amount at end of year**	**8,584**
	Comprising:	
15,217	Gross carrying amounts	15,294
(5,653)	Accumulated amortisation	(6,710)
9,564	**Total**	**8,584**

Intangible Assets are amortised to the relevant service line(s) in the CIES over the economic life of the asset (between 5 and 10 years).

The carrying amount of intangible assets is historical cost, amortised on a straight-line basis. The amortisation for the period has been charged to the relevant service area.

Note 17A - Financial Instruments

The Accounting Policies in Note 1 set out the classifications of financial instruments listed below.

	Non-Current Financial Assets					
	Investments		Debtors		Total	
	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Fair value through profit and loss	34,912	37,350	0	0	**34,912**	**37,350**
Amortised cost	0	0	1,719	1,622	**1,719**	**1,622**
Total financial assets	**34,912**	**37,350**	**1,719**	**1,622**	**36,631**	**38,972**

	Current Financial Assets					
	Investments		Debtors - Restated		Total	
	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	*31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Amortised cost	0	10,004	16,027	23,450	**16,027**	**33,454**
Total financial assets	**0**	**10,004**	**16,027**	**23,450**	**16,027**	**33,454**

*31 March 2021 Debtors has been restated to correct the disclosure of Financial Instruments held. Debtors will not reconcile to the balance sheet as non-financial instruments are excluded from the table above.

	Non-Current Financial Liabilities					
	Borrowings		*Other long-term liabilities		Total	
	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Amortised cost	(64,853)	(59,584)	(192)	(17)	(65,045)	(59,601)
Total financial liabilities	**(64,853)**	**(59,584)**	**(192)**	**(17)**	**(65,045)**	**(59,601)**

	Current Financial Liabilities					
	Borrowings		Creditors - Restated		Total	
	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	*31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Amortised cost	(3,730)	(5,942)	(37,584)	(33,227)	(41,314)	(39,169)
Total financial liabilities	**(3,730)**	**(5,942)**	**(37,584)**	**(33,227)**	**(41,314)**	**(39,169)**

*31 March 2021 Creditors has been restated to correct the disclosure of Financial Instruments held.

Creditors will not reconcile to the balance sheet as non-financial instruments are excluded from the table above.

The table shows Income, Expenses, Gains and Losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement during the year.

	31 March 2021		31 March 2022	
	Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net gains/losses on:				
• financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss	(3,361)	0	(2,438)	
Total net (gains)/losses	**(3,361)**	**0**	**(2,438)**	**0**
Interest revenue:				
• financial assets measured at amortised cost	(1,816)	0	(1,585)	0
• other financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income	(23)	0	(23)	**0**
Total interest revenue	**(1,839)**	**0**	**(1,608)**	**0**
Interest expense	**3,230**	**0**	**3,138**	**0**

Note 17B - Financial Instruments Fair Value

Recurring Fair Value Measurements – Fair Value through Profit and Loss:

	31 March 2021	31 March 2022
	£000	£000
Bond, equity and property funds	34,912	37,350
Money Market Funds	21,612	24,995
Balance 31 March	**56,524**	**62,345**

The Fair Values of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities that are not Measured at Fair Value (but for which Fair Value Disclosures are required).

Financial Liabilities	31 March 2021		31 March 2022	
	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Financial Liabilities held at Amortised Cost	(68,583)	(83,849)	(65,526)	(76,639)
Total	**(68,583)**	**(83,849)**	**(65,526)**	**(76,639)**

Financial Assets	31 March 2021		31 March 2022	
	Carrying Amount	Fair Value	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Amortised Cost	287	287	287	287
Total	**287**	**287**	**287**	**287**

The fair value for financial assets represents the principal outstanding for a finance lease which ends in 2121/2122.

Note 18 - Debtors

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
11,039	Trade Receivables	12,188
10,087	*Prepayments	9,691
2,446	Housing Benefit Claimants	2,026
9,665	Central Government Debtors	6,261
12,920	Council Tax & NDR Debtors	6,069
6,639	Other Receivable Amounts	6,507
52,794	**Total**	**42,741**

*Includes £8.057 million (£8.132 million 2020/2021) cash payment in advance to Bedfordshire Pension Fund in respect of the fixed element secondary rate Employers Pension Contribution.

Note 19 - Cash and Cash Equivalents

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(1,197)	Cash and Bank balances	890
0	Short Term Investments	0
25,509	Short Term Deposits	47,774
0	Bank Overdraft	0
24,312	**Total Cash and Cash Equivalents**	**48,663**

Note 20A - Creditors

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(20,636)	Trade payables	(19,016)
(19,403)	Receipts In Advance	(27,616)
(3,565)	Council Tax and NDR Creditors	(7,465)
(3,314)	Accumulated Absences Accrual	(3,831)
(12,653)	S31 Grant due to be repaid to DLUHC/MHCLG	(8,618)
(20,403)	Other payables	(15,180)
(79,974)	**Total Creditors**	**(81,725)**

Note 20B – Creditors: Other Long-Term Liabilities

31 March 2021 £000		Note Ref	31 March 2022 £000
(467,017)	Pension Liability	39	(371,177)
(192)	Finance Lease Long-Term Liability	36	(17)
0	Long Term Creditors	-	(8,819)
(467,210)	**Total Creditors**		**(380,012)**

Note 21 - Provisions

Current Provisions

2021/22	Elstow Landfill Decommissioning	Insurance Provision	Non - Domestic Rates Appeal (BBC portion)	Compulsory Purchase Orders	Other	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Opening Balance	**(3,272)**	**(364)**	**(5,715)**	**(611)**	**(735)**	**(10,696)**
Increase in provision during year		(450)	(182)			**(632)**
Utilised during year	136			345		**481**
Unwinding of discounting	(46)					**(46)**
Other movements		338				**338**
Closing Balance	**(3,182)**	**(477)**	**(5,897)**	**(266)**	**(735)**	**(10,556)**

Long Term Provisions

2021/22	Elstow Landfill Decommissioning	Insurance Provision	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Opening Balance	**(1,557)**	**(975)**	**(2,532)**
Unwinding of discounting		(301)	**(301)**
Other movements	46		**46**
Closing Balance	**(1,511)**	**(1,276)**	**(2,787)**

The main provisions represent:

- Elstow Landfill Decommissioning is to cover the future statutory revenue and capital costs associated with the closed landfill site in Elstow.
- National Non-Domestic Rates Appeals is 49% of the appeal provision created in the Collection Fund for potential appeals against Non-Domestic Rates Bills.
- Insurance Provision is set aside for specific and known insurance liabilities. Approximately 25% is expected to be spent within 1 year, 50% within 2 – 5 years, and the remainder after 5 years.
- Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) relates to amounts anticipated to be incurred as a result of making CPOs, but where the owner has not yet made a claim.

All other provisions are individually insignificant.

A summary of the movement in provisions is shown in the table below:

2020/21	Total Provisions	2021/22
£000		£000
(12,211)	**Opening Balance**	**(13,228)**
(1,165)	Increase in provision during year	(632)
118	Utilised during year	481
30	Unwinding of discounting	(347)
0	Other movements	384
(13,228)	**Closing Balance**	**(13,343)**

Note 22 - Usable Reserves

Movement in the Council's Usable Reserves are detailed in the **Movement in Reserves Statement**, and the disclosure notes **Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations** and **Transfers to / from Earmarked Reserves**.

The council has established sufficient levels of Usable Reserves to mitigate financial risk. There will be an ongoing need to review and establish a level of Reserves which both allows the Council to withstand the financial impacts of future funding reductions, at a local or national level, and provides funding to enable the Council to transform to deliver fit for purpose services which meet the changing needs and expectations of service users.

Capital Receipts Reserve

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
0	**Balance 1 April**	**0**
(6,651)	Capital Receipts in year	(1,789)
(4,775)	Deferred Receipts realised	(14)
11,425	Capital Receipts used for financing	1,803
0	**Balance 31 March**	**0**

Capital Grants Unapplied

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(14,611)	**Balance 1 April**	**(14,438)**
(6,721)	Capital grants recognised in year	(13,636)
6,895	Capital grants and contributions applied	6,199
(14,438)	**Balance 31 March**	**(21,875)**

Note 23 - Unusable Reserves

The table below provides a breakdown of the Unusable Reserves values included in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(115,486)	Revaluation Reserve	(137,055)
(437,410)	Capital Adjustment Account	(460,585)
19	Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	9
467,018	Pension Reserve	371,177
(392)	Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	(378)
13,447	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	873
3,314	Accumulated Absences Account	3,831
2,088	Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account	(350)
(67,402)	**Total**	**(222,478)**

Financial Instruments Adjustment Account and Accumulated Absences Account are not disclosed below because movements are immaterial.

Revaluation Reserve

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(125,723)	**Balance 1 April**	**(115,486)**
(7,025)	Upward revaluation of assets	(25,772)
15,688	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	2,809
8,662	**Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services**	**(22,962)**
1,481	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	1,393
95	Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	0
1,575	**Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account**	**1,393**
(115,486)	**Balance 31 March**	**(137,055)**

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the authority arising from increases in the value of 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 contains only revaluation gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date that the Reserve was created. Accumulated gains arising before that date are consolidated into the balance on the Capital Adjustment Account.

During 2021/2022 Property Plant and Equipment has been revalued upwards by a net movement of £22.962 million. This revaluation is included within the Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) disclosure, **Note 14**. These revaluations are not recognised within the Provision of Services section of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until the asset is disposed of and the gain is achieved. The net revaluation gain is included within the lower part of the note in the section titled Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
5,449	**Balance 1 April**	**2,088**
(3,361)	Changes in fair value of pooled investments	(2,438)
2,088	**Balance 31 March**	**(350)**

The Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account contains the gains or losses made by the authority arising from increases or decreases in the value of its Pooled Investment Fund investments that are measured at fair value through profit and loss. A statutory provision requires the authority to hold fair value movements in this unusable reserve.

Capital Adjustment Account

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(439,066)	**Balance 1 April**	**(437,410)**
18,948	Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	19,342
13,847	Revaluation losses on non-current assets	(6,503)
1,942	Amortisation of intangible assets	1,991
6,995	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	5,227
4,762	Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	222
46,493	**Reversal of Items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement**	**20,280**
(1,575)	Adjusting Amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(1,393)
44,918	**Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year**	**18,887**
(11,425)	Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(1,803)
(18,257)	Capital Grants and Contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(22,803)
(3,949)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	(3,901)
(6,867)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	(6,369)
(40,498)	**Capital financing applied in year:**	**(34,877)**
(2,652)	Movements in the market value of Investment Properties debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(7,185)
(112)	Other movements	0
(437,410)	**Balance 31 March**	**(460,585)**

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

The account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties and also 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 9** provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

Pension Reserve

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
320,982	**Balance 1 April**	**467,018**
136,058	Remeasurements of the net defined benefit (liability)/asset	(118,862)
30,919	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	46,277
(20,941)	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(23,255)
467,018	**Balance 31 March**	**371,177**

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 pay any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Council has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

The Pensions Reserve fell by £95,841 million during 2021/2022. The table reconciles the movement and includes a significant change due to Actuarial gains or losses on pension’s assets and liabilities. This movement is explained in more detail within **Note 39**.

Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(5,167)	**Balance 1 April**	**(392)**
4,775	Transfer to the Capital Receipts Reserve upon receipt of cash	14
(392)	**Balance 31 March**	**(378)**

The Council holds a balance of Long Term Debtors and a matching balance relating to Deferred Capital Receipts. These balances relate to mortgages arising from the sale of Council houses which are not immediately payable, but are repayable over a longer period and in respect of a finance lease, and the sale of an Investment Property, Employment Land at Wootton which is now fully paid. When principal payments are received the Long Term Debtor is reduced and a matching amount is transferred from Deferred Capital Receipts to Capital Receipts Reserve. However, for finance leases in existence before 31 March 2010 statutory mitigation (SI 2010/454) applies whereby principal payments are classified as revenue (not capital), as such a matching amount is transferred from Deferred Capital Receipts to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Collection Fund Adjustment Account

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
1,695	**Balance 1 April**	**13,447**
11,752	Amount by which council tax and non-domestic rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(12,574)
13,447	**Balance 31 March**	**873**

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from Council Tax and Business ratepayers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

Note 24 - Cash Flow from Operating Activities

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(1,839)	Interest received	(1,607)
3,229	Interest paid	3,139
1,390	**Total**	**1,531**

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

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(18,948)	Depreciation	(19,341)
(13,847)	Impairment and downward valuations	6,503
(1,942)	Amortisation	(1,991)
(21,936)	(Increase)/decrease in creditors	(4,853)
16,448	Increase/(decrease) in debtors	(11,358)
(9,978)	Movement in pension liability	(22,766)
(4,762)	Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or derecognised	(137)
1,566	Other non-cash movements charged to the surplus or deficit on provision of services	6,986
(53,399)	**Total**	**(46,958)**

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

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
6,651	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	1,789
23,379	Any other items for which the cash effects are investing or financing cash flows	29,953
30,029	**Total**	**31,742**

Note 25 - Cash Flow from Investing Activities

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
33,778	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	33,955
0	Purchase of short-term and long-term investments	45,000
(11,425)	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(1,803)
0	Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments	(35,000)
(18,743)	Other receipts from investing activities	(26,987)
3,610	**Net cash flows from investing activities**	**15,164**

Note 26 - Cash Flow from Financing Activities

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(20,000)	Cash receipts of short-term and long-term borrowing	0
245	Cash payments for the reduction of outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases and on-Balance-Sheet PFI contracts	175
19,305	Repayments of short-term and long-term borrowing	3,150
12,959	Other payments / (receipts) for financing activities	(10,750)
12,509	**Net cash flows from financing activities**	**(7,425)**

Note 27 - Agency Services

The Council provides services on behalf of other public bodies on an Agency basis. The income and expenditure recognised in the accounts is only those elements relating to the Council, and not income and expenditure relating to third parties. The significant Agency Services are shown in the table below, with the exception of Business Rates and Council Tax Collection (which are shown as a separate note).

2020/21 £000	Payroll Services	2021/22 £000
(76,217)	Income	(68,396)
76,217	Expenditure	68,396
0	**Net Surplus/Deficit on the Agency Arrangement**	**0**

Note 28 - Pooled Budgets

Better Care Fund

From the 1st April 2015, Bedfordshire CCG entered into a section 75 pooled fund agreement with Bedford Borough Council for the Better Care Fund (BCF). Bedford Borough Council provides financial management for this Pooled Fund.

The BCF is a policy initiative between local authorities, CCG's and NHS providers which has resulted in pooled funds being used to jointly commission or deliver health and social care. Apart from the integrated equipment store arrangements, the terms of the Section 75 agreement means that contracts are stand-alone with financial risk being retained by the lead body. In relation to the equipment store, the arrangement is hosted by Central Bedfordshire Council and accounted for as a pooled budget.

The Clinical Commissioning Group and Bedford Borough Council have signed a Framework Partnership Agreement relating to the BCF and commissioning of health and social care services. The agreement has established a Partnership Board with joint membership from each organisation. The Partnership Board determines which schemes are funded in the CCH locality. Each partner then manages the contracts with their own providers of Better Care Fund services and each partner retains any financial risk relating to those contracts.

2020/21 £000	Better Care Fund	2021/22 £000
(11,262)	Authority Funding	(11,329)
(4,867)	Partner Funding	(5,398)
(16,129)	**Total Pooled Funding**	**(16,727)**
10,302	Authority Expenditure	10,865
4,467	Partner Expenditure	5,398
14,769	**Expenditure**	**16,263**
(1,360)	**Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the Pooled Budget**	**(464)**
(959)	**Authority Share of the Net (Surplus) / Deficit**	**(464)**
(400)	**Partner Share of the Net (Surplus) / Deficit**	**0**
(1,769)	**Authority Share Accumulated (Surplus) / Deficit**	**(2,233)**
(400)	**Partner Share Accumulated (Surplus) / Deficit**	**(400)**

Includes all elements of the Better Care Fund, including Disabled Facilities Capital Grant and Winter Pressure Grant.

Note 29 - Members’ Allowances

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
658	Allowances	660
658	**Total Members' Allowances**	**660**

Note 30 - Officers' Remuneration

The table below discloses details of individual remuneration for senior employees of the Authority. Staff whose salary is above £150,000 are named, otherwise they are listed by way of Job Title. Senior employees are defined as designated Head of Paid Service, (Chief Executive) and direct reports. The remuneration paid to the Council's senior employees is as follows:

Senior Officer Remuneration

		Salary, Fees and Allowances £	Pension Contribution £	Total £
Chief Executive - Laura Church	**2021/22**	**83,309**	**15,329**	**98,638**
Started 4 October 2021	2020/21	0	0	0
Chief Executive - Philip Simpkins	**2021/22**	**21,252**	**1,706**	**22,957**
Left 18 April 2021	2020/21	185,385	32,628	218,013
Interim Chief Executive – Mark Stephens	**2021/22**	**51,904**	**9,550**	**61,454**
14 June 2021 – 3 October 2021	2020/21	0	0	0
Interim Chief Executive - Terry Collins	**2021/22**	**22,716**		**22,716**
1 March 2021 - 28 May 2021	2020/21	21,062	0	21,062
Director of Children's Services	**2021/22**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Left 2 December 2020	2020/21	86,995	15,311	102,306
Director of Children's Services	**2021/22**	**109,673**	**20,180**	**129,853**
Started 3 December 2020	2020/21	35,959	6,329	42,288
Director of Adult Services - Kate Walker	**2021/22**	**131,374**	**24,173**	**155,547**
	2020/21	129,449	22,783	152,232
Director of Environment	**2021/22**	**149,737**	**0**	**149,737**
	2020/21	147,524	0	147,524
Director of Public Health	**2021/22**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Left 31 August 2020	2020/21	51,545	6,341	57,886
Director of Public Health	**2021/22**	**115,136**	**21,185**	**136,321**
Started 2 October 2020	2020/21	53,451	9,407	62,858
Assistant Chief Executive (Finance)	**2021/22**	**119,356**	**21,962**	**141,317**
	2020/21	117,592	20,696	138,288
***Chief Officer Legal & Democratic Services**	**2021/22**	**0**	**0**	**0**
	2020/21	95,736	16,850	112,586
****Director of Corporate Services**	**2021/22**	**90,253**	**16,607**	**106,860**
1 April 2021 - 13 June 2021 and 4 October 2021 - 31 March 2022	2020/21	118,780	20,905	139,685
Interim Director of Corporate Services	**2021/22**	**32,676**	**6,012**	**38,688**
14 June 2021 - 3 October 2021	2020/21	0	0	0
Total in 2021/22		**927,385**	**136,703**	**1,064,088**
Total in 2020/21		**1,043,478**	**151,250**	**1,194,728**

*no longer reports to Chief Executive during 2021/2022
**was Director Business Transformation & Organisational Development

The pension contribution is based on the Actuarial calculation of the current cost of pensions which is set out in the Triennial Valuation Report. This employer's contributions is 18.4% of salary costs for 2021/2022 for those paying into the Local Government Pension Scheme (17.6% in 2020/2021).

The role of Director of Public Health transferred to Local Government from 1 April 2013. The Director of Public Health is jointly funded with Central Bedfordshire Council and Milton Keynes Council. Bedford Borough Council contributes 27% of the post's salary (27% in 2020/2021).

The Council's employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contribution) were paid the following amounts:

Officer Remuneration

	Number of Employees 2020/21	Number of Employees 2021/22
£50,001 to £55,000	71	63
£55,001 to £60,000	11	13
£60,001 to £65,000	25	20
£65,001 to £70,000	3	9
£70,001 to £75,000	8	8
£75,001 to £80,000	9	1
£80,001 to £85,000	6	15
£85,001 to £90,000	2	1
£90,001 to £95,000	0	3
£95,001 to £100,000	12	9
£100,001 to £105,000	1	0
£105,001 to £110,000	0	1
£110,001 to £115,000	0	1
£115,001 to £120,000	2	2
£125,001 to £130,000	1	0
£130,001 to £135,000	0	1
£140,001 to £145,000	0	1
£145,001 to £150,000	1	1
£185,001 to £190,000	1	0
Total	**153**	**149**

- The table includes those employees specifically reported in the previous table.
- Bands with no employees in that range are omitted.
- Teaching Staff (Community and VC Schools only) are included.
- Remuneration includes redundancy cost, but excludes pension contributions.

