

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Thursday, 22 July 2021

6.00 pm

Committee Rooms 1-2, City Hall

Membership: Councillors Rebecca Longbottom (Chair), Helena Mair (Vice-Chair), David Clarkson, Thomas Dyer, Gary Hewson, Rosanne Kirk and Calum Watt

Substitute member(s): Councillors Pat Vaughan

Independent Member: Jane Nellist

Officers attending: Democratic Services, Jaclyn Gibson, John Scott and Colleen Warren

A G E N D A

SECTION A	Page(s)
A TRAINING SESSION WILL BE HELD IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO THE START OF THIS MEETING AT 5.00PM IN RELATION TO THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS	
1. Confirmation of Minutes - 6 July 2021	3 - 12
2. Declarations of Interest	
Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or personal and/or pecuniary.	
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SECTION B

12. Risk Management - Annual Update

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Present:	Councillor Rebecca Longbottom (<i>in the Chair</i>)
Councillors:	Liz Bushell, David Clarkson, Thomas Dyer, Calum Watt and Pat Vaughan
Independent Member:	Jane Nellist
Apologies for Absence:	Councillor Helena Mair, Councillor Gary Hewson and Councillor Rosanne Kirk

1. **Confirmation of Minutes - 23 March 2021**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

2. **Matters Arising**

The Chair referred to minute number 98 in relation to Council Tax Key controls and asked if there was an update in relation to the scale of the issues?

John Scott, Audit Manager responded that the number of direct debit recalls for Council Tax in 2021 was 2065 which totalled £223k and represented less than 1% of the total direct debits taken. If a direct debit payment was missed another attempt to take the money via direct debit would be attempted, if this failed again another payment option would be offered.

The Chair referred to minute number 99 in relation to the Housing Allocations System upgrade and asked for an update.

John Scott, Audit Manager responded that Officers had been liaising with the software supplier regarding the system update and it had been escalated to Management level. A further update would be provided in due course.

The Chair referred to minute 104 and asked if there was an update on the Fraud Awareness Training.

John Scott, Audit Manager responded that the current system could not be used due to procurement issues, a new system would be sourced and rolled out to Members and Officers.

The Chair referred to minute 106 and asked when the Audit Strategy would be presented to Audit Committee.

Jaclyn Gibson, Chief Finance Officer responded that the Audit Strategy would be presented to Audit Committee on 22 July 2021.

3. **Change to Order of Business**

RESOLVED that the order of business be amended to run as follows:

1. Review of Code of Corporate Governance
2. Annual Governance Statement 2021
3. Annual Internal Audit Report
4. External Audit: Completion Report

5. External Audit – Annual Audit Letter
6. Statement of Accounts 2019/20
7. Counter Fraud Policy/ Strategy
8. Fraud and Error Report 2020/21
9. Audit Committee Work Programme

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Vaughan declared a personal interest in the item entitled “Statement of Accounts” as his Granddaughter worked in the Finance Section of the Council.

5. **Review of Code of Corporate Governance 2021**

Pat Jukes, Business Manager Corporate Policy:

- a. presented a report to inform Audit Committee of the outcome of the annual review of the Code of Corporate Governance
- b. confirmed that City of Lincoln Council adopted a new Code of Corporate Governance in March 2017 and it was agreed that it be reviewed annually to ensure that it remained current
- c. advised that internal audit and Corporate Policy undertook a full assessment of the council’s governance framework which commenced in March 2020/21 through a review of the Council’s Code of Corporate Governance (policies and processes) and its use in the review process to develop the AGS to identify any significant issues. Changes to the code itself were also identified as detailed at paragraph 3.4 and Appendix A of the report
- d. explained that a decision was taken to simplify the format of the code, whilst still being able to provide all of the information, but in an easier and accessible format
- e. reported that no further changes were recommended at this time and it was proposed the next review should be in February 2022.
- f. invited members’ questions and comments; and

Question: Referred to the Regulatory table on page 22 of the report and asked why principle E in relation to development and training was not applied to the Audit Committee?

Response: A detailed training plan was being developed for the Audit Committee. The Corporate Governance Framework could be updated to reflect this.

RESOLVED that the amendments made to the Code of Corporate Governance including the reformatted structure be noted.