Exit Packages

Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band		Total cost of exit packages in each band (£)	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
£0-£20,000	13	4	7	6	20	10	136,000	61,136
£20,001 - £40,000	2	0	6	2	8	2	219,000	58,548
£40,001 - £60,000	1	0	0	0	1	0	52,999	0
£60,001 - £80,000	0	0	2	0	2	0	133,000	0
£80,001 - £100,000	1	0	1	0	2	0	165,000	0
£200,001 - £250,000	3	0	0	0	3	0	641,000	0
£300,001 - £350,000	0	0	1	0	1	0	340,000	0
Total	**20**	**4**	**17**	**8**	**37**	**12**	**1,686,999**	**119,683**
Add: Amounts provided for in CIES not included in bandings							0	0
Total cost included in CIES							**1,686,999**	**119,683**

Exit package are recognised during the year in which the Council has agreed them, i.e. those packages for which the authority is demonstrably committed. This means there can be differences between amounts accrued and the actual cost incurred. During 2020/2021 amounts accrued were £0.057 million more than costs incurred because of changes in assumptions used by the Pension

Fund's actuary when final costs were calculated and paid. The accruals were therefore reversed in 2021/2022.

The 'other departures' column includes a number of voluntary redundancies, which mitigated the need for compulsory redundancies.

Note 31 - External Audit Costs

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

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
121	Fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year	210
12	*Fees payable in respect of other services provided by external auditors during the year	44
133	**Total**	**254**

*Includes £12,000 accrual for the Teachers Pensions Audit which is not undertaken by EY, a £35,827 scale fee variation agreed and paid to external auditors for 2019/2020 and £14,059 for 2018/2019, which is partially offset by rebate from the PSAA of £16,880.

Note 32 - Dedicated Schools Grant

The Council's expenditure on schools is funded primarily by grant monies provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). DSG is ring-fenced and can only be applied to meet expenditure incurred as defined in the School Finance and Early Years (England) Regulations 2020. The Schools Budget includes elements for a range of educational services provided on an authority-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 2021/2022 are as follows:

Notes	DSG Receivable for 2021/22	Central Expenditure £000	Individual Schools Budget £000	Total £000
A	Final DSG for year before Academies recoupment			176,940
B	Academy figure recouped for year			(89,102)
C	Total DSG after academy recoupment			**87,838**
D	Plus: Brought forward from previous year			2,372
E	Less: Carry forward to following year (agreed in advance)			(480)
F	Agreed initial budgeted distribution in year	**25,856**	**63,875**	**89,730**
G	In year adjustments	128	(35)	94
H	Final budget distribution for year	**25,984**	**63,841**	**89,824**
I	Less: Actual central expenditure	(25,010)		(25,010)
J	Less: Actual ISB deployed to schools		(63,066)	(63,066)
K	Plus: Local Authority contribution for year	0	0	0
L	**Carry forward to 2021/22**	**974**	**774**	**1,748**
M	**Carry forward to 2021/22 already agreed**			**480**
N	**Total carry forward**			**2,228**

Notes	DSG Receivable for 2020/21	Central Expenditure £000	Individual Schools Budget £000	Total £000
A	Final DSG for year before Academies recoupment			163,584
B	Academy figure recouped for year			(82,061)
C	Total DSG after academy recoupment			**81,523**
D	Plus: Brought forward from previous year			2,572
E	Less: Carry forward to following year (agreed in advance)			(500)
F	Agreed initial budgeted distribution in year	**22,649**	**60,946**	**83,595**
G	In year adjustments	625	(669)	(44)
H	Final budget distribution for year	**23,274**	**60,277**	**83,551**
I	Less: Actual central expenditure	(22,658)		(22,658)
J	Less: Actual ISB deployed to schools		(59,021)	(59,021)
K	Plus: Local Authority contribution for year	0	0	0
L	**Carry forward to 2021/22**	**616**	**1,256**	**1,872**
M	**Carry forward to 2021/22 already agreed**			**500**
N	**Total carry forward**			**2,372**

A: Final DSG figure before any amount has been recouped from the authority as published March 2022, excluding the January 2022 early years block adjustment.
B: Figure recouped from the authority in 2021/22 by the DfE for the conversion of maintained schools into academies and for high needs payments made by ESFA.
C: Total DSG figure after academy and high needs recoupment for 2021/22, as published March 2022.
D: Figure brought forward from 2020/21.
E: Any amount which the authority decided after consultation with the schools forum to carry forward to 2022/23 rather than distribute in 2021/22.
F: Budgeted distribution of DSG, adjusted for carry-forward, as agreed with the schools forum.
G: Changes to the initial distribution, for example, adjustments for exclusions, or final early years block adjustment.
H: Budgeted distribution of DSG as at the end of the financial year.
I: Actual amount of central expenditure items in 2021/22.
J: Amount of ISB actually distributed to schools (ISB is regarded for DSG purposes as spent by the authority once it is deployed to schools' budget shares).
K: Any contribution from the local authority in 2021/22 which will have the effect of substituting for DSG in funding the Schools Budget.
L: In year carry-forward to 2022/23.
M: Plus/minus any carry-forward to 2022/23 already agreed.
N: Total is carry-forward on central expenditure plus carry-forward on ISB plus/minus any carry-forward to 2022/23 already agreed.

Note 33 - Grant Income

Grant Income Credited to Taxation and non-specific Grant Income and Expenditure

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(5,861)	Revenue Support Grant	(5,893)
(17,271)	Section 31 Grant	(6,351)
(6,784)	New Homes Bonus Grant	(4,384)
(762)	Tax Income Guarantee Grant	0
(16,364)	DLUHC/MHCLG Local Authority Support Grant	(11,354)
(7,010)	Department for Transport	(7,884)
(5)	Homes & Communities Agency	(96)
(537)	Community Infrastructure Levy	(3,088)
(16)	Section 106 Developer Contributions	(1,419)
(112)	Other Grants & Contributions	(198)
(3,053)	Department for Education	(7,725)
(3,510)	SEMLEP	(4,557)
0	Homes England	(2,171)
(1,000)	DLUHC/MHCLG	(365)
(62,285)	**Total**	**(55,487)**

Credited to Services

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(81,524)	Dedicated Schools Grants	(88,162)
(39,140)	Housing and Council Tax Benefit Administration and other Department for Work & Pensions Grants	(39,425)
(9,533)	Department for Education	(7,809)
(8,835)	Public Health Grant	(8,908)
(3,922)	Other Revenue Grants	(5,092)
(9,029)	BEIS	(5,161)
0	Department for Health and Social Care	(6,284)
(10,269)	DLUHC/MHCLG	(12,506)
(1)	REFCUS - Community Infrastructure Levy	(20)
(2,485)	REFCUS - Department of Education	(1,313)
0	REFCUS - Better Care Funding - Disabled Facilities Grant	(452)
(15)	REFCUS - Other Grants & Contributions	(4)
(451)	REFCUS – DLUHC/MHCLG	(947)
(165,203)	**Total**	**(176,084)**

Grants Receipts in Advance (Capital Grants) - Long Term Liabilities

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(88)	Homes & Community Agency - Growth Area Funding	(84)
(405)	Homes & Community Agency - Gypsy & Traveller Sites	(309)
(1,290)	Department for Education	(1,417)
(5,820)	Department for Transport	(3,269)
(11,502)	Section 106 Contributions	(12,149)
(446)	Section 278 Contributions	(355)
(853)	SEMLEP	0
(1,769)	Better Care Fund	(2,233)
0	DLUHC/MHCLG	(1,985)
(381)	Other Grants	(236)
(22,553)	**Total**	**(22,036)**

Donated Assets Account - Long Term Liabilities

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(962)	Sports Facilities	(962)
(962)	**Total**	**(962)**

Note 34 - 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 effective control over the general operations of the Council, as it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants, and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. Council Tax bills, Housing Benefits). Grants received from government departments are set out in the subjective analysis in **Note 8**. Grant receipts not yet recognised as income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is shown in **Note 33**.

Members

Members of the council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid is shown in **Note 29**. A number of members are school governors, appointed Town and Parish Council members or members of Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority. Given the nature of governance arrangements in place they are not considered to control or significantly influence any of these public bodies. For transparency a list of members who are also on Parish Councils that have had transactions with Bedford Borough Council during 2021/2022 is listed below:

Member	Parish Council	Expenditure	Income
Councillor Abbott Councillor Walker	Oakley	£26,200	£11,551
Councillor Coombes	Wixams	£0	£1,432
Councillor Gallagher	Shortstown	£43,492	£28,567
Councillor Nawaz Councillor Masud Councillor Meader Councillor Oliver	Kempston Town	£0	£0
Councillor Rider Councillor C Royden	Brickhill	£2,720	£16,716
Councillor Wheeler	Wootton	£115,253	£1,140
Councillor McMurdo	Sharnbrook	£7,127	£1,720
Councillor Foster	Bletsoe	£0	£0
Councillor Abbott	Pavenham	£831	£12,017

There were no other interests of a material nature declared during the year.

Officers

There were no interests of a material nature declared during the year. For completeness the following transactions with related parties did take place:

The Director of Environment is also a Trustee at Forest of Marston Vale. No contributions were paid to the body in 2021/2022 (£2,000 2020/2021). Bedford Borough Council charged the Forest of Marston Vale £2,603 (£3,004 2020/2021) for services provided.

Other Public Bodies

The Council has one pooled budget arrangements which is detailed in **Note 28** relating to provision of Social Care Services. The Other Public Bodies involved in these arrangements are Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) and Central Bedfordshire.

Pension Fund

Pension Fund details are set out in the Pension Fund section of this document. The Pension Fund has a separate bank account and therefore has no cash deposited with the Council. The Council charged the Fund £1.369 million in 2021/2022 (£1.223 million in 2020/2021) for expenses incurred in administering the Fund.

As at 31 March 2022, the amount due to the Council from the Pension Fund was £0.290 million for administration services (£0.153 million as at 31 March 2021); with £2.125 million being owed by the Council to the Pension Fund for March pension contributions (£1.366 million as at 31 March 2021).

Entities Controlled or Significantly Influenced by the Council

The Council has interests in entities that have the controlling nature of subsidiaries. There is one material trust funds, the House of Industry, which has its current assets, liabilities, income and expenditure disclosed within **Note 44**.

The most significant transaction during 2021/2022 between the Council and this entity was a payment of £0.058 million to House of Industry for the rent of St Peter’s car park (£0.057 million in 2020/2021).

Benedict Bedford Limited (BBL)

The Council's has a wholly owned housing development company called Benedict Bedford Limited (BBL). The following Council employees are also directors of the company:

- Jill Evans (Chief Officer for Finance)
- Craig Austin (Director of Environment).

There were no transactions between the Council and BBL.

Note 35 - 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 authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the authority that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
133,993	**Opening Capital Financing Requirement**	**133,955**
	Capital Investment:	
30,200	Property Plant and Equipment	34,212
1,148	Investment Property	549
2,118	Intangible Assets	1,011
6,995	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute	5,227
40,461	**Total Capital Spending**	**40,999**
	Sources of Finance:	
(11,425)	Capital receipts	(1,803)
(18,257)	Government Grants and other contributions	(22,803)
	Sums set aside from revenue:	
(6,867)	- Direct revenue contributions	(6,369)
(3,949)	- Minimum revenue provision	(3,901)
(40,498)	**Total Sources of Finance**	**(34,877)**
133,955	**Closing Capital Financing Requirement**	**140,078**

The below table explains how the movement in Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) has been financed by the Council. The level of unfinanced government supported CFR is expected to reduce year on year as no further government supported borrowing is anticipated. This means future capital investment will be financed by prudential borrowing or other forms of financial liabilities funded by Council Tax.

Explanation of movements in year

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(2,813)	Increase in underlying need to borrow (supported by government financial assistance)	2,701
2,775	Increase in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	3,421
(38)	**Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement**	**6,122**

Note 36 - Leases

Council as Lessee

The Council has acquired a number of vehicles and equipment under finance leases.
The assets acquired under these leases are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet at the following net amounts:

Authority as Lessee - 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 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
179	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture, Equipment and Other	179
179	**Total**	**179**

The minimum lease payments are made up of the following amounts:

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
	Finance lease liabilities (net present value of minimum lease payments):	
(245)	- current	(175)
(192)	- non-current	(17)
(57)	Finance costs payable in future years	(23)
(494)	**Minimum lease payments**	**(215)**

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

Minimum Lease Payments			Finance Lease Liabilities	
31 March 2021 £000	31 March 2022 £000		31 March 2021 £000	31 March 2022 £000
(279)	(190)	Not later than one year	(245)	(175)
(198)	(11)	Later than one year and not later than five years	(180)	(6)
(17)	(15)	Later than five years	(12)	(11)
(494)	**(215)**	**Total**	**(437)**	**(192)**

Operating Leases

The Council has acquired a number of equipment by entering into operating leases, with typical lives of 3 - 5 years. The future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

Authority as Lessee - Operating Leases

The future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases in future years are set out below:

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
128	Not later than one year	113
193	Later than one year and not later than five years	123
163	Later than five years	171
484	**Total**	**407**

The expenditure charged to services in the CIES during the year in relation to these leases was:

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
126	Minimum lease payments	147
126	**Total**	**147**

Council as Lessor

Finance Leases

The Council has one property leased to a third party which is classified as a finance lease. The lease agreement as at 31 March 2022 has a remaining term of 101 years.

The Council has a gross investment in the lease, made up of the minimum lease payments expected to be received over the remaining term. The residual value is considered to be immaterial and has therefore been ignored for the purpose of the calculation. The minimum lease payments comprises settlement of the long-term debtor for the interest in the property acquired by the lessee and finance income that will be earned by the Council in future years whilst the debtor remains outstanding. The gross investment is made up of the following amounts:

Authority as Lessor - Finance Leases

The gross investment is made up of the following amounts:

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
	Finance lease debtor (net present value of minimum lease payments):	
287	- non-current	287
287	**Gross investment in the lease**	**287**

The gross investment in the lease and the minimum lease payments will be received over the following periods:

Gross Investment in the Lease			Minimum Lease Payments	
31 March 2021 £000	31 March 2022 £000		31 March 2021	31 March 2022 £000
0	0	Not later than one year	23	23
0	0	Later than one year and not later than five years	92	92
287	287	Later than five years	2,225	2,202
287	**287**	**Total**	**2,340**	**2,317**

Operating Leases

The Council leases out property under operating leases for income generation, provision of community based facilities, provision of employment, business development opportunities and provision of specific services on behalf of the Council.
The future minimum lease payments receivable under non-cancellable leases in future years are set out in the following table:

Authority as Lessor - Operating Leases

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

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
3,282	Not later than one year	3,276
10,190	Later than one year and not later than five years	9,273
54,264	Later than five years	50,416
67,736	**Total**	**62,965**

Note 37 - Impairment Losses

The Code requires disclosure by class of assets of the amounts for impairment losses and impairment reversals charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services and to Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. There were no impairments during 2021/22 or 2020/21.

Note 38 - Pension Schemes Accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes

Teachers' Pension Schemes

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

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

The Council is not liable to the scheme for any other entities obligations under the plan.

Year	Retirement Contributions	Pensionable Pay
2020/2021 (actual)	£4.820 million	16.48%
2021/2022 (actual)	£5.046 million	16.48%
2022/2023 (estimate)	£5.197 million	16.48%

NHS Pension Schemes

Public Health officers employed by the Council are members of the NHS Pension Scheme, administered by the Department for Health. The Scheme provides officers with specified benefits upon their retirement, and the Council contributes towards the costs by making contributions based on a percentage of members' pensionable salaries.

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

Year	Retirement Contributions	Pensionable Pay
2020/2021 (actual)	£0.030 million	14.0%
2021/2022 (actual)	£0.020 million	14.0%
2022/2023 (estimate)	£0.020 million	14.0%

The Council is not liable to the scheme for any other entities obligations under the plan.

Note 39 - Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

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 disclose payments which will be due at the time an employee earns their future entitlement.

The Council participates in one post-employment scheme:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), administered locally by Bedford Borough Council – is a funded defined benefit salary scheme, meaning that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liabilities with investment assets. From 1 April 2014 the scheme became Career Average Scheme (CARE). Benefits earned in the scheme before 1 April 2014 are protected so benefits up to that date will be based on the scheme member's final year's pay.
- 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 is no investment assets built up to meet these pension liabilities, and cash has to be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due.
- The Bedfordshire Pension Fund 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 Bedford Borough Council. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pensions Fund Regulations. Further details can be obtained from the Pension Fund accounts starting on page 97.
- The principal risks to the authority 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 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.

The tables on the following page contain all transactions relating to the Bedfordshire Pension Fund for the 2021/2022 Financial Year and comparator figures for 2020/2021. This includes;

- Transactions included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year.
- Movements in the Pensions Net (Liability)/Asset

General Fund Transactions

2020/21 LGPS	2020/21 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements		2021/22 LGPS	2021/22 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements
£000	**£000**		**£000**	**£000**
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement				
Cost of Services				
		Service cost comprising:		
22,883	0	Current service cost	35,143	0
502	0	Past service cost	1,620	0
372	0	Administration expenses	544	0
		Other Operating Expenditure:		
		Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure		
7,162	0	Net interest expense	8,970	0
30,919	**0**	**Total charged to Surplus and Deficit on Provision of Services**	**46,277**	**0**
Other post-employment benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement				
£000	**£000**		**£000**	**£000**
		Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:		
(70,868)	0	Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(41,892)	
(6,972)	0	Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(13,655)	0
221,252	0	Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	(33,056)	0
(7,354)	0	Other movements in the liability / (asset)	(30,259)	0
136,058	**0**	**Total charged to Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement**	**(118,862)**	**0**
166,977	**0**	**Total charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement**	**(72,585)**	**0**

2020/21 LGPS	2020/21 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements	Movement in Reserves Statement	2021/22 LGPS	2021/22 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements
£000	£000		£000	£000
(30,919)	0	Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(46,277)	0
		Actual amount charged against the general fund balance for pensions in the year:		
20,252	689	Employers' contributions payable to scheme	22,590	665

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

Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the authority's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

2020/21 LGPS	2020/21 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements	Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet	2021/22 LGPS	2021/22 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements
£000	£000		£000	£000
(926,297)	(8,126)	Present value of the defined obligation	(883,064)	(7,461)
467,405	0	Fair value of plan assets	519,347	0
(458,892)	**(8,126)**	**Value of Assets / (Liabilities)**	**(363,717)**	**(7,461)**
0	0	Other movements in the (liability) / asset	0	0
(458,892)	**(8,126)**	**Net (liability) / asset arising from the defined benefit obligation**	**(363,717)**	**(7,461)**

2020/21 LGPS	2020/21 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements	Movement in the Value of Scheme Assets	2021/22 LGPS	2021/22 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements
£000	£000		£000	£000
385,652	**0**	**Opening fair value of scheme assets**	**467,405**	**0**
8,104	0	Interest income	8,689	
		Re-measurement gain / (loss):		
70,868	0	- The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	41,892	
(53)	0	Other gains / (losses)	(3,319)	
20,252	689	Contributions from employer	22,590	665
4,228	0	Contributions from employees into the scheme	4,315	
(21,274)	(689)	Benefits / transfers paid	(21,681)	(665)
(372)	0	Administration expenses	(544)	
467,405	**0**	**Closing value of scheme assets**	**519,347**	**0**

Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation)

2020/21 LGPS £000	2020/21 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements £000	Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme Liabilities	2021/22 LGPS £000	2021/22 Discretionary Benefits Arrangements £000
(697,819)	**(8,815)**	**Opening balance at 1 April**	**(926,297)**	**(8,126)**
(22,883)	0	Current service cost	(35,143)	
(15,266)	0	Interest cost	(17,659)	
(4,228)	0	Contributions from scheme participants	(4,315)	
		Re-measurement gains and losses:		
6,972	0	- Actuarial gains / (losses) from changes in demographic assumptions	13,655	
(221,252)	0	- Actuarial gains / (losses) from changes in financial assumptions	33,056	
7,407	0	- Other	33,578	
(502)	0	Past service cost	(1,620)	
21,274	689	Benefits / transfers paid	21,681	665
(926,297)	**(8,126)**	**Balance as at 31 March**	**(883,064)**	**(7,461)**

LGPS - Pension Scheme - Assets comprised of:

Fair value of scheme assets

2020/21 Quoted £000	2020/21 Unquoted £000	2020/21 Total £000		2021/22 Quoted £000	2021/22 Unquoted £000	2021/22 Total £000
0	11,685	11,685	Cash and cash equivalents	0	10,387	10,387
21,033	0	21,033	UK Government Bonds	0	0	0
0	33,653	33,653	UK Property	0	41,548	41,548
0	5,609	5,609	Private Equity	0	10,387	10,387
			Investment Funds			
0	75,252	75,252	Equities	0	36,354	36,354
0	0	0	Bonds	0	0	0
12,153	20,566	32,718	Other	0	62,322	62,322
12,153	**95,818**	**107,971**	**Total Investment Funds**	**0**	**98,676**	**98,676**
0	9,816	9,816	Infrastructure	0	20,774	20,774
69,176	0	69,176	Absolute Return	72,709	0	72,709
0	174,342	174,342	Unit Trusts	0	197,352	197,352
34,121	0	34,121	UK Corporate Bonds	67,515	0	67,515
136,482	**330,923**	**467,405**	**Total Assets**	**140,224**	**379,124**	**519,348**

The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

2020/21	LGPS	2021/22
Long term expected rate of return on assets		
2.0%	Bonds	2.6%
2.0%	Real Estate	2.6%
2.0%	Private Equity	2.6%
2.0%	Investment Funds	2.6%
Mortality assumptions		
Longevity at retirement for current pensioners		
21.9	Men	21.3
24.3	Women	24.1
Longevity at retirement for future pensioners		
22.8	Men	22.4
26.0	Women	25.7
Other assumptions		
3.8%	Rate of increase in salaries	4.25
2.8%	Rate of increase in pensions	3.25
2.0%	Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.60

Impact of assumptions on the obligation:

Increase by 1% £000	LGPS Assumption	Decrease by 1% £000
43,000	Longevity +/- 1 year	(43,934)
1,278	Rate of increase in salaries	(1,165)
16,928	Rate of increase in pensions	(16,886)
(17,958)	Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	18,718

Impact on the Authority's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. The Borough Council has agreed a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve a funding level of 100% over the next 17 years. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation is due to be completed on 31 March 2022. The authority anticipates to pay £22.9 million expected contributions to the scheme in 2022/2023.

Note 40 - Contingent Liabilities

At 31 March 2022, the Council had no known material contingent liabilities.

Note 41 - Contingent Assets

At 31 March 2022, the Council had no known material contingent assets.

Note 42 - Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks:

- Credit risk – the possibility that the counterparty to a financial asset will fail to meet its contractual obligations, causing a loss to the Council.
- Liquidity risk – the possibility that the Council might not have cash available to make contracted payments on time.
- Market risk – the possibility that an unplanned financial loss will materialise because of changes in market variables such as interest rates or equity prices.

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 the Treasury Team using policies approved by Full Council which are outlined in the annual Treasury Management Strategy. The Council provides 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.

This risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria, as laid down by recognised credit rating agencies. The Annual Investment Strategy also imposes a maximum sum to be invested with a financial institution located within each category. Recognising that credit ratings are imperfect predictors of default, the Council has regard to other measures including credit default swaps and equity prices.

The credit criteria in respect of financial assets held by the Council are detailed below:

- Council investments are with Central Government, other Local Authorities or institutions with a high credit rating

- The Council considers the ratings of each of the three major credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors) in establishing the criteria that shall apply to its investment decisions; the lowest of the three ratings shall apply

- Fitch credit rating or equivalent has been determined by the Council to be the minimum long term credit rating as "high".

- The maximum that may be deposited with each institution is £5 million for secured deposit takers and Money Market Fund, £3 million for unsecured deposit takers. Further details on Sector Limits are detailed in the Treasury Management Strategy.There is no limit on the level of investment with Central Government.

Customers for goods and services are assessed, taking into account 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.

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies is negligible although they are used from time to time. 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 of the Council's deposits, but there was no evidence at the 31 March 2022 that this was likely to crystallise, even with the effect of Covid-19.

No counterparty credit limits were exceeded during the reporting period, and furthermore the Council would not expect any investment losses from counterparties of fixed term deposits or bonds.

The Council does not enter into customer credit arrangements, and as such a significant amount (£7.465 million) of the total balance of £17.873 million is past its due date for payment. The outstanding amount can be analysed by age as follows:

Credit Risk - Debtors	**31 March 2021**	**31 March 2022**
	£000	**£000**
Less than three months	9,182	10,408
Three to six months	1,322	1,304
Six months to one year	1,556	1,291
More than one year	4,663	4,870
	16,723	**17,873**

Liquidity risk

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available for operational requirements. If unexpected movements occur, the Council is capable of accessing short term funds from the money markets, Public Works Loan Board and other Local Authorities. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Nonetheless, the risk is that the Council will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates. The Council sets limits on the proportion of its fixed rate borrowing during specified periods. This is achieved using a strategy to ensure that not more than 15% of loans are due to mature within any one year through a combination of careful planning of new loans and assessing the potential to make early repayments. The maturity analysis of financial liabilities is set out in the following table:

Liquidity Risk	**31 March 2021**	**31 March 2022**
	£000	**£000**
Less than one year	(3,730)	(5,942)
Between one and two years	(5,358)	(4,749)
Between two and five years	(9,784)	(9,548)
More Than 5 Years	(16,562)	(12,140)
More Than 10 years	(33,145)	(33,142)
	(68,579)	**(65,521)**

It is assumed that LOBO borrowing will continue to final maturity; these borrowings allow the lender to reset the interest rate on the loan every six months. Due to the low interest rate environment it is unlikely that the lender will exercise its option, and therefore trigger the repayment of these loans. The maturity data is therefore uncertain. All trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

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. For instance, a rise in interest rates would have the following effects:

- borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise
- borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the liabilities borrowings will fall
- investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise
- investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall

Borrowings are not carried at fair value, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Surplus of 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 Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

The Council's Annual Investment Strategy incorporates a number of measures to manage interest rate risk. The measures aim to keep a maximum of 75% of its net borrowings (by reference to the interest payable) in variable rate loans. During periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate loans will be repaid early to limit exposure to losses. The risk of loss is ameliorated by the fact that a proportion of government grant payable on financing costs will normally move with prevailing interest rates or the Council's cost of borrowing and provide compensation for a proportion of any higher costs.

The Annual Investment Strategy incorporates active measures for assessing interest rate exposure that feeds into the setting of the annual budget and which is used to update the budget quarterly during the year. This strategy allows any adverse changes to be accommodated. The mechanism will also inform whether new borrowing taken out is fixed or variable.

According to this assessment strategy, at 31 March 2022, if interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be:

Market Risk - Interest Rate Risk	**31 March 2022 £000**
Increase in interest payable on variable rate borrowings	0
Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	(810)
Increase in government grant receivable for financing costs	(614)
Impact on Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**(1,424)**

Price risk

The council has investments in pooled funds through the purchase of shares in these funds, the shares are valued every business day and so the Council is exposed to movements in price.

The investments are classified as 'Fair Value through Profit and Loss', meaning that all movements in price will impact on gains and losses recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. However a statutory override reverses the impact on the General Fund unless the investments are sold. A general shift of 5% in the general price of shares (positive or negative) would have resulted in a £1.868 million gain or loss being recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

Foreign exchange risk

The Council has no financial asset or liability held in foreign currency denominations, and thus has no exposure to any losses arising from movements in exchange rates.

Note 43 - Heritage Assets Further Information

Heritage assets are assets that are held by the authority principally for their contribution to knowledge or culture.

The Council has reviewed the definition of heritage assets and has concluded that the Council has the following heritage assets that required reviewing:

- Historical assets held in Archives
- Art Gallery and Museum artefacts
- Mayor's Chain, Mace, and other Civic Regalia.

In line with the accounting policy on Heritage Assets, the Council has separately recognised some of these assets on its Balance Sheet. Some assets have not been recognised in the Balance Sheet due to the disproportionate cost of obtaining valuations. In addition to the above, there are some assets previously classified as Community Assets, for example: Bromham Mill, Moot Hall and Castle Mound.

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
6,554	Opening Balance	6,554
0	Other Movements	0
6,554	**Closing Balance**	**6,554**

Note 44 - Trust Funds

The main funds for which the council acts as sole trustee are listed below. These are not assets of the Council and have not been included in the Balance Sheet.

2021/22

Fund	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Assets £000	Liabilities £000
House of Industry Estate	(251)	358	5,571	268
Total	(251)	358	5,571	268

2020/21

Fund	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Assets £000	Liabilities £000
House of Industry Estate	(300)	287	5,926	268
Total	**(300)**	**287**	**5,926**	**268**

The audited accounts of the charity show £0.228m income and £5.315m assets.

House of Industry Estate

Set up under the Bedford Corporation Act 1964, the estate owns significant land holdings, income from which (together with investment income) is used to provide financial assistance within the scheme approved by the Charity Commissioners. The current scheme was effective from 1 April 1988.

Collection Fund

These accounts represent the transactions of the Collection Fund, which is a statutory fund under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Acts 1988, 1992 and 2012, and covers all Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). Bedford Borough being the billing authority maintains this account.

31 March 2021				31 March 2022		
Business Rates £000	**Council Tax £000**	**Total £000**	**Collection Fund**	**Business Rates £000**	**Council Tax £000**	**Total £000**
			INCOME:			
	(116,680)	(116,680)	Council Tax Receivable		(123,443)	(123,443)
(43,474)		(43,474)	Business Rates Receivable	(59,401)		(59,401)
1,370	0	1,370	Transitional Protection Payments Receivable	380		380
(42,104)	**(116,680)**	**(158,784)**	**Total amounts to be credited**	**(59,021)**	**(123,443)**	**(182,464)**
			EXPENDITURE:			
			Apportionment of Previous Year Surplus/Deficit:			
(1,873)		(1,873)	Central Government	(12,879)		(12,879)
(1,835)	434	(1,401)	Bedford Borough Council	(12,622)	(244)	(12,866)
(37)	28	(10)	Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority	(258)	(15)	(273)
0	57	57	Police & Crime Commisioner for Bedfordshire		(32)	(32)
			Precepts, demands and shares:			
32,845		32,845	Central Government	33,742		33,742
32,188	97,244	129,433	Bedford Borough Council	33,067	97,560	130,627
657	6,119	6,776	Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority	675	6,034	6,709
0	12,925	12,925	Police & Crime Commisioner for Bedfordshire		13,380	13,380
			Charges to Collection Fund:			
747	117	864	Write-offs of uncollectable amounts	353	590	943
(7)	700	693	Increase/(decrease) in allowance for impairment	137	240	377
918		918	Increase/(decrease) in allowance for appeals	373		373
230		230	Charge to General Fund for allowable collection costs for non-domestic rates	228		228
			Other transfers to General Fund in accordance with non-domestic rates regulations			
642		642	Renewable Energy	640		640
64,476	**117,625**	**182,101**	**Total amounts to be debited**	**43,456**	**117,512**	**160,968**
22,372	**945**	**23,317**	**(Surplus)/Deficit arising during the year**	**(15,566)**	**(5,930)**	**(21,496)**
4,509	**(615)**	**3,895**	**(Surplus)/Deficit b/f at 1 April 2021**	**26,882**	**330**	**27,213**
26,882	**330**	**27,213**	**(Surplus)/Deficit c/f at 31 March 2022**	**11,316**	**(5,600)**	**5,716**

Both the billing authority and major preceptors (i.e. the Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire, Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority and Central Government) are required to accrue the income for the year in their own accounts. Since the collection of Council Tax and NNDR are agency functions the cash collected, and any unpaid sums are shared proportionately between the major preceptors and billing authority. This resulting debtor/creditor position is shown in each authority's accounts.

Notes to the Collection Fund

Council Tax is charged on residential properties, which are classified into one of eight valuation bands based on estimated values at 1 April 1991.

The Band D tax is calculated by dividing the total amount of income required by the Collection Fund to pay the Borough, Police and Fire precepts for the forthcoming year by the Council tax base. The Council tax base used in the calculation is based on the number of dwellings in each band on the Valuation list at the relevant date, adjusted for exemptions, discounts and disabled banding changes.

The tax base for 2021/2022 was 58,919 Band D equivalent properties, (60,943) equivalents for 2020/2021). The tax base calculation is shown below:

Note 1 - Council Tax Income

2021/22

Band	Valuation band limits	Calculated no of dwellings	Ratio to band D	Equated No of dwellings
	£	No		No
A	Upto and including - 40,000	6,153	6/9	4,102
B	40,001 - 52,000	13,569	7/9	10,554
C	52,001 - 68,000	15,922	8/9	14,153
D	68,001 - 88,000	8,648	9/9	8,648
E	88,001 - 120,000	7,830	11/9	9,570
F	120,001 - 160,000	5,137	13/9	7,419
G	160,001 - 320,000	2,969	15/9	4,949
H	More than - 320,001	210	18/9	421
			Adjustment	(897)
			Council tax base	58,919

2020/21

Band	Valuation band limits	Calculated no of dwellings	Ratio to band D	Equated No of dwellings
	£	No		No
A	Upto and including - 40,000	6,215	6/9	4,143
B	40,001 - 52,000	13,668	7/9	10,630
C	52,001 - 68,000	15,801	8/9	14,046
D	68,001 - 88,000	11,074	9/9	11,074
E	88,001 - 120,000	7,678	11/9	9,384
F	120,001 - 160,000	5,020	13/9	7,251
G	160,001 - 320,000	2,951	15/9	4,918
H	More than - 320,001	213	18/9	425
			Adjustment	(928)
			Council tax base	60,943

The total non-domestic rateable value on 31 March 2022 was £176.1 million (£169.8 million 31 March 2021) and the Business Rate Multiplier for the year is 49.9p (49.9p 2020/2021).

A split of the Collection Fund balances share by major preceptor is shown below:

2020/2021		Analysis of Collection Fund Balance by Major Preceptors	2021/2022	
NNDR	Council Tax		NNDR	Council Tax
£000	£000		£000	£000
13,440		Central Government	5,657	
13,172	276	Bedford Borough Council	5,544	(4,671)
	37	Police & Crime Commissioner for Bedfordshire		(641)
269	17	Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Authority	113	(288)
26,881	**330**	**Balance at 31 March**	**11,316**	**(5,600)**

NNDR: In response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the government confirmed that some support would be extended to mitigate the potential detrimental financial impact of the pandemic for local businesses and local authorities. The key initiatives were the implementation and extension of business rates reliefs across a range of business sectors, chiefly retail and nursery discounts together with the introduction of the Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF). These additional reliefs resulted in a decrease in the level of income received through the collection fund for redistribution to Bedford Borough Council, Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Central Government.

However, a range of measures were announced to compensate the billing and precepting authorities for the loss in collection fund income resulting from these initiatives – the compensation for the extended reliefs was provided in the form of additional s31 grants. 100% of the S31 grant was paid to the local billing authority in the first instance, rather than just their proportionate share, in order to facilitate the cash flow to make the 2021/2022 NDR payments to government and preceptors. The S31 grants held on behalf of the precepting authorities will be released after the 2021/2022 financial year to compensate the billing and precepting authorities for the deficits on the collection fund due to losses in income caused by the extensions to the business rates relief schemes

Council Tax: The level of Council Tax income was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic during the 2020/2021 financial year – the taxbase for that financial year was established before the outbreak was experienced in this country. The expected continuation of the impact of the impact of the pandemic was reflected in a lower taxbase forecast for the 2021/2022 financial year. However, 2021/2022 saw an increase in net Council Tax yield as economic confidence increased.

Bedfordshire Pension Fund

2021/2022

Fund Account for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

2020/2021 £000		2021/2022 £000	See note
	Contributions and Benefits		
193,603	Contributions	129,461	7
9,765	Transfers in from other pension funds	12,369	8
1	Other Income	27	
203,369		**141,857**	
-103,136	Benefits	-107,289	9
-9,153	Payments to and on account of leavers	-12,977	10
91,080	**Net additions/(withdrawals) from dealings with members**	**21,591**	
-9,278	Management Expenses	-10,563	11
81,801	**Net additions/(withdrawals) including Management Expenses**	**11,028**	
	Returns on Investments		
10,833	Investment income	15,230	12
0	Taxes on income	-1	
454,619	Profit and losses on disposal of investments and changes in value of investments	229,992	13a
465,452	**Net return on investments**	**245,221**	
547,253	Net increase/(decrease) in the fund during the year	256,249	
2,209,404	Opening Net Assets of the Fund	2,756,657	
2,756,657	**Closing Net Assets of the Fund**	**3,012,906**	

Net Assets Statement for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000	See note
1,182	Long Term Investment Assets	1,182	13.1
1,182	**Total Long Term Investment Assets**	**1,182**	
2,692,256	Investment Assets	2,953,046	13.2
0	Investment Liabilities	0	13.3
2,692,256	**Total Net Current Investments**	**2,953,046**	
2,693,438	**Total Net Investments**	**2,954,228**	
0	Long Term Assets	0	18
65,375	Current Assets	61,532	19
-2,156	Current Liabilities	-2,854	20
2,756,657	**Net assets of the fund available to fund benefits at the end of the Reporting Period**	**3,012,906**	

The Fund's financial statements do not take account of liabilities to pay pensions and other benefits after the period end. The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is disclosed in Pension Note 17a.

Notes to the Accounts

1) Description of the Pension Fund

Bedfordshire Pension Fund (the Fund) is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme and is administered by Bedford Borough Council. The Borough Council is the reporting entity for the Fund.

The following description of the Fund is a summary only. For more detail, reference should be made to the Bedfordshire Pension Fund Annual Report & Accounts 2021/2022 and the underlying statutory powers underpinning the scheme, namely the Superannuation Act 1972 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Regulations.

The Fund is governed by the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 and is administered in accordance with the following secondary legislation:

- The LGPS (Administration) Regulations 2013 (as amended)
- The LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (as amended)
- The LGPS (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016 (as amended)

Local Government Pension Funds are required to be funded, being financed by contributions from employees, employers and by earnings from investments. Triennial actuarial valuations are undertaken and employers' contributions are reviewed to ensure that the Fund's assets are sufficient to meet its funding targets.

Membership of the Fund

The Fund is a contributory defined benefit pension scheme providing pensions and other benefits for pensionable employees of Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough Councils and a range of other scheduled and admitted bodies within the Bedfordshire area. Teachers, Police Officers and Firefighters are not included as they come within other national pension schemes. Organisations participating in the Fund include:

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

As at 31 March 2022, the total number of employees (i.e. from Councils within Bedfordshire and the other scheduled and admitted bodies) contributing to the Fund was 22,826 (22,849) at 31 March 2021), the number of pensioners was 19,991 (18,929) and the number of deferred pensioners was 32,994 (32,001).

A full list of participating bodies as at 31 March 2022 is included in the Bedfordshire Pension Fund Annual Report.

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

Core Benefits of the Scheme

From 1 April 2014 the scheme became a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme. Benefits earned in the scheme before 1 April 2014 are protected so benefits up to that date will be based on the scheme member's final year's pay.

The benefits payable from the Fund are set out in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, as amended, and in summary are:

- A guaranteed annual pension based on the pay received during the year and revalued in line with earnings.
- An optional tax-free lump sum by commuting part of the pension.
- Life assurance of three times the members' yearly pay from the day they join the scheme.
- Pensions for spouses, civil registered partners, qualifying cohabiting partners and eligible children on the death of the member.
- An entitlement paid early if a member has to stop work permanently due to permanent ill-health.
- Inflation-proof preserved pensions and pensions in payment.
- Pensions payable from age 55, including (with the employer's consent) flexible retirement and early retirement.
- The option to contribute a reduced contribution for a reduced benefit - the 50/50 option.

NB scheme members must have a minimum of two years' membership to qualify for a pension

Full details of the contributions payable by employees and benefits receivable can be found in the Fund's scheme handbook "Guides to the Local Government Pension Scheme", available from Borough Hall and available in full or in summary on the Fund's website.

http://www.bedspensionfund.org/active_members/guides_to_the_lgps.aspx

2) Basis of Preparation

The accounts are compliant with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/2022 (the Code), which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as amended for the UK public sector. The accounts of the Pension Fund have also been prepared to meet the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2013 and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice on Financial Reports of Pension Schemes.

The accounts summarise the transactions and net assets of the Fund and do not take account of liabilities to pay pensions and other benefits in the future. They should therefore be read in conjunction with the actuarial reports which take account of future liabilities.

The Administering Authority has carried out an assessment and is satisfied that Bedfordshire Pension Fund is a going concern. The Fund value at 31 March 2022 stood at £3.01 billion, an increase of £0.26 billion since 31 March 2021, regaining the losses reported at the last accounting date, as a result of the write down arising from the pandemic.