6. **Annual Governance Statement 2021**

Pat Jukes, Business Manager Corporate Policy:

- a. presented a report to inform Audit committee that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) had been completed and signed off by Leadership

- b. highlighted that officers had concluded that two of the three significant governance issues from 2019/20 needed to remain in the 2020/21 AGS; although both had made significant progress during 2020, they now needed a revised focus as a direct result of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic:
 - a. The Disaster Recovery plan in place for IT arrangements.
 - b. Vision 2025 needed to be re-profiled and communicated to a wider audience in light of COVID-19 effects.
- c. recommended that Audit Committee reviewed the contents of the Final Annual Governance Statement with a view to monitoring progress on the significant issue identified over the coming year.
- d. invited members questions and comments.

Comment - It was disappointing to see that the IT Disaster Recovery Plan was included as a significant governance issue again and requested that the IT Manager be invited to attend committee to provide further details.

Comment – Expressed concern regarding procedure for the loss of City Hall and number of devices in the Disaster Recovery Plan.

Response – Significant investment had been made in IT, previously there had not been sufficient resources to provide everyone with a device. The process to roll out Office 365 had commenced before the Covid-19 Pandemic. Significant work on a second base had been undertaken at Hamilton House. A refresh of the IT Disaster Recovery Plan was being undertaken and it would be fed into the revised Business Continuity plans.

Question – Could the Glossary be updated to include all of the acronyms?

Response – The Annual Governance Statement 2021 Glossary would be updated to include all of the acronyms.

RESOLVED that:

- The contents of the Final Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 with a view to monitoring progress on the significant issue identified over the coming year be agreed.

7. Annual Internal Audit Report

John Scott, Audit Manager:

- a. presented the Annual Internal Audit Report to the committee for comments.
- b. explained that the purpose of the annual internal audit report as outlined at Appendix A was to provide a summary of Internal Audit work undertaken during 2020/21 timed to support the Annual Governance Statement by providing an opinion on the organisation's governance, risk management and internal control environment.

- c. highlighted that Governance, Risk, Internal Control and Financial Control was working well: no concerns that significantly affected the governance framework and successful delivery of the Council priorities. Internal control was assessed as performing adequately – some improvements were identified over the Council’s Governance, Risk and Control Framework. This included actions such as updating the IT security policy and associated guidance.
- d. invited members questions and comments.

Question: Was the Council insured against Housing Benefit Fraud?

Response: No, the Council sought to recover costs from the individual. The Council did have fidelity insurance which covered some areas of fraud.

Question: Referred to Appendix 1 of the report and asked why some of the table was marked as not applicable?

Response: Audit did not provide a formal assurance for those areas, they were not a standard assurance piece of work but consultancy which had a more individual focus such as housing benefit subsidy testing or linked to policy review.

Question: Referred to Appendix 2 of the report which set out the audits that had been removed from the original plan and asked if there was concern over the level of resource available in the Audit Department?

Response: A benchmarking exercise had taken place which showed that the level of internal audit resource was adequate. The reason some of the audits had been removed was due to Covid, audit staff had provided support to business grants instead.

Question: How was Audit funded and could the Housing Revenue Account be used?

Response: Under accounting practises certain things could be charged to the Housing Revenue Account but there had to be a basis to do it, the full cost of the Audit section could not be moved across to the Housing Revenue Account.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

8. External Audit: Audit Completion Report

Mike Norman, representing the Council’s external auditors, Mazars advised:

The work on the financial statements and Value for Money conclusion for the year ending 31 March 2020 had been substantially completed and there were no significant matters outstanding.

As part of the audit, the internal controls in place relevant to the preparation of the financial statements had been considered, with three recommendations resulting from this work made as follows:

- Production of draft accounts and working papers

- Incomplete disclosures for pension fund plan assets
- Investment property valuations

Further details of these recommendations were outlined in section 4 of the external auditors' report at Appendix A.

In relation to misstatements in the accounts, there were a number of misstatements identified that were above the threshold level of £49,000. Of these there were two misstatements that the Council assessed as not being material and were therefore not adjusted the accounts. These unadjusted misstatements were detailed in section 5 of the report. There was also a number of misstatements that were adjusted for as part of the audit process and had been reflected in the final version of the Statement of Accounts. Further details of these misstatements were provided in section 5 of the report.

It was reported that the Council had proper arrangements in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The external auditors therefore proposed issuing an unqualified opinion on the Council's value for money arrangements.

As part of presenting this item, the external auditors took the Committee through each page of the report and highlighted any key issues, particularly with regard to:

- the audit approach;
- significant findings;
- internal control recommendations;
- summary of misstatements;
- value for money conclusion.
- Management Representation Letter

Question: Referred to the IT infrastructure for employees leaving the authority and asked what processes had been put in place?