The Fund's cashflow remains robust. 76% of employer deficit contributions for the period to March 2023 were paid in advance in April 2020 and all employers during the year paid the contributions set out in the Rates and Adjustment Certificate. It remains the Fund's expectation that employers will continue to pay their contributions.

The Fund remains cashflow positive in 2021/2022 despite the significant level of prepayments made in the first valuation year. Cash held at the Balance Sheet date stood at £49.7 million, equivalent to 2% of the Fund Assets. In addition, the Fund does not have any external borrowing and held £2.7 billion in Level 1 and Level 2 investment assets which could be realised within 3 months if required. Therefore, the fund is satisfied it has sufficient resources to meet its obligations to pay pensions throughout the going concern period which is at least 12 months from the date of authorisation of these accounts. For this reason, alongside the statutory guidance, these financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

3) Significant Accounting Policies

Contribution Income

Normal contributions, both from the members and from the employer, are accounted for on an accruals basis at the percentage rate recommended by the actuary in the payroll period to which they relate. Employer deficit funding contributions are accounted for on the dates on which they are due under the schedule of contributions set by the actuary or on receipt if earlier than the due date. Employer's augmentation and pension strain contributions are accounted for in the period in which the liability arises. Any amount due in-year but unpaid is classed as a current financial asset.

Benefits Payable

All pensions and lump sum payments have been included on an accruals basis other than some death gratuities. The payment of some death gratuities is dependent upon the receipt of probate or letters of administration. Where death occurs before the end of the year but probate or letters of administration have not yet been received by the balance sheet date, then no accrual is made. The departure from the accruals basis for these death gratuities does not materially affect the reported figure.

Lump sums are accounted for in the period in which the member becomes a pensioner. Any amounts due but unpaid are disclosed in the net assets statement as current liabilities.

Only benefits paid under local government pension scheme regulations are included in the Fund account. For administrative ease, the Fund also pays out compensatory added years benefits on behalf of scheme employers; these are refunded in full by the employer. Both the benefits paid and the subsequent reimbursements are excluded from the Fund account.

Refunds of Contributions

Refunds have been included on a cash basis. Accounting for refunds on an accruals basis would not materially alter the reported figure.

Transfer Values

Transfer values to and from other schemes have been included on a cash basis. Bulk (group) transfers are accounted for on an accruals basis in accordance with the terms of the transfer agreement.

Management Expenses

The Code of Practice does not require any breakdown of Pension Fund administrative expenses. However, in the interests of greater transparency, the Fund discloses its management expenses in accordance with CIPFA Guidance on Accounting for LGPS management expenses.

Administrative Expenses

The administration of the Fund is undertaken by the Borough Council in its role as administering authority. The Council's costs of administering the scheme, agreed by the relevant committees of both the Council and the Pension Fund, are charged to the Fund.

Oversight and Governance Costs

All oversight and governance expenses are accounted for on an accruals basis. All staff costs associated with governance and oversight are charged direct to the Fund. Associated management, accommodation and other overheads are apportioned to this activity and charged as expenses to the Fund.

Investment Management Expenses

Fees of the external investment managers and the Fund's custodian are agreed in the respective mandates governing their appointments. Broadly, these are based on the market value of the assets under their management and therefore increase or reduce as the value of these investments change. In addition, the Fund has negotiated with the following managers that an element of their fee be performance-related.

- Abrdn - Private Equity
- Insight Investment – Absolute Return Bonds
- Invesco Asset Management – Absolute Return Multi Asset
- Pantheon Ventures – Real Assets

Where an investment manager's fee note has not been received by 31 March 2022, an estimate based upon the market value of their mandate as at the end of the year is used for inclusion in the Fund account.

Following guidance from CIPFA, Accounting for Local Government Pension Scheme Management Expenses, the Fund extracts transactional costs from managers where the information is available to make an estimate or where this is readily available from the Custodian. This is included within the investment management costs. For the Property manager, management costs have been extracted reflecting the unit management costs based on the Net Asset Value (NAV) of each separate fund.

Investments

Investments are shown in the accounts at market value, determined as follows:

(i) Quoted securities are valued by reference to market bid price at the close of business on 31 March 2022.
(ii) Traded futures are valued by reference to their exchange prices as at 31 March 2022.
(iii) Other unquoted securities are valued having regard to latest dealings, professional valuations, asset values and other appropriate financial information.
(iv) Unit trust and managed fund investments are valued by reference to the latest bid prices quoted by their respective managers prior to 31 March 2022. If bid prices are unavailable, mid prices or net asset value will be used.
(v) Assets, including investments, denominated in foreign currencies are valued on the relevant basis and translated into sterling at the rate ruling on 31 March 2022. Exchange gains and losses arising from movements in current assets and liabilities are included in the Fund account for the year.

Investment assets include cash balances held by the Fund managers and debtor and creditor balances in respect of investment activities.

Investment Income

(i) Interest income is recognised in the Fund account as it accrues, using the effective interest rate of the financial instrument as at the date of acquisition or origination. Income includes the amortisation of any discount or premium, transaction costs or other differences between the initial carrying amount of the instrument and its amount at maturity calculated on an effective interest rate basis.
(ii) Dividend income is recognised on the date the shares are quoted ex-dividend. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the net assets statement as a current financial asset.
(iii) Distributions from pooled funds are recognised at the date of issue. Any amount not received by the end of the reporting period is disclosed in the net assets statement as a current financial asset.
(iv) Changes in the net market value of investments are recognised as income and comprise all realised and unrealised profits/losses during the year.

Acquisition Costs of Investments

Where shown, the cost of investments includes direct costs of acquisition.

Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) Investments

Bedford Borough Council as the administering authority has arrangements with its AVC providers to enable employees to make AVCs to supplement their pension benefits. AVCs are invested separately from the Fund's main assets and the assets purchased are specifically allocated to provide additional benefits for members making AVCs. The value of AVC assets is not included in the Fund's net asset statement.

Taxation

The Fund is an exempt approved Fund under section 1(1) of Schedule 36 of the Finance Act 2004, and as such is exempt from tax on capital gains and from UK income tax on interest receipts. As the Council is the administering authority for the Fund, VAT is recoverable on all expenditure where appropriate, and all of the Fund's income is outside the scope of VAT.

The Fund is liable to tax at a rate of 20% on small pensions that have been compounded into a lump sum.

The Fund is exempt from United States withholding tax.

Where the Fund is subject to other foreign tax, income is shown as the grossed up figure and the tax withheld as an item of expenditure.

New Accounting Standards

For any new accounting standard or policy introduced, the Pension Fund is required to provide information explaining how these changes have affected the accounts.

There were no new accounting standards introduced in 2021/2022 affecting the Pension Fund.

Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

The Fund is required to disclose information relating to the impact of the accounting change on the financial statements as a result of the adoption by the Code of a new standard that been issued, but is not yet required to be adopted by the Pension Fund. There are no such disclosures.

Events after the reporting date

These are events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue. Two types of events can be identified:

a) those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period (adjusting events after the reporting period), and
b) those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period (non-adjusting events after the reporting period).

An example of an adjusting event would be if new information came to light regarding the methodology employed in the valuation of an asset.

4) Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

Pension Fund Liability

The Pension Fund liability is calculated every three years by the Fund Actuary in line with the regulations, with annual updates in the intervening years. The methodology used is in accordance with International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19. Assumptions underpinning the valuations are agreed between the Fund and the Actuary and are summarised in the Actuarial Report on page 29. This estimate is subject to significant variances based on changes to the underlying assumptions.

Actuarial revaluations are used to set future contribution rates and underpin the Fund’s most significant investment management policies, for example in terms of the balance struck between longer term investment growth and short-term yield/return.

Unquoted Investments

The fair value of unquoted securities is estimated by the Fund’s investment managers and subject to the professional judgement and assumptions used by those managers. It is considered that changes in those assumptions would not produce significant variations in the value of those assets other than normal market fluctuations.

5) Assumptions made About the Future and Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

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

The items in the net asset statement at 31 March 2022 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming year are as follows:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgments relating to the discount rates 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 Fund with expert advice on the assumptions to be applied.	The effects on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For instance, an increase in the discount rate assumption would result in a decrease in the pension liability. An increase in assumed earnings would increase the value of liabilities and an increase assumed life expectancy would increase the liability. A Sensitivity Analysis is shown in Note 17a.
Pooled Property	Property investments are valued at fair value in accordance with the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) guidelines. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation.	There is a risk that these assets may be over or understated in the accounts.
Alternatives (Private Equity, Infrastructure and Private Credit)	Alternatives or unquoted investments are valued at fair value e.g. Private Equity in accordance with the British Venture Capital Association guidelines. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in their valuation.	There is a risk that these assets may be over or understated in the accounts. A Sensitivity Analysis on Level 3 assets is shown in Note 14.

6) Events after the Reporting Date

Following the 2022 triennial actuarial valuation, the updated IAS 26 disclosures have been made in Notes 17 and 17a.

7) Contributions receivable

2020/2021 £000	Contributions	2021/2022 £000
28,030	Employees' normal contributions	29,367
255	Employees' additional voluntary contributions	261
83,894	Employers' normal contributions	89,843
79,592	Employers' deficit funding	7,546
1,832	Employers' augmentation contributions	2,444
193,603		**129,461**
40,239	Administering authority	17,078
144,300	Scheduled bodies	102,094
9,064	Admitted and other bodies	10,289
193,603		**129,461**

Employers' augmentation contributions relate to payments for the cost of enhanced benefits and early retirements. Refunded payments from employers in respect of compensatory added years' benefits are excluded from the accounts.

8) Transfers In From Other Pension Funds

2020/2021 £000	Transfers in from other pension funds	2021/2022 £000
0	Transfers in from other pension funds - bulk	0
9,765	Individual transfers from other pension funds	12,369
9,765		**12,369**

There were no bulk transfers into the Fund in 2021/2022.

9) Benefits Payable

2020/2021 £000	Benefits	2021/2022 £000
84,491	Pensions	87,190
15,708	Commutations of pensions and lump sum retirement benefits	16,614
2,937	Lump sum death benefits	3,485
103,136		**107,289**
	Further analysed as:	
13,611	Administering authority	14,965
79,513	Scheduled bodies	81,092
10,012	Admitted and other bodies	11,232
103,136		**107,289**

Payments to employees in respect of compensatory added years benefits are excluded from the accounts.

10) Payments To and On Account of Leavers

2020/2021 £000	Payments to and on account of leavers	2021/2022 £000
288	Refunds of contributions	412
0	Transfers to other schemes – bulk	699
8,360	Transfers to other schemes – individuals	11,538
340	Annual Allowance - Tax Charge	161
165	Lifetime Allowance - Tax Charge	167
9,153		**12,977**

The Annual Allowance Tax Charge is on behalf of individual scheme members who exceeded the annual allowance and used the Scheme Pays facility which permits members to opt for the LGPS to pay the tax charge, which is then recovered from the member's pension benefits.

The Lifetime Allowance Tax Charge is on behalf of individual members who exceeded the lifetime allowance and used the Scheme Pays facility which permits members to opt for the LGPS to pay the tax charge, which is then recovered from the member's pension benefits.

11) Management Expenses

2020/2021 £000	Management Expenses	2021/2022 £000
1,502	Administrative Costs	1,460
6,815	Investment Management Expenses	7,818
961	Oversight and Governance Costs	1,285
9,278		**10,563**

The external audit fees paid in 2021/2022 was £0.032 million and £0.030 million in 2020/2021.

A further breakdown of the investment management expenses is shown below:

2020/2021 £000	Investment Management Expenses	2021/2022 £000
5,094	Management Fees	5,824
4	Performance Related Fees	286
1,617	Underlying Property Fees	1,658
100	Custody Fees	50
6,815		**7,818**

12) Investment Income

2020/2021 £000	Investment Income	2021/2022 £000
0	Dividends from equities	0
10,497	Income from pooled investment vehicles	13,539
336	Interest on cash deposits	1,691
10,833	Total Investment Income	**15,230**

13) Investments

2020/2021 £000	Investments	2021/2022 £000	Note
	Long Term Investments		
1,182	Pool Share Capital	1,182	13.1
1,182	**Total Long Term Investments**	**1,182**	
	Equities		
0	UK quoted equities	0	
0	Overseas quoted equities	0	
0	**Total Equities**	**0**	13.2
	Managed and Unitised Funds		
1,465,132	UK insurance managed funds	1,298,047	
194,969	UK property unit trusts	230,116	
595,303	Overseas unit trusts	613,362	
200,863	Global equity funds	216,057	
120,863	Multi Asset Credit	337,924	
28,797	Private Equity	48,768	
53,838	Infrastructure	142,182	
3,166	Private Credit	27,335	
2,662,931	**Total Managed and Unitised Funds**	**2,913,791**	13.2
	Cash Deposits & Other Investment Assets		
632	Amount receivable for sales of investments	0	
33	Investment income outstanding	125	
665	**Other Investment Assets**	**125**	
28,660	Cash deposits	39,130	
29,325	**Total Cash and Other Investment Assets**	**39,255**	13.2
	Investment Liabilities		
0	Other liabilities	0	
0	**Total Other Liabilities**	**0**	13.3
2,693,438	**Total**	**2,954,228**	

13a Value of Investments

2021/2022	Market Value at 31 March 2021 £000	Purchases at cost & derivative payments £000	Sale proceeds & derivative receipts £000	Change in Market Value £000	Market Value at 31 March 2022 £000
Long Term Investments					
Pool Share Capital	1,182	0	0	0	1,182
Equities					
UK	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0

Managed Funds	**1,790,024**	**49,749**	**-325,741**	**183,342**	**1,697,374**
Unit Trusts					
Property	194,969	10,513	-13,627	38,261	230,116
Other	677,938	324,585	-24,610	8,389	986,301
	872,907	**335,098**	**-38,238**	**46,650**	**1,216,417**
Other Assets	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total	**2,664,113**	**384,847**	**-363,979**	**229,992**	**2,914,973**
Cash	29,292				39,130
Currency Movements	33				125
	29,325				**39,255**
Total	**2,693,438**				**2,954,228**

13.b Value of Investments

2020/2021	**Market Value at 31 March 2019**	**Purchases at cost & derivative payments**	**Sale proceeds & derivative receipts**	**Change in Market Value**	**Market Value at 31 March 2021**
	£000	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**	**£000**
Long Term Investments					
Pool Share Capital	833	349	0	0	1,182
Equities					
UK	0	0	0	0	0
Overseas	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0
Managed Funds	**1,309,352**	**146,320**	**-55,596**	**389,948**	**1,790,024**
Unit Trusts					
Property	204,844	1,657	-6,672	-4,860	194,969
Other	582,596	34,639	-8,828	69,531	677,938
	787,440	**36,296**	**-15,500**	**64,671**	**872,907**
Other Assets	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Total	**2,097,625**	**182,965**	**-71,096**	**454,619**	**2,664,113**
Cash	19,708				29,292
Currency Movements	41				33
	19,749				**29,325**
Total	**2,117,374**				**2,693,438**

13.c Investments Analysed by Fund Manager

2020/2021 £000	2020/2021 %	Fund Manager	2021/2022 £000	2021/2022 %
507,601	18.46%	Legal & General - Global Equities	564,228	18.73%
200,863	7.29%	BCPP - Global Equities	216,057	7.17%
448,228	16.26%	BlackRock – Global Equities	498,998	16.56%
215,308	7.81%	Legal & General - UK Equities	234,799	7.79%
88,333	3.20%	BlackRock - Emerging Markets Equities	95,270	3.16%
32,441	1.18%	Abrdn - Private Equity	59,174	1.96%
203,991	7.40%	CBRE - Indirect Property	236,993	7.87%
163,386	5.93%	Pyrford - Absolute Return Multi-Asset	170,361	5.65%
100,360	3.64%	Invesco - Absolute Return Multi Asset	-	0.00%
143,049	5.19%	Newton - Absolute Return Multi Asset	144,988	4.81%
35,276	1.28%	BCPP - Infrastructure	126,354	4.19%
21,431	0.78%	Pantheon – Real Assets	27,139	0.90%
0	0.00%	BCPP - Multi Asset Credit	197,840	6.57%
3,277	0.12%	BCPP - Private Credit	27,774	0.92%
200,535	7.27%	Insight - Absolute Return Bonds	202,742	6.73%
120,863	4.38%	PIMCO – Diversified Income Fund	140,084	4.65%
193,635	7.02%	BlackRock - Gilts inc. Index Linked	-	0.00%
1,182	0.04%	Pool Share Capital – Equities	1,182	0.04%
2,679,759	**97.21%**	**Net Assets Managed by External Bodies**	**2,943,983**	**97.71%**
76,898	2.79%	Net Assets Managed by the Administering Authority	68,922	2.29%
2,756,657	**100.00%**	**Total Assets**	**3,012,905**	**100.00%**

13.d Investments exceeding 5% of net assets (excluding UK Government Securities)

2020/2021 £000	% of Total Market Value	Managed and Unitised Investment	2021/2022 £000	% of Total Market Value
545,465	20.26%	Legal & General	799,027	26.52%
730,196	27.12%	BlackRock Advisers	594,268	19.72%
200,535	7.45%	Insight	202,742	6.73%
163,386	6.07%	Pyrford	170,361	5.65%
143,049	5.19%	Newton	144,988	4.81%
239,417	8.89%	Border to Coast	568,025	18.85%

13.e Stock Lending

The Fund did not undertake any stock lending during 2021/2022.

14) Fair Value – Basis of Valuation

The basis of the valuation of each class of investment asset is set out below. There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year. All assets have been valued using fair value.

Asset Type	Level	Valuation Basis	Observable And Unobservable Inputs	Key Sensitivities
Market quoted Investments	1	Published bid market price ruling on the final day of the accounting period	Not required	Not required
Cash balances, money market funds and investment income due but not yet paid	1	Expected maturity date of less than two months, therefore, Fair Value is the carrying value of these assets and liabilities	Not required	Not required
Non-investment current assets and current liabilities (carried at Amortised cost)	1	Short-term transactions and high degree of certainty of settlement value. Fair Value is carrying value at the year-end date	Not required	Not required
Pooled investments – overseas unit trusts	2	Closing bid price where bid and offer prices are published. Closing single price where single price published	NAV – based principal set on a forward pricing basis	Not required
Pooled investments – property funds quoted	2	Closing bid price where bid and offer prices are published. Closing single price where single price published	NAV – based principal set on a forward pricing basis	Not required
Pooled investments – property funds unquoted	3	Closing bid price where bid and offer prices are published. Closing single price where single price published	NAV – based principal set on a forward pricing basis	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the Pension Fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cash flows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts

Asset Type	Level	Valuation Basis	Observable And Unobservable Inputs	Key Sensitivities
Alternative Assets (Private Equity, Private Credit and Infrastructure)	3	Comparable valuation of similar companies in accordance with *International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines (2018)*	EBITDA Multiple Revenue Multiple discount for lack of marketability control premium	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the Pension Fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cash flows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts

Sensitivity of Assets Valued at Level 3

Based on an analysis of historical data, current market trends, information supplied by the investment managers and the Pension Fund policy documents, the Fund has determined that the valuation methods described below are likely to be accurate to within the following range, and has set out below the consequent potential impact on the closing value of investments held at 31 March 2022.

14a. Level 3 Assets*	Valuation Range	Value at 31 March 2022	Valuation Increase	Valuation Decrease
	+/-	£000	£000	£000
Property	10	95,090	104,599	85,581
Private Equity	15	48,767	56,082	41,452
Infrastructure	15	141,144	162,316	119,972
Private Credit	15	27,335	31,435	23,235
		312,336	**354,432**	**270,240**

**Note this table excludes equity holdings in Border to Coast as there is no market for these shares.*

Fair Value Hierarchy

Asset and liability valuations have been classified into three levels, according to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values. Transfers between levels are recognised in the year in which they occur.

Level 1

Assets and liabilities at Level 1 are those where the fair values are derived from unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities. Investments classified as level 1 comprise of quoted equities, quoted fixed securities, quoted index linked securities and unit trusts.

Level 2

Assets and liabilities at Level 2 are those where quoted market prices are not available; for example, where an instrument is traded in a market that is not considered to be active, or where valuation techniques are used to determine fair value.

Level 3

Assets and liabilities at Level 3 are those where at least one input that could have a significant effect on the instrument's valuation is not based on observable market data.

The following table provides the analysis of the financial assets and liabilities of the Pension Fund grouped into Levels 1 to 3, based on the level at which the fair value is observable.

Table 14.b Analysis of Asset Levels	31 March 2022			
	Quoted Market Price Level 1 £000	Using Observable Inputs Level 2 £000	With Significant Unobservable inputs Level 3 £000	Total £000
Financial Assets				
Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss	0	2,600,117	313,519	**2,913,636**
Financial assets at amortised cost	90,926			**90,926**
Total Financial Assets	**90,926**	**2,600,117**	**313,519**	**3,004,562**
Financial Liabilities				
Financial liabilities at fair value through profit and loss	0			0
Financial liabilities at amortised costs	-2,854			**-2,854**
Total financial liabilities	**-2,854**	**0**	**0**	**-2,854**
Net financial assets	**88,072**	**2,600,117**	**313,519**	**3,001,708**

	31 March 2021			
	Quoted Market Price Level 1 £000	Using Observable Inputs Level 2 £000	With Significant Unobservable inputs Level 3 £000	Total £000
Financial Assets				
Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss	0	2,478,393	185,720	**2,664,113**
Financial assets at amortised cost	85,347			**85,347**
Total Financial Assets	**85,347**	**2,478,393**	**185,720**	**2,749,460**
Financial Liabilities				
Financial liabilities at fair value through profit and loss	0			0
Financial liabilities at amortised costs	-2,156			**-2,156**
Total financial liabilities	**-2,156**	**0**	**0**	**-2,156**
Net financial assets	**83,191**	**2,478,393**	**185,720**	**2,747,305**

The following assets have been carried at cost. (£1,182,000 in 2020/21):

Table 14.c Share Capital Values at 31 March 2022	Level 1 £000	Level 2 £000	Level 3 £000	Total £000
Share Capital in Border to Coast Pool	0	0	1,182	1,182
Investments held at cost	**0**	**0**	**1,182**	**1,182**

Reconciliation of Fair Value Measurement within Level 3

Table 14.d Reconciliation of Fair Value Measurement within Level 3

	2020/2021	Transfer Into Level 3	Transfer Out of Level 3	Purchases	Sales	Unrealised Gains/ Losses	Realised Gains/ Losses	2021/2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Private Equity	28,797	0	0	7,234	-7,481	17,984	2,233	48,767
Infrastructure	53,838	0	0	94,601	-15,112	7,798	19	141,144
Property	98,737	0	-15,220		-9,322	19,683	1,212	95,090
Private Credit	3,166	0	0	22,969	-542	1,727	15	27,335
	184,538	**0**	**-15,220**	**124,804**	**-32,457**	**47,192**	**3,479**	**312,336**

15) Financial Instruments

Accounting policies describe how different asset classes of financial instruments are measured, and how income and expenses, including fair value gains and losses, are recognised. The following table analyses the carrying amounts of financial assets and liabilities by category and net assets statement heading.

2020/2021				2021/2022		
Fair Value Through profit & loss £000	Financial assets at amortised cost £000	Financial liabilities at amortised cost £000		Fair Value Through profit & loss £000	Financial assets at amortised cost £000	Financial liabilities at amortised cost £000
			Financial Assets			
1,182	0	0	Equities	1,182		
2,662,932	0	0	Managed & unitised funds	2,913,792		
0	83,066	0	Cash		88,841	
0	666	0	Other investment assets		125	
0	1,615	0	Debtors		622	
2,664,114	**85,347**	**0**		**2,914,974**	**89,588**	**0**
			Financial Liabilities			
0	0	0	Other investment liabilities	0		
0	0	-2,156	Creditors	0		-2,854
0	**0**	**-2,156**		**0**		**-2,854**
2,664,114	**85,347**	**-2,156**		**2,914,974**	**89,588**	**-2,854**

Net Gains and Losses on Financial Instruments

2020/2021 £000		2021/2022 £000
	Financial Assets	
454,619	Designated at fair value through profit and loss	229,992

The Fund has not entered into any financial guarantees that are required to be accounted for as financial instruments.

16) Nature of Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The Pension Fund's assets are predominantly managed by external investment managers appointed by the Pension Fund Committee. Each fund manager is required to invest the assets in accordance with the terms of a written Investment Management Agreement (IMA) or fund prospectus. The Pension Fund Committee has determined that the appointment of these managers is appropriate for the Fund and is in accordance with the Funds' Investment Strategy. The Committee receives regular reports from each of the managers on the nature of the investments made on the Fund's behalf and the associated risks.

The allocation of assets between various types of financial instruments is determined by the Committee, in line with the Investment Strategy Statement (ISS). Divergence from benchmark asset allocations and the composition of each portfolio is monitored by the Pension Fund Committee.

The Fund's investment activities expose it to the following risks from the use of financial instruments:

- Market risk
- Credit risk
- Liquidity risk

The nature and extent of the financial instruments employed by the Fund and the associated risks are discussed below. This note presents information on the Fund's exposure to each of the above risks and the Fund's policies and processes for managing those risks.

The Fund's ISS is formulated to identify the risks managed by investment managers, to set appropriate risk limits and to monitor adherence to those limits. The ISS is reviewed regularly to reflect changes in market conditions and the Fund's activities.

Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices, such as interest rates, foreign exchange rates and equity prices will affect the Fund's income or the value of its assets. The objective of market risk management is to control market risk exposures within acceptable parameters while optimising returns. The Fund has used manager and adviser information to help it identify market risks.

Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that interest rate fluctuations will cause the value of fixed interest securities to deviate from expectations. The Fund manages interest rate risk by:

- The use of specialist external investment managers to manage the Fund's cash and fixed interest assets.
- Ensuring asset allocations include a diversity of fixed interest investments with appropriate durations.

The Fund's direct exposure to interest rate risk, as at the period end, is shown in the table following. The table also shows the effect in the year on the net assets available to pay benefits of a +/- 100 basis points (bps) change in interest rates. Comparatives for the previous year are shown in the table below.

Table 16.a Exposure to Interest Rate Risk

Carrying value at 31/03/2021 £000	Change in year in net assets available to pay benefits 100 bps £000	Change in year in net assets available to pay benefits -100 bps £000	Asset type	Carrying value at 31/03/2022 £000	Change in year in net assets available to pay benefits +100 bps £000	Change in year in net assets available to pay benefits -100 bps £000
778,778	7,787	-7,787	Fixed interest securities	711,028	7,110	-7,110
83,066	831	-831	Cash & cash equivalents	90,180	902	-902
861,844	**8,618**	**-8,618**	**Total**	**801,208**	**8,012**	**-8,012**

NB. The Fund's direct exposure includes managed fund assets.

Currency Risk

Currency risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates. The Fund manages currency risk by instructing investment managers to use hedging techniques with foreign currencies.

The following table summarises the Fund's currency exposure as at 31 March 2022 and also shows the increase/decrease in the value of net assets available to pay benefits arising.
Using information available from investment advisers, investment managers, the Custodian and the Fund's policy documents, the Fund believes the following are reasonable.

Currency Risk by Asset Class

Table 16.b Exposure to Currency Risk

	2021/2022			
Asset Type	**Value £000**	**Change %**	**Value on Increase £000**	**Value on Decrease £000**
Overseas Equities	1,103,371	6.00%	1,169,574	1,037,169
Overseas Absolute Return	540,666	6.00%	573,106	508,226
Overseas Diversified Growth	315,350	6.00%	334,271	296,429
Overseas Alternatives	201,396	6.00%	213,479	189,312
Overseas Cash	23,512	6.00%	24,923	22,101
Total	**2,184,295**	6.00%	**2,315,353**	**2,053,237**

	2020/2021			
Asset Type	**Value £000**	**Change %**	**Value on Increase £000**	**Value on Decrease £000**
Overseas Equities	998,710	6.00%	1,058,632	938,787
Overseas Absolute Return	321,398	6.00%	340,681	302,114
Overseas Diversified Growth	406,794	6.00%	431,202	382,387
Overseas Alternatives	85,802	6.00%	90,950	80,653
Overseas Cash	10,449	6.00%	11,076	9,822
Total	**1,823,153**	**6.00%**	**1,932,542**	**1,713,763**

Market Price Risk

Market price risk is the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate as a result of changes in market prices, whether from factors specific to individual assets or those applying to the market as a whole.

As the Fund's assets are valued at market value, with changes to that value reflected in the Fund account, all changes in market conditions will directly affect the Fund's income.

- The Fund manages market risk by the application of the following principles:
- Ensuring a diversity of exposures to different financial markets and market sectors

By ensuring that investments have the sufficient liquidity to enable the appropriate response to changing market conditions.

Sensitivity analysis

Following analysis of historical data and expected investment return movement during the financial year, and using information available from investment advisers, investment managers, the Custodian, and the Fund's policy documents, the Fund believes the following is reasonable for the 2021/2022 reporting period.

Asset Type	% Change
UK Equities	14.0%
Overseas Equities	14.0%
Property	15.0%
Absolute Return Bonds	10.0%
Diversified Growth Funds	12.0%
Gilts	10.0%
Private Equity	25.0%
Private Credit	15.0%
Infrastructure	25.0%
Cash	0.5%

If the market price of the Fund's investments increased/decreased in line with the above, the change in the net assets available to pay benefits would have been as shown in the following table. Comparatives for the previous year are also shown.

Table 16.c Exposure to market fluctuations

	2021/2022			
Asset Type	**Value £000**	**Change %**	**Value on Increase £000**	**Value on Decrease £000**
UK Equities	506,002	14.00	576,843	435,162
Overseas Equities	1,103,372	14.00	1,257,844	948,898
Property	230,116	15.00	264,633	195,599
Absolute Return Bonds	540,666	10.00	594,733	486,600
Diversified Growth Funds	315,350	12.00	353,192	277,508
Private Equity	48,767	25.00	60,959	36,575
Private Credit	27,335	15.00	31,436	23,235
Infrastructure	141,144	25.00	176,430	105,858
Cash	89,880	1.00	90,631	89,729
Total	**3,002,632**		**3,406,701**	**2,599,164**

Asset Type	Value £000	Change %	Value on Increase £000	Value on Decrease £000
	2020/2021			
UK Equities	461,624	14.0%	526,252	396,997
Overseas Equities	998,710	14.0%	1,138,529	858,890
Property	194,969	15.0%	224,214	165,723
Absolute Return Bonds	321,398	10.0%	353,537	289,258
Diversified Growth Funds	406,794	12.0%	455,610	357,979
Gilts	193,635	10.0%	212,998	174,271
Private Equity	28,797	25.0%	35,996	21,598
Private Credit	3,166	15.0%	3,641	2,691
Infrastructure	53,838	25.0%	67,298	40,379
Cash	83,066	0.5%	83,481	82,651
Total	**2,745,997**		**3,101,557**	**2,390,437**

The % change for Total Assets includes the impact of correlation across asset classes.

Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk that a counterparty to a transaction involving a financial instrument will fail to discharge an obligation or commitment it has entered into with the Fund.

The net market value of the Fund's assets, as shown in the Net Assets Statement, represents the Fund's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to those assets. The Fund does not have any significant exposure to any individual counter-party or industry. Credit risk is monitored through ongoing reviews of the investment managers' activity.

Apart from a small number of outstanding tax reclaims represented by the provision for tax reclaims over 1 year in the Net Assets Statement, the Fund has no assets that are past due or impaired.

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Fund will not be able to meet its financial obligations when they fall due. The Fund's liquidity is monitored on a daily basis and the Fund seeks to ensure that it will always have sufficient liquid funds to pay benefits to members and liabilities when due, without incurring unacceptable losses or risking damage to the Fund's reputation.

The Fund manages liquidity risk by:

- giving careful consideration to the anticipated income and expenditure required for the administration of the Fund and the payment of benefits and by maintaining in-house managed cash balances sufficient to meet day-to-day cash flows.

- Maintaining a significant proportion of the Fund being held in highly liquid investments such as actively traded equities and unit trusts. The level 1 highly liquid funds total £73 million representing 2.5% of the Fund.

17) Funding Arrangements – Actuary Statement

The Fund's Actuary has provided the following Statement on the valuation of the retirement benefits as at 31 March 2022 and the assumptions made in the valuation.

Introduction

The last full triennial valuation of the Bedfordshire Pension Fund (the Fund) was carried out as at 31 March 2022 as required under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (the Regulations) and in accordance with the Funding Strategy Statement of the Fund. The results were published in the triennial valuation report dated 31 March 2023.

Asset value and funding level

The results for the Fund at 31 March 2022 were as follows:

- The smoothed value of the Fund's assets for funding purposes as at 31 March 2022 was £2.95bn.
- The Fund had a funding level of 92% i.e. the value of assets for funding purposes was 92% of the value that they would have needed to be to pay for the benefits accrued to that date, based on the assumptions used. This corresponded to a deficit of £273m.

Contribution rates

The employer contributions rates, in addition to those paid by the members of the Fund, are set to be sufficient to meet:

- the annual accrual of benefits allowing for future pay increases and increases to pensions in payment when these fall due;
- plus an amount to reflect each participating employer's notional share of the Fund's assets compared with 100% of their liabilities in the Fund, in respect of service to the valuation date.

The primary rate of contribution on a whole Fund level was 19.6% of payroll p.a. The primary rate as defined by Regulation 62(5) is the employer's share of the cost of benefits accruing in each of the three years beginning 1 April 2023.

In addition each employer pays a secondary contribution as required under Regulation 62(7) that when combined with the primary rate results in the minimum total contributions. This secondary rate is based on their particular circumstances and so individual adjustments are made for each employer.

Details of each employer's contribution rate are contained in the Rates and Adjustments Certificate in the triennial valuation report.

Assumptions

The key assumptions used to value the liabilities at 31 March 2022 are summarised below:

Assumptions	Assumptions used for the 2022 valuation
Financial assumptions	
Market date	31 March 2022
CPI inflation	2.9% p.a.
Long-term salary increases	3.9% p.a.
Discount rate	4.6% p.a.
Demographic assumptions	
Post-retirement mortality	
Base tables	Based on Club Vita analysis
Projection model	CMI 2021
Long-term rate of improvement	1.25% p.a.
Smoothing parameter	7.0
Initial addition to improvements	0% p.a.
2020/21 weighting parameter	5%

Full details of the demographic and other assumptions adopted as well as details of the derivation of the financial assumptions used can be found in the 2022 valuation report.

Updated position since the 2022 valuation

Assets

Returns over the year to 31 March 2023 have been low, particularly in the first quarter. As at 31 March 2023, in market value terms, the Fund assets were less than they were projected to be at the previous valuation.

Liabilities

The key assumption which has the greatest impact on the valuation of liabilities is the real discount rate (the discount rate relative to CPI inflation) – the higher the real discount rate the lower the value of liabilities. As at 31 March 2023, the real discount rate is estimated to be higher than at the 2022 valuation due to a reduction in the long term rate of inflation from 31 March 2023 onwards.

The value of liabilities will also have increased due to the accrual of new benefits net of benefits paid.

In addition, benefits will increase by 10.1% in line with the 2023 LGPS pension increase which is higher than the pension increase assumed at the previous valuation.

Overall position

On balance, we estimate that the funding position has slightly weakened when compared on a consistent basis to 31 March 2022.

The change in the real discount rate since 31 March 2022 is likely to place a lower value on the cost of future accrual which results in a lower primary contribution rate. The impact on secondary contributions will vary by employer.

However, the next formal valuation will be carried out as at 31 March 2025 with new contribution rates set from 1 April 2026. As part of the 2025 valuation, the Fund and us as the Fund Actuary will work together in setting the assumptions for the valuation.

Graeme Muir FFA
Partner, Barnett Waddingham LLP

17a) Actuarial Present Value of promised Retirement Benefits

In addition to the triennial funding valuation, the fund's actuary also undertakes a valuation of the pension fund liabilities on an IAS 19 basis every year using the same base data as the funding valuation rolled forward to the current financial year but taking account of changes in membership numbers and updating assumptions to the current year.

The actuarial (IAS19) present value of promised retirement benefits of the Pension Fund are set out in the following table. This reflects the underlying commitment of the Pension Fund in the long term to pay retirement benefits to its active (employee members), deferred and pensioner members. The liabilities include an allowance for the potential impact of the McCloud judgement. The value of the Funds Assets in the table below is the net assets as per the pension fund's Net Asset Statement.

31 March 2021 £000		31 March 2022 £000
(5,238,170)	Present Value of the defined benefit obligation	(4,858,955)
2,756,657	Fair Value of Fund Assets (bid value)	3,012,906
(2,481,513)	**Net Liability**	**(1,846,049)**

In order to assess the value of the benefits on this basis, the actuary has updated the actuarial assumptions (set out below) from those used for funding purposes (see note 17), in particular IAS19 stipulates a discount rate rather than a rate that reflects market rates.. The actuary has also used valued ill health and death benefits in line with IAS19.

2020/2021 % pa		2021/2022 % pa
	Assumptions	
2.00	Discount Rate	2.60
2.85	Pension Increases	3.20
3.85	Salary Increases	4.20

The sensitivity of the assumptions on the value of liabilities have been calculated in the tables below:

Sensitivity to:	**£000 +0.1%**	**£000 -0.1%**
Discount Rate	(4,754,515)	(4,966,801)
Long Term Salary Increases	(4,865,617)	(4,852,346)
Pension Increases and deferred revaluation	(4,959,397)	(4,761,623)
	+1 year	**-1 year**
Life Expectancy Assumptions	(5,098,082)	(4,631,921)

18) Long Term Debtors

As at 31 March 2022 the Fund had no long term debtors (2020/21 nil).

19) Current Assets

2020/2021 £000	Current Assets	2021/2022 £000
1,422	Contributions due from Administering Authority	1,657
8,597	Contributions due from other scheme employers	10,119
0	Civil Service Pensions Scheme	0
0	Bulk Transfer due from other Local Authorities	0
950	Other	45
10,969		**11,821**
54,406	Cash	49,711
65,375	Current Assets	**61,532**

The cash balance of £61.5 million is held in the Fund's own bank accounts. Cash held by the Fund's managers is included in cash deposits in Note 12.2 above.

20) Current Liabilities

2020/2021 £000	Current Liabilities	2021/2022 £000
184	Administration costs etc. due to Administering Authority	290
735	Investment managers' fees	2,211
30	Other professional fees	145
0	AVCs in transit	4
0	Death grants	0
1,207	Other	204
2,156		**2,854**
0	Provision for Tax Reclaims over 1 Year	0
2,156	Current liabilities	**2,854**

21) Additional Voluntary Contributions

Scheme members have the option to make additional voluntary contributions to enhance their pension benefits. These contributions are invested separately from the Fund's assets with Prudential and the Standard Life Assurance Company.

The financial statement from the Prudential for 2021/2022 was not available in time for the publication of the Statement of Accounts. The figures for Prudential include in the tables below have been estimated based on the previous three years' statements.

2020/2021 £000	Additional Voluntary Contributions	2021/2022 £000
4,964	Value at 1 April	**5,381**
	Income	
811	Contributions received	**794**
	Expenditure	
-930	Retirements	-215
-19	Transfers values paid	-4
-949		**-219**
555	Change in market value	253
5,381	Value at 31 March	**6,209**

In accordance with Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016, additional voluntary contributions are excluded from the Fund Account and Net Assets Statement.

Breakdown of AVC Providers	Prudential	Standard Life	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Value at 1 April 2021	**4,586**	**795**	**5,381**
Income			
Contributions received	788	6	794
Expenditure			
Retirements	-144	-71	-215
Transfers values paid	0	-4	-4
	-144	**-75**	**-219**
Change in market value	217	36	253
Value at 31 March 2022	**5,447**	**762**	**6,209**

22) Related Party Transactions

Pension Fund Committee members and relevant senior officers are required to declare any interests in related party transactions and relationships between themselves, and their related parties, and the Pension Fund. Some of the Committee members also act as councillors or board members of the Fund's scheduled or admitted bodies, who maintain a conventional employer relationship with the Fund. Committee Members are also required to declare any company directorships. These are listed below but do not include representation of their respective bodies as Committee members:

- Councillor McMurdo is a member of the Bedfordshire & River Ivel Drainage Board.
- A member of Councillor McMurdo's immediate family is an employee of the Sharnbrook Academy Federation.
- Councillor Sawyer is a Director at Bedford Consulting Limited.
- Councillor Wenham is a Director at Raynsford Church of England Academy, Southeast Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership Limited, Henlow Pavilion Management Limited and Rasear Limited.
- Councillor Nicholls is a Non-executive Director of London Luton Airport Limited (Luton Rising).

There were no material transactions between members and officers and the Fund during 2021/2022.

The only material related party transactions during 2021/2022 were in respect of contributions paid by the employing bodies into the Fund. See Note 7.