Response: This was included in the Audit Recommendations follow up report. There was a leavers process put in place where managers completed an online form for the removal of access to systems. The IT Manager also received a list of HR leavers which is used as a secondary check.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

9. External Audit - Annual Audit Letter

Mike Norman, representing the External Auditor, Mazaars:

- a. presented a report for Audit Committee to receive and comment on the Annual Audit Letter provided by the Council's External Auditors (Mazars) from its 2019/20 audit of the Council (including audit of the 2019/20 statement of accounts, value for money conclusion and other reporting responsibilities)
- b. advised that the Annual Audit Letter 2019/20; although addressed to members of the authority was also intended to communicate issues to key external stakeholders including members of the public and would be placed on the Authority's website
- c. reported on the key headlines within the report outlined within the Executive Summary as detailed at page 2 of Appendix A.

- d. confirmed that a value for money conclusion by the auditors reported that they were satisfied in all significant respects that the Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2020.
- e. highlighted that the audit of the financial statements by Mazars gave a true and fair view of the Council's financial position as at 31 March 2020 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended, and that the other information in the Statement of Accounts was consistent with the audited financial statements; and
- f. reported on a final fee for the 2019/20 audit by Mazars of £36,332 in addition Mazars have applied a fee variation to cover additional work required for; extended auditor reporting and requirements as a result of the Council being designated as a EU Public Interest Entity; additional testing on property, plant and equipment and defined benefit pension schemes; and further additional costs relating to 2019/20. These additional fees were estimated to be £17,099 (£6,750 in 2018/19), bringing the total fee for 2019/20 to £53,431.

The committee discussed the report in detail.

RESOLVED that the content of the Annual Audit Letter from Mazars be noted.

10. Statement of Accounts 2019/20

Jaclyn Gibson, Chief Finance Officer:

- a. presented, for information, the final Statement of Account for the financial year ended 31st March 2020, following completion of the audit opinion.
- b. advised that it had been previously agreed that any further changes to the Statement of Accounts be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer; and
- c. referred to paragraph 4 of the report and outlined the amendments to the Statement of Account 2019/20 in relation to the Stradivarius violin.

RESOLVED that the final, audited, Statement of Accounts 2019/20 be noted.

11. Counter Fraud Policy/ Strategy

John Scott, Audit Manager:

- a. presented the revised Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption policy/ strategy for comment prior to referral to Executive.
- b. advised that the Council's Counter Fraud Policy/Strategy was updated in 2018. The 2021 version took into account the latest best practice guidance and updated the fraud action plan.
- c. explained that in the main, the Council's updated policy/strategy was similar to the previous one. This version recognised the increased risks to victims and the local community. There was more emphasis on tackling cross-boundary and organised fraud and corruption attempts, as well as addressing new risks such as social care fraud and cyber issues.

- d. advised that the new approach highlighted the key strands as detailed at paragraph 4.4 of the report:
 - i. Govern
 - ii. Acknowledge
 - iii. Prevent
 - iv. Pursue
 - v. Protect
- e. explained that there was a greater emphasis on economic crime – referred to as “a broad category of activity involving money, finance, assets the purpose of which was to unlawfully obtain a profit or advantage for the perpetrator or cause loss to others”
- f. advised that local authorities could ensure that their counter fraud response was comprehensive and effective by considering their performance against each of the six themes as detailed at paragraph 4 of the report.
- g. referred to the work programme at Appendix B of the report and advised how the policy/strategy would be implemented; and
- h. invited members comments and questions

Question : Referred to table 11.2 of Appendix A of the report and asked for details regarding the Small Business Rates Relief?

Response: : A third party was used to cross check with other authorities to identify small businesses that were claiming Small Business Rate Relief. This was a way to identify businesses that were not entitled to tax relief before it was granted.

Question: Referred to table 12.3 of Appendix A of the report and asked what Audit would look at to combat Housing Tenancy Fraud?

Response: There were different ways to review possible tenancy fraud including Tenancy Verification which uses a third party to undertake data matching and identify any anomalies (such as possible sub-letting) for the Council to review. There is also the National Fraud Initiative. Matches are currently being reviewed. In the past this had not identified any significant levels of fraud or error. Housing investigate cases of suspected sub-letting or non-occupation.

RESOLVED that the revised Counter Fraud Policy/ Strategy be referred to Executive for approval.