Amounts owed to and from the administering authority can be seen in Notes 19 and 20.

The disclosures required by the above legislation can be found in the main accounts of Bedford Borough Council.

Administration and investment management costs include charges by Bedford Borough Council for providing services in its role as administering authority. For 2021/2022 these amounted to £1.4 million (2020/2021 £1.2 million).

The Administration team provide the legacy payroll for Teachers pension added years.

The Fund pays compensatory added years benefits on behalf of some of its employers. The costs of these are invoiced to the employer. In 2021/2022, £2.9 million (2020/2021 £3.0 million) was paid and recovered from employers.

Key Management Personnel

There are two senior officers of Bedford Borough Council involved in the financial management of Bedfordshire Pension Fund. They are the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance), (The Fund Administrator) and the Chief Officer for Bedfordshire Pension Fund. Both of these officers charge a proportion of their time to the Pension Fund as part of Bedford Borough Council's role as administering authority. In 2021/2022, their remuneration was as follows:

2020/2021 £000		2021/2022 £000
69	Short-term benefits	108
11	Post-employment benefits	19
80		**127**

23) Contingent Liabilities and Contractual Commitments

There were no material contingent liabilities as at 31 March 2022. But there were outstanding capital commitments to investment vehicles of up to £362.9 million (31 March 2021: £171.6 million). These commitments relate to outstanding call payments (including recallable distributions) due on unquoted investments in infrastructure £209.0 million; private equity £41.0 million; real assets £4.8 million; and private debt £108.1 million. The amounts drawn down by the managers are irregular in both size and timing over typical periods of up to 6 years from the date of the original commitments.

BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Annual Governance Statement

2021/2022

Executive Summary

The Annual Governance Statement is a statutory document, which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively. Regulation 6 (1) of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS reports publicly on the effectiveness of governance and internal control arrangements and how the Council has complied with its Local Code of Corporate Governance, including how it monitors effectiveness. The Governance Framework has been in place at Bedford Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual statement of accounts.

Bedford Borough Council is committed to enhancing Bedford Borough as a place where people, communities and businesses can grow and realise their potential. This commitment was set out in the Council's **Corporate Plan 2017-2021**, extended to 2022, now updated by the **Corporate Plan 2022-2026**, which describes how the Council will meet the challenges ahead and make the most of opportunities. To be successful the Council must have a solid foundation of good governance and sound financial management. The Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance ensures that we are doing the right things, in the right way, in line with our values. The Code is supported by a Governance Framework that sets out how and what the Council will seek to obtain assurance on. A copy of the Council's **Local Code of Corporate Governance** and **Governance Framework** are available on our website.

Approval of the Annual Governance Statement

The Mayor and Chief Executive both recognise the importance of having a solid foundation of good governance and sound financial management. We confirm we have been advised of the implications of the review by Senior Management and the Audit Committee and are satisfied that the steps outlined in this document will address the areas for improvement. Through the actions referred to in the Action Plan on page 20, we propose over the coming year to address the issues that have been identified, with a view to further enhancing our governance arrangements. These steps will identify improvements that are needed and we will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

Signed on behalf of Bedford Borough Council:

Elected Mayor
December 2022

Chief Executive
December 2022

Introduction

Bedford Borough Council is a Unitary Authority with a directly elected Mayor. The present Mayor was re-elected in May 2019 for a four-year term. The next Council elections will take place in May 2023. The Mayor has executive powers and selects some councillors to be on his Executive. Each Executive member takes on a portfolio of responsibilities for particular service areas.

The Council elects 40 councillors for a four-year term to represent the 27 local wards across urban and rural parts of Bedford Borough. Across the area of Bedford Borough, there are also 47 parish and town councils. Following the elections in May 2019, the make-up of the Council including the Elected Mayor is as follows:

- 15 Liberal Democrats
- 11 Labour
- 12 Conservatives
- 2 Green Party
- 1 Independent

The Council's gross expenditure budget for 2021/2022 was £319.5 million of which £176.9 million funding is the Dedicated Schools Grant. The net Budget for 2021/2022 was £121.8 million, from the following sources:

- Government Grant - £5.9 million
- Business Rates - £20.5 million
- Council Tax - £95.4 million

During 2021/2022, the Council agreed the budget for 2022/2023 on 2 February 2022, requiring savings of £4.511 million.

The Council's Chief Executive of twelve years retired in April 2021. The Council had interim arrangements to cover the position from April 2021 to September 2021. A permanent Chief Executive started in October 2021.

A significant restructure was implemented in 2021 and these changes are currently being embedded. New ways of working will be a continual process over the current financial year and will build on the existing work of the transformation programme, recognising the continued tough financial challenge, not least the recent impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and significant legislative changes.

During 2021/2022, the Council continued to meet the challenges of the pandemic. Continuing to provide support and care for the most vulnerable residents and a first-class service for all, remains the Council's priority and this will inform decisions going forward.

The Performance Management Framework has continued to operate effectively during the year. The outturn against the last year of the Corporate Plan 2017-2022 was reported to Executive on 19 October 2022 in the Annual Report for 2021/2022. Full Council agreed a new Corporate Plan for 2022-26, on 16 March 2022.

As part of the 'Together Bedford Borough' transformation programme, the Council completed a number of service re-designs during the year; aiming to better meet the needs of residents and businesses.

The Annual Governance Statement assesses the governance arrangements in place during 2021/2022.

Code of Corporate Governance

Scope of Responsibility

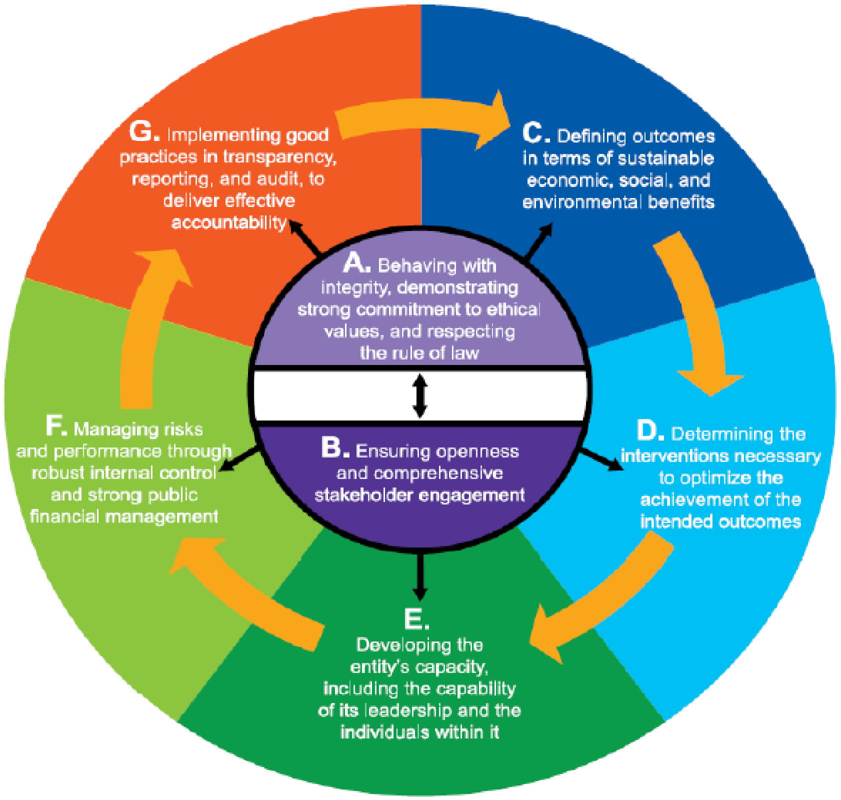
Bedford Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money allocated to it is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively in accordance with the Local Government Act 1999 and to also make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised. In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

Members and senior officers are responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of the Council's affairs and the stewardship of the resources at its disposal. The Management Team (MT), which comprises the Chief Executive and Directors supported by Statutory Officers, manages this task: Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.

The Council has adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA), and Society of Local Authority Chief Executive's (SOLACE) Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Guidance Notes for English Authorities 2016. The Annual Governance Statement explains how the Council has complied with its Local Code and the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (amended 2021), which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.

The Local Code of Corporate Governance was updated during 2021/2022, approved by the Audit Committee in March 2022, and was ratified at Full Council on 13 July 2022.

The Council's <u>Local Code of Corporate Governance</u> sets out the principles of good governance and describes the arrangements the Council has put in place to meet each of these principles:



Governance Framework

Annual Governance Statement
(Meets Accounts & Audit Regulations and is published with Annual Accounts)

Audit Committee
(Challenge the draft AGS and supporting evidence. Approve AGS)

Chief Executive & Management Team
(Challenge the draft AGS and supporting evidence)

Chief Officer for Internal Audit
(Challenge Governance Statement etc.)

Section 151 Officer (CFO)
(Promote & Deliver Good Financial Management)

Monitoring Officer
(Legal & Ethical Assurance)

Code of Corporate Governance
(The Council's commitment to good governance based on the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE framework)

- Constitution
- Code of Conduct
- Scheme of Delegation
- Complaints Process
- Equality & Diversity
- Standards Committee
- Complaint Summary Reports
- Public Consultations
- Local Government Ombudsman Report

- Corporate Plan
- Policies & Procedures
- Business Planning
- Performance Results
- Manager's Assurance Statements
- Monthly/Quarterly Performance Reports
- Committee Reports
- Annual Audit Opinion
- Scrutiny Committee

- Financial Management Framework
- Budget Monitoring Process
- Compliance with CIPFA Guidelines
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Treasury & Investment Strategy
- Capital Strategy
- Statement of Accounts
- Annual Audit Report
- Financial & Contract Procedure Rules

- HR Policies Pay Policy
- Risk Management
- Corporate Risk Register
- Service Risk Register
- Personal Appraisals
- Bribery, Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

The System of Internal Control

The governance framework described above comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the Council directs and controls its activities, and how it leads, engages with and accounts to the community it serves. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The Council's governance framework addresses the way the Council is controlled and managed, both strategically and operationally, and how it will deliver its services. The Framework recognises that the Council's business focuses on its corporate priorities and seeks to facilitate delivery to local communities of the goals set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Council has designed systems and processes to regulate, monitor and control its activities in order to achieve its vision and objectives.

The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework; designed to manage risk to an acceptable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve the Council's aims and objectives, but it seeks to provide reasonable rather than absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The system of internal control is designed to identify, prioritise and manage the risks to the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives.

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. This review is informed by:

- The work of the Corporate Governance Working Group, who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- The Annual Internal Audit Assurance opinion, as provided by the Chief Officer for Internal Audit. The Audit Committee relies on the work of Internal Audit to ensure there is an adequate and effective internal control environment. This has remained a key source of assurance for the Council in 2021/2022;
- Comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates; and
- The Audit Committee's work programme, which reviews that the elements of the governance framework are in place, to ensure compliance with the principles. An annual report for the full calendar year 2021/2022 was presented to Full Council on 12 October 2022.

As part of the review of effectiveness, the Council's senior managers have completed assurance statements for each of their areas of control, acknowledging responsibility for risk management and internal control, and certifying compliance with the arrangements in place throughout 2021/2022. These assurance arrangements are consistent with the Governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019).

The assurance statements provided by the Council's senior managers identified the following successes:

- The implementation of new software (LiquidLogic) for recording and managing case information, and for making payments in relation to Adults and Childrens Social Care, has improved reporting mechanisms considerably;
- Partnership working has improved during the pandemic. The acute pressure faced by organisations has brought us closer together; and
- Ofsted reviewed the Council's Childrens Services November 2021, and the outcome was 'Good' in all four areas reviewed.

A number of **governance issues and weaknesses** were also identified:

- **Contracts register and contract monitoring**: Service areas have highlighted weaknesses in monitoring, management and documentation of contracts. There are examples where services areas do not have a complete list of contracts they manage, instances of expenditure with no formal contract in place, and being unable to locate original signed contracts either in the contracts register or in the relevant service area, particularly in the case of older contracts. This is consistent with the findings of external and internal audit work in 2021/2022. Room for improvement in contract monitoring and management was also highlighted in the 2020/2021 AGS action plan. The Strategic Commissioning and Procurement team are working with service areas to reconcile contracts within services to the Council's procurement system (In-tend) to ensure all contracts are held in one single repository. Guidance on entering contracts onto the procurement system, and contract management training is also being developed. A review of Strategic Commissioning and Procurement arrangements has been included in the Internal Audit Plan for 2022/2023 and this will include a review of the management of contract documentation and how expenditure is managed and reviewed against contracts.
- **Recruitment**: Partly compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic and a wider issue in the public sector, a shortage of suitably skilled and qualified staff meant recruitment was a challenge for much of the year, particularly in adults' social care, transport, the planning service and HR. This is anticipated to continue in 2022/2023. A recruitment and retention strategy is in development, and Personnel services have prioritised a number of actions to address immediate recruitment challenges. The external review of the Council's planning service, by the Planning Advisory Service, also acknowledged recruitment difficulties. Temporary staff have been appointed to the vacant posts within the Development Management Team. Resources have been agreed to fund additional posts within the service and re-grade others, and recruitment is underway.
- **Capacity**: The Council has provided Covid-19 response and recovery, business as usual and responded to a number of significant legislative changes such as the Integrated Care System. Some areas have identified a lack of capacity, particularly at managerial level. Delivery of Transformation and the Operating Model has reduced managerial and team leader posts, and transferred some activities from central support services such as HR and Finance. Capacity and resilience across all service areas now needs to be reviewed. Work is ongoing through the Operating Model workstream to review process, capability and spans of control to support efficiencies and capacity pressures.
- **Complaints**: The Council has seen an increase in the number of complaints and the complexity of issues it is responding to, again partly due to the pandemic and ongoing recruitment and capacity issues. It is likely that there will be an increase in decisions upheld by the Ombudsman for the year 2021/2022. Reinforcement of complaints good practice will be made at Management Team, Directorate Senior Leadership Team and team meetings. A refresh of complaint policies, procedures and guidance is underway.

Whilst the assurances mentioned above have been obtained from senior managers, to support the conclusion that the Council's governance arrangements are adequate, it is important that the following specific assurances be considered to support this Annual Governance Statement:

Chief Executive

During 2021/2022, the Council had two interim Chief Executives and appointed a permanent Chief Executive in October 2021. The Chief Executive is responsible for the overall corporate and operational management of the Council. The Chief Executive has considered these responsibilities within the context of this Statement, and can confirm that the Council has proper arrangements in place for the overall operation and management of the Council. The Chief Executive has no significant concerns to report.

New arrangements have been put in place for a regular meeting between the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer so that any issues are addressed.

A significant restructure was implemented in 2021 and these changes are currently being embedded. New ways of working will be a continual process over the current financial year and will build on the existing work of the transformation programme, recognising the continued tough financial challenge, not least the recent impact of Covid-19 and significant legislative changes.

A feature of 2021/2022 has been the role of the Council in the Integrated Care Partnership and ensuring that there is appropriate governance and participation. Further implications will continue to develop.

Continuing to provide support and care for the most vulnerable residents and a first-class service for all, remains the Council's priority and this will inform decisions going forward. The Council will look at all areas of its business to ensure that it operates as efficiently as possible as the organisation continues to evolve and continues to meet the needs of local people. During 2022, the Council has taken on additional responsibilities in relation to Ukrainian Refugees.

The Council is also considering how a phased return to the workplace for staff could happen in the future, although the priority continues to be the safety of staff and members. During 2021/2022, most staff continued to work from home. The Council has developed a new Agile Working Policy and also reflected on the importance of wellbeing and supported a well-being champion programme.

The Council has adopted a new Corporate Plan and work is now underway to ensure that it is delivered.

Chief Finance Officer (Section 151)

The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) role at the Council is responsible for the development and maintenance of the Council's financial governance, risk and control frameworks, which ensure that financial decision-making, is both lawful and prudent. The CFO is also responsible, in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs.

The CFO has considered these responsibilities within the context of this Statement and can confirm that the Council's arrangements meet the requirement to be proper as set out in Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. Additionally, the Council complies with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in Local Government (2016) and the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting for 2021/2022. The CFO presented his annual report on the adequacy of the current arrangements for the proper financial administration of the Council, to the Audit Committee on 15 March 2022. This included a description of the key controls in place.

The governance arrangements and system of internal control aims to provide as much assurance as is reasonably possible (not absolute assurance) that assets are safeguarded, transactions are properly authorised and recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or can be detected promptly. In conjunction with his management team, the CFO has reviewed the governance and effectiveness of the systems of internal control, informed by:

- regular scrutiny of financial and other performance monitoring data;
- Internal audit reports on the systems of internal control; and
- self-assessment of the arrangements supporting the Annual Governance Statement.

The CFO is satisfied that internal control systems in operation during the year were adequate and effective although there is a need to embed the Adult Social Care Debt Board, strengthen processes for managing purchase cards, and to clarify data owner responsibilities for Agresso (the Council's financial management system). The CFO also highlighted the reduction in capacity in Finance, after the restructure in 2021, and the need to prioritise tasks at peak times, as a potential governance risk.

Full Council agreed the budget for 2022/2023 on 2 February 2022, requiring savings of £4.511 million to set a balanced budget. Financial performance is reported on a quarterly basis to Members.
While the Council has robust financial management arrangements, in the Medium Term Financial Strategy refresh presented to Full Council on 16 March 2022, there is a funding gap of £6.1 million in 2023/2024 and £5.6 million in 2024/2025, with a cumulative gap of £17 million by 2026/2027. These forecasts are based on a number of assumptions, the more significant of which relate to: Council Tax yield increases due to growth in dwelling numbers, a business rates baseline 're-set' resulting in a reduction in retained rates, uncertainty around the New Homes Bonus, and increased service pressures such as continued increase in demand for adult social care.

Funding the gap requires significant savings targets to be met. The Executive initially approved the Council's Transformation Programme on 28 October 2020 to meet the funding gap over the medium term. This has been updated as part of the 2022/2023 budget setting process. The plans for the delivery of the Programme are well under way with a number of key themes; efficient business processes harnessing the Council investment in technology, continued supplier engagement to explore new and more cost effective ways of procuring services, building on those changes that have arisen during the Covid-19 pandemic, such as greater agile working, and Directorate Service Proposals (DSPs) that look at what and how specific services are delivered.

Monitoring Officer

The Council's Monitoring Officer has a legal responsibility to look into matters of potential unlawfulness within the Council. The Monitoring Officer is required to report to the Council in any case where it appears that any proposal, decision or omission by the Council has given rise to or is likely to or would give rise to any contravention of any enactment, rule of law or code of practice or maladministration or injustice in accordance with Sections 5 and 5A of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Monitoring Officer has considered these responsibilities, within the context of this Statement, and has no significant concerns to report and has had no reason to submit a report in accordance with the above.

In 2021/2022, the Monitoring Officer continued her review of the efficiency and effectiveness of all arrangements relating to Council and Committee meetings, working groups, and the required officer support. The Standards Committee has monitored standards of conduct of Members and advised the Council on probity issues. Entries made in the Register of Members' Interests were reviewed by the Monitoring Officer and reported back to the Standards Committee.

The Monitoring Officer is satisfied that the Council has robust processes for decision-making but this can be strengthened further. During the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings were conducted remotely, to ensure the business of the Council could continue in accordance with the Virtual Meeting Regulations. There have been some ICT issues with accessibility of members and public to meetings, which have in the main been addressed, however, issues remain due to poor internet connections of individuals. Physical access is provided for all who wish to attend in person.

The Monitoring Officer does not have significant concerns regarding Member conduct. There have been a very small number of complaints alleging a breach of the Member Code of Conduct during the past year but this is increasing. Some may require further investigation. The Monitoring Officer is not overly concerned about an increase in complaints, because from experience, this is usually the case in an election year.

The AGS action plan for 2019/2020, included in the 2020/2021 AGS, highlighted that the Council's Constitution was being reviewed and updated, to take into account management restructures and to ensure that it is fit for purpose. This was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but is now in progress. The target date has been revised to 31 March 2023.

The Monitoring Officer had also previously highlighted the need for improvements to Information Governance, included in the 2019/2020 AGS action plan. The target date was also extended due to the pandemic, to 31 December 2021, and the action has now been completed. There is now an Information Governance Board in place that meets regularly. The Board is well attended by the relevant officers of the council. The role of the Board is to establish the long-term information governance strategy of the Council, in addition to monitoring progress and providing assurance that information risk is being properly assessed, controlled and mitigated.

Chief Officer for Internal Audit

In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards (PSIAS), the Chief Audit Executive (the Chief Officer for Internal Audit at the Council) is required to provide independent assurance and opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Councils' risk management and control framework, and through the internal audit service deliver an annual programme of risk based audit activity, including counter fraud and investigation activity and make recommendations for the improvement of the management of risk and control.

The Audit Committee approved the Internal Audit Plan for 2021/2022 in March 2021. The Chief Officer for Internal Audit is satisfied that sufficient work has been undertaken during 2021/2022 to draw a reasonable conclusion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's arrangements. The Chief Internal Auditor's annual report for 2021/2022, was presented to the Audit Committee on 29 June 2022, therefore providing the independent assurance that key risks (financial and non-financial) are adequately controlled and providing an opinion on the effectiveness of these arrangements. It should, however, be noted that all risks of failure cannot be eliminated, and the assurance given is therefore reasonable and not absolute.

During 2021/2022 Internal Audit completed its annual self-assessment against the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) 2013, revised in 2017. In the previous year, the Internal Audit service was externally reviewed against the PSIAS, by another Council's audit service, confirming substantial compliance. The results of the self-assessment were reported to the Audit Committee at its meeting in June 2022.

All key financial systems were audited in 2021/2022, and audit reports were provided to management and the outcomes reported to the Audit Committee. Outstanding high-risk recommendations relating to Adults Social Care Payments were reported to the Audit Committee during 2021/2022 and will continue to be monitored until they are resolved.

Internal Audit assessed the Council's corporate governance arrangements by measuring them against the requirements of the governance framework outlined in the CIPFA/SOLACE publication "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government", reporting the results to the Audit Committee.

This included an audit of the Council's Risk Management arrangements, which received a Substantial Audit opinion. The Risk Management Strategy was updated in November 2020, and reviewed on 9 June 2021 and 23 September 2022. The operational risk registers were all updated during 2021/2022.

The Strategic Risk Register was updated and approved by the Executive during 2021/2022 and monitored regularly by Management Team. Risks arising from the Covid-19 pandemic continued to be monitored by the Joint Executive and the Management Team, in a specific Covid-19 risk register.

The Covid-19 pandemic affected all of the 2021/2022 financial year. Central government introduced various financial support schemes, in the previous year, which were required to be administered by Local Authorities.

Given the large number and value of financial transactions involved, these financial support schemes introduced a heightened risk of fraud. Whilst Internal Audit carried out some specific targeted Covid-19 fraud work, this does not address all the potential risks of fraud posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Internal Audit team have remained alert to any Covid-19-specific risks in their day-to-day work, and have adjusted testing programmes to address the risks.

In terms of the Council's internal control framework the majority of the authorisation controls are electronic/system driven and Covid-19 did not impact on these in a significant way.

The Council is committed to the prevention and detection of fraud and has established a robust framework in this regard which includes:

- Anti-Fraud Strategy (November 2021)
- Fraud Risk Register (November 2021)
- Corporate Confidential Reporting Policy (June 2020)
- Bribery and Anti-Money Laundering Policies (March 2018)

The Chief Officer for Internal Audit attends Audit Group meetings with other Local Authorities, which share fraud intelligence, and the Council is a member of the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) receiving regular fraud alerts. The Council also participates in the bi-annual national Fraud Initiative (NFI) and the annual CIPFA Fraud Survey; the results of which are reported to the Audit Committee each year.

External Audit

In December 2021, the Council's external auditor (EY LLP) provided the Council with an unqualified opinion on the Council's 2020/2021 accounts, and their Auditor's Annual Report was received by the Audit Committee in March 2022. EY also concluded that the Council has effective arrangements to secure Value for Money. Whilst external audit did not identify any signifcant reporting issues, they did report that they had identified:

- Inadequate controls over the maintenance of the contracts register; and
- Weaknesses in controls over the existence of school equipment..

Other assurances

Corporate Plan and Transformation Programme

The process for reporting against the Corporate Plan has continued throughout 2021/2022, closely aligned to the delivery of the Transformation Programme. A monthly dashboard of high-level performance indicators is provided to the Management Team and Executive for review and intervention. Overview & Scrutiny Committees also review performance on a regular basis. The outturn for 2020/2021 against the Corporate Plan was reported to Executive on 15 September 2021; this included information on the successes and challenges throughout the year. The Performance Management Framework has continued to operate effectively during the year. The outturn for the last year of the Corporate Plan 2017-2021, extended to 2022, was reported to Executive on 19 October 2022.

Full Council agreed its new Corporate Plan, on 16 March 2022. A new performance framework to support this plan is in development with the first annual report due to the Executive in September 2023.

As part of the 'Together Bedford Borough' transformation programme, the Council completed a number of service re-designs during the year; aiming to better meet the needs of residents and businesses.

Full Council agreed the budget for 2022/2023 on 2 February 2022, requiring savings of £4.511 million.

Overview and Scrutiny

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee process has provided challenge and has monitored the Council's policies and performance on an ongoing basis.

During 2021/2022 the Members of O&S have continued to work together, adopting a non-political approach, developing and using their knowledge and expertise, and that of others to the best effect. An evidence-based approach to the O&S work has been instrumental in achieving good results.

There have been contributions, and input, from a range of stakeholders, including voluntary sector organisations, officers and Members of the Council. Key areas have been considered by relevant committees in relation to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on service areas and resources, and through the health overview and scrutiny committee a consideration of the health implications of Covid-19 and specifically mental health and well-being. There has also been joint scrutiny between overview and scrutiny committees to work collaboratively with issues crossing over one or more committee work programmes.

Audit Committee

In May 2022, CIPFA published its Position Statement on Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022, setting out the purpose, model, core functions and membership of the audit committee. The statement represents CIPFA's view on the audit committee practice and principles that local government bodies in the UK should adopt. CIPFA expects that all local government bodies should make their best efforts to adopt the principles, aiming for effective audit committee arrangements. This will enable those bodies to meet their statutory responsibilities for governance and internal control arrangements, financial management, financial reporting and internal audit.

The Audit Committee has carried out a self-assessment of its effectiveness in September 2022.

Member Training and Development

The Council is committed to supporting the development of all Elected Members to enable them to perform effectively in their current roles and to develop to meet future challenges. A comprehensive induction programme is offered to all new Members following their election to office including training on the Code of Conduct. Due to Covid-19 there has been no formal member training since February 2020 however, members have had training in how to use online meeting software. With the recent changes in the make-up of the Audit Committee, from May 2021, it was identified that the members would benefit from training on the role of the audit committee, and the skills required. This training was delivered in July 2021.

Staff Training and Development

Senior Officers' training and development needs are identified through the Council's Performance Development Review system. The Chief Executive and Directors are also subject to an annual performance review by a member panel.

BBOLT staff learning & training website

Workforce Development have been working on developing ways to improve the staff learning experience. Through the launch of BBOLT, the Council's Learning & Training website, the Council now offers an innovative approach to satisfy the learning needs of its agile workforce. BBOLT is the place to for staff to go to for staff digital and classroom training needs, including e-learning and booking virtual/face-to-face classroom training.

Stakeholder Engagement

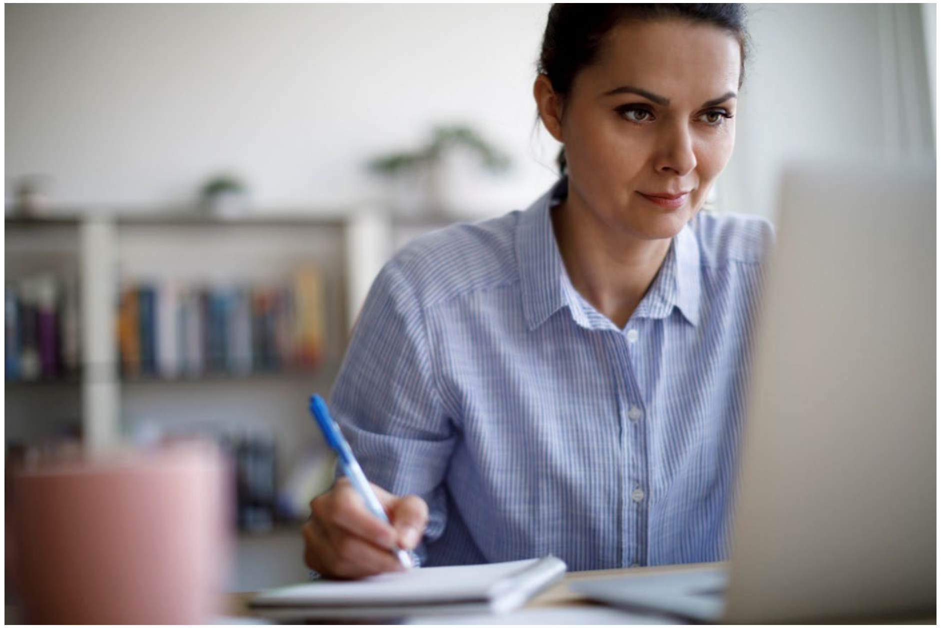
To provide services that are best suited to its customers, the Council listens to its citizens and stakeholders. Consultation around an issue helps tailor services, and meet the needs of the community. Consultation helps garner views and preferences, help understand possible unintended consequences of a policy or decision, or to get views on implementing change. This ensures that decisions and policies are made from a strong evidence base.

During 2021/2022, the following key public consultations were conducted:

- Public Spaces Protection Order Consultation
- Budget 2022 Consultation
- Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2022/2023
- Corporate Plan 2021 Consultation
- Domestic Abuse Strategy Consultation
- Statement of Gambling Licensing Principles 2021
- Bedford Borough Design Guide Scoping Consultation
- Local Plan 2040
- Bus Travel Consultation
- Draft recommendations for new ward boundaries across Bedford Borough Council - Local Government Boundary Commission
- East West Rail
- Moving Traffic Offences
- Short Breaks

In 2021/2022, the Council responded to 411 complaints at stage 1 and 67 complaints at stage 2 of our Corporate Complaints Procedure. Additionally, 16 complaints were addressed via our Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure and 21 were addressed via our Children's Social Care Complaints Procedure. In total 81.4% of the complaints responded to within the prescribed timescales. The Council identified some learning outcomes from the complaints received and these have been incorporated into changes in service provision.

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Annual Review Letter for 2021/2022 was presented to Executive on 23 September 2023. The LGSCO recorded 47 decisions/outcomes during 2021/2022 against this Council. Eight were upheld, compared to five in 2020/2021.



CIPFA Financial Budget Monitoring Review

The Council has enhanced the robustness of budget management processes, to enable more informed resource management decisions. The Council engaged CIPFA to work with the Finance Team to develop Budget Manager training focusing on principles and best practice and how this can be put into practice in terms of the Council's Financial Management system. Training was delayed after changing priorities due to the Covid-19 pandemic but completed in May 2021.

Training for budget managers to complete their own forecasts in Agresso, was developed and delivered by the Finance team in May 2021, with top-up training available monthly. The new way of working enables all Budget Holders to take more responsibility for their own forecasts, with support and challenge from Finance, enabling Finance to refocus their time and add value through horizon scanning and strategic planning. The breadth and inclusivity of the discussions at Budget Monitoring meetings has improved in 2021/2022, with Budget Holders more informed and able to give more insight into their budgets and forecasts.

The Council has invested a lot of time in ensuring it is fully compliant with Making Tax Digital, which came into effect on 1 April 2022. Financial processes now enable information to flow without manual intervention from the initial IT system entry to the financial system, connecting the Council's systems efficiently. The opportunity was taken to improve all financial information flows into Agresso. This also reduces error and time.

CIPFA Financial Management Code

The CIPFA Financial Management Code translates the principles of good financial management into a series of financial standards that comprise leadership and accountability, governance and financial management, medium term financial planning to inform and ensure financial resilience, monitoring financial performance to address emerging issues through to financial reporting. Taken together these financial management standards underpin the effective governance of the use and control of resources utilised by the Council in pursuance of its stated objectives.

2021/2022 was the first full year of compliance. The Council has reviewed, evaluated and concluded that it complies with the requirements of the Financial Management Code. Most statements are 'Green' but there are four 'Amber'-rated statements reflecting opportunities for strengthening existing practice and/or ensuring that existing practice is embedded across the Council. There are no 'Red' statements, or areas of non-compliance. The full report on compliance with the Code went to Audit Committee in March 2022 as part of the Chief Finance Officer's report on the financial administration of the Council.

External Review

OFSTED
In November 2021, Bedford Borough's Childrens Services were reviewed by Ofsted. The outcome was 'Good' in all four areas reviewed.

It was highlighted that Covid-19 has placed huge pressures on children and families in Bedford Borough. Despite this, services have adapted well to significant changes in demand. Leaders have made sure that support for children and families has continued. A relentless focus on strengthening practice has seen progress in most of the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection.

In an Ofsted inspection in July 2022, Foxgloves Children's Home was rated as 'Outstanding'.

Planning Advisory Service

In December 2021, at the Council's request, the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) of the Local Government Association undertook a further review of the Council's planning service.

The PAS review found that Bedford benefits from a core of experienced and dedicated Planning officers, with support from elected members. However, these officers were experiencing workload pressures and suffering from unmanageable caseloads due to a high number of vacancies.

PAS noted the impact this and other factors had had on performance, in particular the time taken to determine planning applications. They also noted that the Council was aware of these challenges and has recently provided additional resources to alleviate these pressures. There were six priority recommendations and twelve longer-term recommendations for improvement, and the Council has agreed action on these, through an Executive Decision (see page 22 for actions on recruitment).

Governance Conclusion, Governance Issues in 2021/2022 and Action Plan

This Statement is intended to provide reasonable assurance. It is stressed that no system of control can provide absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss. The governance framework has been in place at Bedford Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual statement of accounts.

Following the review of the Council's governance arrangements, by the Chief Officer for Internal Audit, five significant issues have been identified in 2021/2022 that need to be addressed to ensure continuous improvement in the Governance Framework. The Council will complete the following key actions to address these issues (more detail at pages 20-23):

- **Contracts register and contract monitoring** – strengthened arrangements for managing contracts and the contracts register;
- **Recruitment** – implementation of a new recruitment and retention strategy, and apprenticeship strategy;
- **Capacity** - review of process, capability and spans of control to support efficiencies and capacity pressures;
- **Complaints** - reinforcement of complaints good practice, and a refresh of complaint policies, procedures and guidance; and
- **Audit Committee** - a self-assessment of Audit Committee effectiveness using CIPFA best practice templates.

Ongoing actions from the 2020/2021 and 2019/2020 Annual Governance Statements:

- completion of the implementation of the new Management Structure (appointing a permanent Chief Officer for Legal, HR, and the Monitoring Officer) (2020/2021 AGS);
- wider training and support for Managers to enhance contract monitoring (2020/2021 AGS);
- review and update of the Council's Constitution, to take into account the Senior Management restructure and to ensure that it is fit for purpose (2019/2020 AGS); and
- implementation of the recommendations from the Ethics review (2019/2020 AGS).

The ongoing actions from the 2020/2021 and 2019/2020 Annual Governance Statements are included at the Action Plan at page 24-26 of this statement.

The aim is to address these weaknesses during the 2022/2023 financial year, by way of an action plan as tabled below, which will be subject to monitoring by the Corporate Governance Working Group and Audit Committee.

2021/2022 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

Issue No.	Issue Identified	Comments / Summary of Action Proposed
1 (21/22)	**Contracts Register and Contract Monitoring** Service areas have highlighted weaknesses in monitoring, management and documentation of contracts. There are examples where services areas do not have a complete list of contracts they manage, instances of expenditure with no formal contract in place, and being unable to locate original signed contracts either in the contracts register or in the relevant service area, particularly in the case of older contracts. This is consistent with the findings of external and internal audit work in 2021/2022. Room for improvement in contract monitoring and management was also highlighted in the 2020/2021 AGS action plan **(see next action)**.	**In Progress** The Strategic Commissioning and Procurement (SCP) team are working with service areas on an ongoing basis to reconcile contracts within services to the Council's procurement system (In-tend) ensuring ensure all contracts are held in one single repository. Training on use of the In-tend system is on BBOLT (the council's staff training portal) with a suite of standard contracts and guidance available on the SCP intranet resource page. Additionally a Procurement Dashboard tool has been developed which enables expenditure to be analysed in a number of useful ways including by service, account code, budget holder, and supplier and whether a contract is in place or not for the expenditure. This allows the potential of identification of where savings may be possible. A bespoke training session on contract management has been developed by the SCP team for presentation to senior managers at the Bedford Leaders meeting in October, from there a training module on contract management/ monitoring will be placed on BBOLT to ensure staff who are responsible for managing contracted spend have access to training. A review of Strategic Commissioning and Procurement arrangements has been included in the Internal Audit Plan for 2022/2023 and this will include a review of the management of contract documentation and how expenditure is managed and reviewed against contracts. **Responsible Officer:** Management Team and the Chief Officer for Commercial Services & Business Transformation **Target date: 31 March 2023** **cont.**

2021/2022 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN		
Issue No.	**Issue Identified**	**Comments / Summary of Action Proposed**
1 (21/22) cont.	**Contracts Register and Contract Monitoring – cont.**	
c/f 20/21	The Chief Finance Officer and the Enabling team has identified that there is a need to enhance contract monitoring in line with Contract Procedure Rules. **(Issue carried forward from 2020/2021 AGS)**	**Complete** The In-tend e-procurement system training is ongoing. Specific contract management training courses have been identified and are being implemented (see above). A suite of standard contracts and guidance is available on the SCP intranet resource page. Additionally work has now been completed on new procedures linking Agresso purchase orders with an In-Tend contract reference number to aid in-contract monitoring and spend management with third parties. The requirement to enter this contract reference number on purchase orders raised has been communicated in new procedures and will be monitored on a spot-check basis. The Council has also recently entered into a new contract with DocuSign for 3 years to support the drive towards better contract management in the Council through enabling e-signing and easier access to contract documentation. **Responsible Officer:** Management Team and the Chief Officer for Commercial Services & Business Transformation **Target date:** 31 December 2022

2021/2022 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN		
Issue No.	**Issue Identified**	**Comments / Summary of Action Proposed**
2 (21/22)	**Recruitment** Partly compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic and a wider issue in the public sector, a shortage of suitably skilled and qualified staff meant recruitment was a challenge for much of the year, particularly in adults' social care, transport, the planning service and HR. This is anticipated to continue in 2022/2023.	**In Progress** A recruitment and retention strategy is in development. Recruitment continues to be difficult across most professions and sectors. Personnel services have been carrying out work to prioritise and address immediate recruitment challenges, which include the following: • Introduced career grades for planning officers. Discussions are underway with Legal services to introduce something similar for Solicitors, as part of the 'grow our own' initiative; • Pay Benchmarking reviews have been undertaken and Market Rate Supplement payments introduced where necessary to help attract and recruit; • Development of a recruitment event day for certain job roles to simplify the application process and fast track recruitment, by interviewing on the day and taking up compliance checks; • Working with authorities in the region through the HR QSW Group to develop a regional recruitment site for Social Workers; • Creation of employee marketing videos; • Using agencies via the corporate agency contract for hard to fill permanent roles; • Reconfiguring the recruitment system to enable adverts to be shared via social media i.e. Twitter and LinkedIn; and • Greater usage of Instagram for advertising jobs. In addition, as part of the Establishment Project with the Project Management Office, work will take place to develop a recruitment and retention strategy. This will be a 12-month project. There is a need to look to mobilise resource which will go through the Star Chamber process. **Responsible Officer: Manager for HR Strategy & Workforce Development and Manager for HR Transactions & Traded Services** **Target date: 12 month project with date TBC**