12. **Fraud and Error Report 2020/ 21**

John Scott, Audit Manager:

- a. presented the Fraud and Error annual report.
- b. advised that Covid-19 had some impact in terms of delaying some pro-active work for 2020/21 and this was outlined in the report.
- c. advised that the report covered key messages, investigations proactive work, fraud partnerships , referrals and action plans and highlighted the following key areas:

- Housing Benefit/ Council Tax Support
- Cyber Crime and Cyber Security
- National Non Domestic Business Rates and Small Business Rate Relief
- Council Tax – Single Person Discount
- Housing tenancy
- NFI – National Fraud Initiative
- Covid Grants
- Fraud Strategy and Policy Review
- Whistleblowing
- Fraud Awareness/ Scam Awareness
- Fraud Risk Register
- Other fraud/ fraud attempts

d. invited committees questions and comments.

Question: Had the whistleblowing reports for 2020/21 been dealt with?

Response: Yes the reports had been followed up with the officers concerned. There was no fraud identified in the majority of cases but some had been referred to the Department of Work and Pensions.

Question: Referred paragraph 9.1 of the report in relation to Housing Tenancy and asked why there was an increase in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20?

Response: There was some fluctuation year to year, more information would be circulated following the meeting.

Question: How did the Council identify someone that was living in a student House of Multiple Occupation but they were working full time and should be paying Council Tax?

Response: There are checks undertaken to verify student status

Question: In relation to students was the onus on the landlord or the tenant to declare that they were working.

Response: A response could be circulated following the meeting regarding the controls around students and student discount.

Question: Was the Severely mentally impaired discount for Council Tax publicised to encourage people to take up the discount?

Response: Officers would liaise with the Council Tax Department and circulate a response following the meeting.

Question: Was work still ongoing in relation to loan sharks?

Response: The issues had been promoted from a fraud angle around scams, we would liaise with the Policy Team regarding any work that they were undertaking and circulate a response following the meeting.

Question: Referred to Cyber Crime and Security and asked if consideration had been given to penetration testing?

Response: Penetration testing had been completed as part of the external review.

RESOLVED that the Fraud and Error Report 2020/21 be noted.

13. Audit Committee Work Programme

John Scott, Audit Manager:

- a. presented a report to inform members of the Audit Committee on the work programme for 2021/22 as detailed at Appendix A of the report.
- b. advised that the frequency of the meeting had been reviewed and revised to take into account impacts relating to the pandemic and was considered appropriate for 2020/21.

The Chair informed committee that an additional meeting had been arranged for 5pm on Thursday 15th July to consider an urgent item in relation to the Homes England Compliance Audit.

Councillor Dyer formally proposed that the IT Manager be invited to attend the Audit Committee to discuss the Disaster Recovery issues and this was seconded by Councillor Clarkson.

The committee discussed the proposal and agreed that the IT Manager be invited to attend the September Audit Committee, with questions to put to the IT Manager being discussed at the Audit Committee due to be held on 22 July 2021.

RESOLVED that

1. the contents of the Audit Committee work programme 2021/22 be noted.
2. the IT Manager be invited to attend the Audit Committee on 23 September 2021.

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SUBJECT: EXTERNAL AUDIT 2020/21 PLANNING & PROGRESS REPORT

DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK

REPORT AUTHOR: JACLYN GIBSON, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the External Audit Progress Report to Audit Committee.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 This report provides Audit Committee with an update on progress in delivering responsibilities of the External Auditors.

3. Background

3.1 The External Auditor provides periodic update reports to the Audit Committee. Mazars are currently appointed as the Council's External Auditor.

4. External Audit Progress Report

4.1 The External Audit progress report attached (Appendix A) covers the following areas:

- a summary of the audit planning proposals which form the basis of the formal 2020/21 Audit Strategy Memorandum (ASM). The formal ASM is subject to external engagement quality review and will be shared with the Committee when confirmed
- an update on progress in delivering the 2020/21 audit
- a summary of recent relevant national reports and publications

4.2 External Audit will be in attendance at the meeting to present the progress report.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 There are no direct implications for the Council's strategic priorities. The external audit of the Council's financial statements and VFM conclusion is a statutory requirement and as such contributes towards the fitness for purpose of the Council's governance arrangements.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

The Audit fee for 2020/21 is £36,332, set in accordance with the scale fees set by the PSAA. The fee includes work on the VFM conclusion and the audit of the financial statements. Further separate agreement will be reached with Mazars

regarding; additional fees in relation to the Council's status as an EU Public Interest Entity; additional work required on property valuations and the net pension liability valuation; and additional testing as a result of new auditing standards.