2021/2022 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

Issue No.	Issue Identified	Comments / Summary of Action Proposed
2 (21/22) cont.	**Recruitment – cont.** The external review of the Council's planning service, by the Planning Advisory Service, also acknowledged recruitment difficulties.	**Complete** An update report was taken to Executive on 23 September 2022, detailing the Planning service's response to the PAS recommendations. This detailed a number of planned actions in relation to recruitment including a marketing campaign. Temporary staff have been appointed to the vacant posts within the Development Management Team, and permanent recruitment is ongoing. The Council has provided additional resources in 2022/2023 to fund seven new posts and re-grade three others. **Responsible Officer: Chief Officer for Planning, Infrastructure & EG** **Target date: 31 December 2022**
3 (21/22)	**Capacity** Some areas have identified a lack of capacity, particularly at managerial level. Delivery of Transformation and the Operating Model has reduced managerial and team leader posts, and transferred some activities from central support services such as HR and Finance. Capacity and resilience across all service areas now needs to be reviewed.	**In Progress** Work is ongoing through the Operating Model workstream to review process, capability and spans of control to support efficiencies and capacity pressures. Management Team continue to keep this area under review. **Responsible Officer:** Management Team **Target date: 31 March 2023**
4 (21/22)	**Complaints** The Council has seen an increase in the number of complaints and the complexity of issues it is responding to, again partly due to the pandemic and ongoing recruitment and capacity issues. It is likely that there will be an increase in decisions upheld by the Ombudsman for the year 2021/2022.	**In Progress** A refresh of complaint policies, procedures and guidance is underway and on course for completion by 31 December 2022. The Complaints Service Manager will attended management team on 6 October 2022 to advise on best practice for complaint response and resolution. Follow up meetings with the wider staff group are being arranged post presentation at Management team. All complaints are reviewed quarterly by management team. **Responsible Officer:** Director of Corporate Services **Target date: 31 March 2023**

2021/2022 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN		
Issue No.	**Issue Identified**	**Comments / Summary of Action Proposed**
5 (21/22)	**Audit Committee - CIPFA Position Statement** In May 2022, CIPFA published its Position Statement on Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022, setting out the purpose, model, core functions and membership of the audit committee. The statement represents CIPFA's view on the audit committee practice and principles that local government bodies in the UK should adopt. CIPFA expects that all local government bodies should make their best efforts to adopt the principles, aiming for effective audit committee arrangements.	**Complete** The Audit Committee carried out a self-assessment of its effectiveness at a training session with External and Internal Audit on 21 September 2022. The action plan from this self-assessment is on the agenda for Audit Committee on 5 December 2022. **Responsible Officer:** Audit Committee **Target date: 31 December 2022**

ONGOING ACTIONS FROM THE 2020/2021 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN		
Issue No.	**Issue Identified**	**Comments / Summary of Action Proposed**
2 (20/21)	**Senior Management Restructure** Following the approval of the new Senior Management structure at Full Council in March 2021, work is still ongoing to implement the structure, however most changes were implemented with effect from 1 July 2021. It is imperative that the new role of Chief Officer for Legal, HR, and the Monitoring Officer, which is a statutory requirement, and a key role for implementing and monitoring good governance controls, is recruited to without delay.	**Complete** The post of Chief Officer, Legal, Performance and Democracy was advertised w/c 29 August 2022. Interim arrangements are in place, with the Legal Services Team Leader acting as Interim Monitoring Officer and two other managers taking on additional responsibilities. They are currently reporting to the Chief Executive. Confirmation of the new Chief Officer for Legal, Performance and Democracy was made at Full Council on 12 October 2022 and it is anticipated that the new CO will start in the New Year. **Responsible Officer:** Management Team **Revised Target date: 30 November 2022 (Interim Arrangements in place)**

ONGOING ACTIONS FROM THE 2019/2020 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN		
Issue No.	**Issue Identified**	**Comments / Summary of Action Proposed**
2 (19/20)	**Council Constitution Review** The Council's Constitution is currently being reviewed and updated, to take into account management restructures and to ensure that it is fit for purpose.	**In Progress** The Covid situation has led to a delay in the review of the Constitution due to lack of time and resources. The Constitution review has commenced. There have been reports to the Council's General Purposes Committee on 14 June and 1 November 2022, and the latest Constitution Review Working Group meeting was held on 4 October 2022. Further meetings are scheduled on 22 November and 7 December and an Interim report will go to General Purposes Committee on 10 January 2023. We will have completed a review of the Constitution by the end of the Municipal Year. **Responsible Officer:** Chief Officer for Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) **Revised Target date: 31 March 2023**
3 (19/20)	**Ethics Review** An Ethics review was undertaken by BDO LLP and a number of recommendations were made including: • Reviewing codes of conduct and the protocol between Members and Officers to improve officer/member relationships;	**In Progress** An amended Code of Conduct was approved by the Standards Committee on 14 June 2021, to include best practice in relation to bullying and harassment as set out in the LGA model code. The review of the Constitution, due to be completed by March 2023 if the General Purposes Committee and the Council approve of the proposed amendments, will include an update of how the Monitoring Officer will deal with allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct.

ONGOING ACTIONS FROM THE 2019/2020 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN

Issue No.	Issue Identified	Comments / Summary of Action Proposed
3 (19/20) cont.	**Ethics Review (cont.)** • Formally defining organisational values and communicating these to all employees;	A Corporate Values Consultation was launched in June 2022. Staff were asked to vote for six values they felt are important to them while at work, from a shortlist of ten, which was drawn up from conversations with the Council's Change Champions and Bedford Leaders staff groups. This is helping to build a corporate culture that reflects and represents the workforce and the values that are important to them. The results of the vote were discussed at Bedford leaders in October 2022 with a focus on how to embed these values. This will be further communicated to staff shortly
	• Undertaking training on key ethical areas; and	The induction training for new members in 2019 covered the Code of Conduct and Ethics for Members; however the Code of Conduct has now been amended (see above) to include best practice in relation to bullying and harassment. The induction programme will be updated for new members who join the Council following the elections in May 2023.
	• Introducing a staff survey in 2020 as a means of gauging staff attitudes to key ethical and cultural matters.	The staff Covid-19 survey was carried out in July 2020 and the results were reported to the General Purposes Committee on 27 October 2020. A full staff survey has been carried out and was considered at General Purposes Committee on 14 September 2021. Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Target date: 31 January 2023

Finding out more

If you would like further copies, a large-print copy or information about us and our services, please telephone or write to us at our address below.

Për Informacion معلومات کے لئے برای اطلاع للمعلومات Za Informacije

ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਲਈ Per Informazione Informacja তথ্যের জন্য

01234 267422

Bedford Borough Council
Borough Hall
Cauldwell Street
Bedford MK42 9AP

laura.church@bedford.gov.uk

www.bedford.gov.uk

Glossary

AAA FITCH RATING

Highest credit quality - ‘AAA’ ratings denote the lowest expectation of credit risk. They are assigned only in case of exceptionally strong capacity for timely payment of financial commitments. This capacity is highly unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.

AA FITCH RATING

Very high credit quality - ‘AA’ ratings denote a very low expectation of credit risk. They indicate very strong capacity for timely payment of financial commitments. This capacity is not significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.

A FITCH RATING

High credit quality - ‘A’ ratings denote a low expectation of credit risk. The capacity for timely payment of financial commitments is considered strong. This capacity may, nevertheless, be more vulnerable to changes in circumstances or in economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.

ACCOUNTING PERIOD

The period of time covered by the accounts, normally a period of twelve months commencing on 1 April. The end of the accounting period is the Balance Sheet date.

ACCRUALS

Sums included in the final accounts to recognise revenue and capital income and expenditure earned or incurred in the financial year, but for which actual payment had not been received or made as at 31 March.

ACTUARIAL GAINS AND LOSSES

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the changes in actuarial surpluses or deficits that arise because

· Events have not coincided with the actuarial assumptions made for the last valuation (experience gains and losses); or

· The actuarial assumptions have changed

ASSET

An item having value to the authority in monetary terms. Assets are categorised as either current or non-current

· A current asset will be consumed or cease to have material value within the next financial year (e.g. cash and stock);

· A non-current asset provides benefits to the Authority and to the services it provides for a period of more than one year and may be tangible e.g. a community centre, or intangible, e.g. computer software licences.

AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

An independent examination of the Authority’s financial affairs.

BALANCE SHEET

A statement of the recorded assets, liabilities and other balances at the end of the accounting period.

BORROWING

Using cash provided by another party to pay for expenditure, on the basis of an agreement to repay the cash at a future point, usually incurring additional interest charges over and above the original amount.

BUDGET

The forecast of net revenue and capital expenditure over the accounting period.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Expenditure on the acquisition of a fixed asset, which will be used in providing services beyond the current accounting period, or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing fixed asset.

CAPITAL FINANCING

Funds raised to pay for capital expenditure. There are various methods of financing capital expenditure including borrowing, leasing, direct revenue financing, usable capital receipts, capital grants, capital contributions, revenue reserves and earmarked reserves.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The capital schemes the Authority intends to carry out over a specific period of time.

CAPITAL RECEIPT

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other fixed assets. Proportions of capital receipts can be used to finance new capital expenditure, within rules set down by the government but they cannot be used to finance revenue expenditure.

CLAW-BACK

Where average council house rents are set higher than the government’s prescribed average limit rent, used in the calculation of rent rebates, the percentage difference reduces the amount of rent rebate subsidy due to the authority, i.e. it is “clawed-back” by the government.

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

COLLECTION FUND

A separate fund that records the income and expenditure relating to Council Tax and non-domestic rates.

COMMUNITY ASSETS

Assets that the Authority intends to hold in perpetuity, that have no determinable useful life and that may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historical buildings.

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

The account of the Authority that reports the net cost for the year of the functions for which it is responsible and demonstrates how that cost has been financed from precepts, grants and other income.

CONSISTENCY

The concept that the accounting treatment of like items within an accounting period and from one period to the next are the same.

CONTINGENT ASSET

A contingent asset is a possible 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 Authority's accounts.

CONTINGENT LIABILITY

A contingent liability is either:

· A possible obligation arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Authority's control; or

· A present obligation 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 sufficient reliability.

CORPORATE AND DEMOCRATIC CORE

The corporate and democratic core comprises all activities that local authorities engage in specifically because they are elected, multi-purpose authorities. The cost of these activities are thus over and above those which would be incurred by a series of independent single purpose, nominated bodies managing the same services. There is therefore no logical basis for apportioning these costs to services.

CREDITOR

Amount owed by the Authority for work done, goods received or services rendered within the accounting period, but for which payment has not been made by the end of that accounting period.

CURRENT SERVICE COST (PENSIONS)

The increase in the present value of a defined benefits pension scheme's liabilities, expected to arise from employee service in the current period.

DEBTOR

Amount owed to the Authority for works done, goods received or services rendered within the accounting period, but for which payment has not been received by the end of that accounting period.

DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEME

Pension schemes in which the benefits received by the participants are independent of the contributions paid and are not directly related to the investments of the scheme.

DEPRECIATION

The measure of the cost of wearing out, consumption or other reduction in the useful economic life of the Authority's fixed assets during the accounting period, whether from use, the passage of time or obsolescence through technical or other changes.

DISCRETIONARY BENEFITS (PENSIONS)

Retirement benefits, which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award and are awarded under the Authority's discretionary powers such as the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996.

EQUITY

The Authority's value of total assets less total liabilities.

EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

Events after the Balance Sheet date are those events, favourable or unfavourable, that occur between the Balance Sheet date and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue.

EXPECTED RETURN ON PENSION ASSETS

For a funded defined benefit scheme, this is the average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, which is expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

FAIR VALUE

The fair value of an asset is the price at which it could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction.

FINANCE LEASE

A lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a fixed asset to the lessee.

GOING CONCERN

The concept that the Statement of Accounts is prepared on the assumption that the Authority will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Grants made by the government towards either revenue or capital expenditure in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Authority. These grants may be specific to a particular scheme or may support the revenue spend of the Authority in general.

HOUSING BENEFITS

A system of financial assistance to individuals towards certain housing costs administered by authorities and subsidised by central government.

IMPAIRMENT

A reduction in the value of a fixed asset to below its recoverable amount, the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and its value in use.

INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Fixed assets belonging to the Authority that cannot be transferred or sold, on which expenditure is only recoverable by the continued use of the asset created. Examples are highways, footpaths and bridges.

INTANGIBLE ASSETS

An intangible (non-physical) item may be defined as an asset when access to the future economic benefits it represents is controlled by the reporting entity. This Authority's intangible assets comprise computer software licences.

INTEREST COST (PENSIONS)

For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period of the present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

INVESTMENTS (PENSION FUND)

The investments of the Pension Fund will be accounted for in the statements of that fund. However, authorities are also required to disclose, as part of the disclosure requirements relating to retirement benefits, the attributable share of the pension scheme assets associated with their underlying obligations.

LIABILITY

A liability is where the Authority owes payment to an individual or another organisation.

· A current liability is an amount which will become payable or could be called in within the next accounting period, e.g. creditors or cash overdrawn.

· A deferred liability is an amount which by arrangement is payable beyond the next year at some point in the future or to be paid off by an annual sum over a period of time.

LIQUID RESOURCES

Current asset investments that are readily disposable by the Authority without disrupting its business and are either:

· Readily convertible to known amounts of cash at or close to the carrying amount; or

· Traded in an active market.

LONG-TERM CONTRACT

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 to substantially complete the contract is such that the contract activity falls into more than one accounting period.

MATERIALITY

The concept that the Statement of Accounts should include all amounts which, if omitted, or mis-stated, could be expected to lead to a distortion of the financial statements and ultimately mislead a user of the accounts.

MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION (MRP)

The minimum amount which must be charged to the revenue account each year in order to provide for the repayment of loans and other amounts borrowed by the Authority.

NET BOOK VALUE

The amount at which fixed assets are included in the Balance Sheet, i.e. their historical costs or current value less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation.

NET DEBT

The Authority’s borrowings less cash and liquid resources.

NON-DISTRIBUTED COSTS

These are overheads for which no user now benefits and as such are not apportioned to services.

NON-DOMESTIC RATES (NDR)

The Non-Domestic Rate is a levy on businesses, based on a national rate in the pound set by central government and multiplied by the assessed rateable value of the premises they occupy. In England it is collected by the Authority on behalf of itself, central government and major preceptors.

In Scotland it is collected by the Authority on behalf of central government and then redistributed back to support the cost of services.

NON-OPERATIONAL ASSETS

Fixed assets held by the Authority but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services. Examples are investment properties, assets under construction or assets surplus to requirements pending sale or redevelopment.

OPERATING LEASE

A lease where the ownership of the fixed asset remains with the lessor.

OPERATIONAL ASSETS

Fixed assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Authority in the pursuit of its strategy and in the direct delivery of those services for which it has either a statutory or discretionary responsibility.

PAST SERVICE COST (PENSIONS)

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities related to employee service in prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvement to retirement benefits.

PENSION SCHEME LIABILITIES

The liabilities of a defined benefit pension scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured during the projected unit method reflect the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

PRECEPT

The levy made by precepting authorities by billing authorities, requiring the latter to collect income from Council Tax on their behalf.

PRIOR YEAR ADJUSTMENT

Material adjustments applicable to previous years arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of fundamental errors. This does not include normal recurring corrections or adjustments of accounting estimates made in prior years.

PROVISION

An amount put aside in the accounts for future liabilities or losses which are certain or very likely to occur but the amounts or dates of when they will arise are uncertain.

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD (PWLB)

A Central Government Agency, which provides loans for one year and above to authorities at interest rates only slightly higher than those at which the government can borrow itself.

RATEABLE VALUE

The annual assumed rental of a hereditament, which is used for NNDR purposes.

RELATED PARTIES

There is a detailed definition of related parties in FRS 8. For the Council's purposes related parties are deemed to include the Authority's members, the Chief Executive, its Directors and their close family and household members.

RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Statement Of Recommended Practice requires the disclosure of any material transactions between the Authority and related parties to ensure that stakeholders are aware when these transactions occur and the amount and implications of such.

REMUNERATION

All sums paid to or receivable by an employee and sums due by way of expenses allowances (as far as those sums are chargeable to UK income tax) and the money value of any other benefits. Received other than in cash. Pension contributions payable by the employer are excluded.

RESERVES

The accumulation of surpluses, deficits and appropriations over past years. Reserves of a revenue nature are available and can be spent or earmarked at the discretion of the Authority. Some capital reserves such as the fixed asset restatement account cannot be used to meet current expenditure.

RESIDUAL VALUE

The net realisable value of an asset at the end of its useful life.

RETIREMENT BENEFITS

All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after the completion of employment.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE

The day-to-day expenses of providing services.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE CAPITALISED UNDER STATUTE (REFCUS)

Expenditure which ordinarily would be revenue, but is statutorily defined as capital. Examples of REFCUS include grants of a capital nature to voluntary organisations and back pay expenditure capitalised under Secretary of State Direction.

REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT

A grant paid by Central Government to authorities, contributing towards the general cost of their services.

STOCKS

Items of raw materials and stores an authority has procured and holds in expectation of future use. Examples are consumable stores, raw materials and products and services in intermediate stages of completion.

TEMPORARY BORROWING

Money borrowed for a period of less than one year.

TRUST FUNDS

Funds administered by the Authority for such purposes as prizes, charities, specific projects and on behalf of minors.

USEFUL ECONOMIC LIFE (UEL)

The period over which the Authority will derive benefits from the use of a fixed asset

Independent Auditor's Report

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Opinion

We have audited the financial of Bedford Borough Council ('the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2022 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended). The financial statements comprise the:

- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement,
- Movement in Reserves Statement,
- Balance Sheet,
- Cash Flow Statement,
- the related notes 1 to 44 and the Expenditure and Funding Analysis on page 16, and
- Collection Fund and the related note 1.

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 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of Bedford Borough Council as at 31 March 2022 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

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 for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Council 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 the Comptroller and Auditor General's AGN01, 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 Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer'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, 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 to 30 September 2024.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts 2021/22, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the other information contained within the Statement of Accounts.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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 course of 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 themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of the other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- in our opinion the annual governance statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information forthcoming from the audit or our knowledge of the Council
- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and
- Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- 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 2022.

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Responsibility of the Assistant Chief Executive – Finance & Section 151 Officer

As explained more fully in the Statement of the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer Responsibilities set out on page 15, the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer 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/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022), and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Assistant Chief Executive (Finance) and Chief Financial Officer is responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Council either intends to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

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 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.

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect irregularities, including fraud. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and management.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Council and determined that the most significant are:

- Local Government Act 1972,
- Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (England and Wales),
- Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 1992),
- Transport Act 2000,
- Education Act 2002 and School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (England),
- Local Government Act 2003,
- The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended in 2018, 2020, and 2022,
- Waste and Emissions Trading Act 2003,
- National Health Service Act 2006,
- Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/948,
- Business Rate Supplements Act 2009,
- The Local Government Finance Act 2012,
- The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended), and
- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

In addition, the Council has to comply with laws and regulations in the areas of anti-bribery and corruption, data protection, employment legislation, tax legislation, general power of competence, procurement and health & safety.

We understood how Bedford Borough Council is complying with those frameworks by understanding the incentive, opportunities and motives for non-compliance, including inquiring of management, head of internal audit, those charged with governance, and the monitoring officer and obtaining and reading documentation relating to the procedures in place to identify, evaluate and comply with laws and regulations, and whether they are aware of instances of non-compliance. We corroborated this through our reading of the Council's committee minutes, through enquiry of employees to confirm Council's policies, and through the inspection of other information. Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures had a focus on compliance with the accounting framework through obtaining sufficient audit evidence in line with the level of risk identified and with relevant legislation.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Council's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by understanding the potential incentives and pressures for management to manipulate the financial statements, and performed procedures to understand the areas in which this would most likely arise. Based on our risk assessment procedures, we identified inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure and management override of controls to be our fraud risks.

To address our fraud risk of inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure we tested the Council's capitalised expenditure to ensure the capitalisation criteria were properly met and the expenditure was genuine.

To address our fraud risk of management override of controls, we tested specific journal entries identified by applying risk criteria to the entire population of journals. For each journal selected, we tested specific transactions back to source documentation to confirm that the journals were authorised and accounted for appropriately. We also assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and evaluated the business rationale of any identified significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business. These procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error.

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

Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice 2020, having regard to the guidance on the specified reporting criteria issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in December 2021**,** as to whether Bedford Borough Council had proper arrangements for financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined these criteria as those necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether Bedford Borough Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, Bedford Borough Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) 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.

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

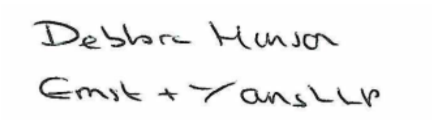
We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until the NAO as group auditor has confirmed that no further assurances will be required from us as component auditors of Bedford Borough Council. We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements or our work on value for money arrangements.

In addition, we cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have issued our Auditor's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2022**.** We have completed our work on the value for money arrangements and will report the outcome of our work in our commentary on those arrangements within the Auditor's Annual Report.

Until we have completed these procedures, we are unable to certify that we have completed the audit of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Bedford Borough Council, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Council and the Council's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Debbie Hanson (Key Audit Partner)
Ernst & Young LLP (Local Auditor)
Luton
25 September 2023