To support implementation of the Redmond review recommendations, MHCLG is providing local authorities with £15 million in additional funding in 2021/22. This is intended to support affected local bodies to meet the anticipated rise in fees for 2020/21 audits, driven by new requirements on auditors and to enable local authorities to develop standardised statements of service information and costs. MHCLG are currently consulting on the allocation of this additional £15 million. An update will be provided to the Committee once the Council's specific allocation is announced.

6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

There are no direct legal implications. The External Auditor is required to satisfy themselves that the Council's accounts comply with statutory requirements and that proper practices have been observed in compiling them.

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

There are no specific equality, diversity and human rights issues arising as result of this report.

7. Risk Implications

7.1 There are no specific risk implications arising as a direct result of this report. The annual Audit Strategy Memorandum will set out the key risks, as identified by the External Auditor, relevant to the audit of the financial statements.

8. Recommendation

8.1 Audit Committee is asked to note the content of the latest External Audit Progress Report.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

One

List of Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer:

Jaclyn Gibson, Chief Finance Officer
Telephone (01522) 873258

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2020/21 Audit Planning and Progress Report

City of Lincoln Council

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Audit Committee 22 July 2021



1. 2020/21 Audit Planning and Progress
2. National publications

01

Section 01:

2020/21 Audit Planning and Progress

2020/21 Audit Planning and Progress

Purpose of this report

This report provides the Audit Committee meeting of 22 July 2021 with:

- a summary of the audit planning proposals which form the basis of the formal 2020/21 Audit Strategy Memorandum (ASM). The formal ASM is subject to external engagement quality review and will be shared with the Committee when confirmed.
- an update on progress in delivering the 2020/21 audit (page 10); and
- a summary of recent relevant reports and publications for your information (page 12).

2020/21 Audit Planning

The key points to share with the Audit Committee from the proposed ASM are summarised below and on the following pages.

Audit Responsibilities and Communications

There are no fundamental changes to our audit responsibilities and the scope of the audit. We continue to be responsible, under the National Audit Office's (NAO) Code of Audit Practice, for:

- Audit Opinion - forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements.
- Value for Money - forming a view on the arrangements that the Council has in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
- Fraud - planning and performing our audit so as to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial statements taken as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error.
- Electors' rights - giving an elector, or any representative of the elector, the opportunity to question us about the accounting records of the Council and consider any objection made to the accounts. We also continue to have a broad range of further reporting responsibilities and powers.
- Reporting to the NAO - reporting to the NAO on the consistency of the Council's financial statements and the matters arising from our audit which are relevant to the Council's Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) submission.

2020/21 Audit Planning

Audit Responsibilities and Communications (continued)

Our main communications with the Audit Committee will continue to be:

- Audit Strategy Memorandum – this sets out the key communication points required at the audit planning stage, which are summarised in this document.
- Audit Completion Report – this sets out the key findings from our detailed audit and, amongst other things, the proposed draft audit report on the audited financial statements.
- Auditor’s Annual Report – this replaces the Annual Audit Letter from 2020/21 onwards and includes our commentary on the Council’s value for money arrangements. This form of reporting is a new requirement for this year. The Auditor’s Annual Report is required to be issued within 3 months of the date of the audit opinion on the financial statements.

The Council continues to have £560,780 of listed debt and as such it falls under the definition of an EU Public Interest Entity. In particular there are additional requirements at both the planning and the reporting stages of the audit, culminating in the longer-form audit report we give on the financial statements.

Audit Team responsibilities

As already communicated to the Audit Committee the engagement team for 2020/21 is made up of Mark Surrige (Director and Engagement Lead), Mike Norman (Senior Manager) and Kizzy Atkins (Assistant Manager). Mark and Kizzy formed part of the engagement team in the previous two audit years and Mike has worked with the Council’s management team as part of previous audit engagements.

Audit Approach

The audit approach is broadly the same as in previous years. Our audit approach is designed to provide an audit that complies with all professional requirements. Our work is focused on those aspects of your business which we consider to have a higher risk of material misstatement, such as those impacted by management judgement and estimation, application of new accounting standards, changes of accounting policy, changes to operations or areas which have been found to contain material errors in the past.

The diagram on the following page outlines the procedures we perform at the different stages of the audit and the indicative timeline at this stage based on the current national timetable. The specific dates are subject though to the timely provision of information by third parties and us being able to fully complete the audit procedures to the required quality standards.

The delay in the completion of the 2019/20 audit has meant that we have needed to overlap work on audit years and be flexible in the timing of the audit stages. We are continuing to discuss the detailed year-end audit arrangements with management, together with the timing of the completion stages. It is clear that the impact of the 2019/20 changes to the year-end timetable and delays nationally in completing audits is taking some time to unwind, with MHCLG confirming in March 2021 their expectation that the 2020/21 and 2021/22 draft and audited accounts publication dates will be 31 July and 30 September respectively. These dates are challenging for the entire sector.

2020/21 Audit Planning

Audit Approach (continued)

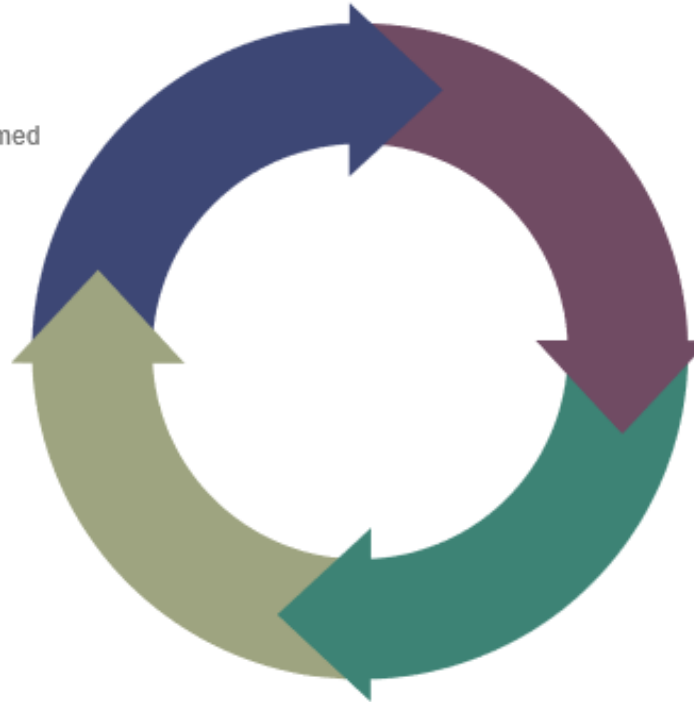
Planning – February/March

- Planning visit and developing our understanding of the Council
- Initial opinion and value for money risk assessments
- Considering proposed accounting treatments and accounting policies
- Developing the audit strategy and planning the audit work to be performed
- Agreeing timetable and deadlines
- Preliminary analytical review

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Completion – November **

- Final review and disclosure checklist of financial statements
- Final partner and EQCR review
- Agreeing content of letter of representation
- Reporting to the Audit Committee
- Reviewing subsequent events
- Signing the auditor's report



Interim – March/April

- Documenting systems and controls
- Performing walkthroughs
- Interim controls testing including tests of IT general controls
- Early substantive testing of transactions
- Reassessment of audit plan and revision if necessary

Fieldwork – July to September *

- Receiving and reviewing draft financial statements
- Technical (ATS) review of financial statements
- Reassessment of audit plan and revision if necessary
- Executing the strategy starting with significant risks and high risk areas
- Communicating progress and issues
- Clearance meeting

* Specific dates for the audit visits being confirmed with management to accommodate audit and client staff availability during this period.

** Although we would hope to complete the audit work ahead of this date the timetable has been impacted by the delayed 2019/20 audit opinion and audit and client availability. Final completion is also subject to, amongst other things, the timely provision of information by third parties and us being able to fully complete the audit procedures to the required quality standards.

2020/21 Audit Planning

Audit Risks

Following the risk assessment approach we have identified the following relevant risks to the audit of financial statements. We have identified the additional audit procedures required to address these risks and will report our findings to the Audit Committee in the Audit Completion Report and our Auditor Report.

Description	Status	Comments
Management Override of Control	Significant Audit Risk	This is a mandatory significant risk on all audits due to the unpredictable way in which such override could occur.
Expenditure Recognition	Significant Audit Risk	Having considered the factors for expenditure recognition, we believe the risk is focused on the year-end and in particular whether cut-off (recognition in the correct financial year) is materially accurate.
Property Valuation	Significant Audit Risk Key Audit Matter	Property related assets are a significant balance on the council's balance sheet. The valuation of these properties is complex and is subject to a number of management assumptions and judgements.
Net Pension Liability Valuation £	Significant Audit Risk Key Audit Matter	The Council's accounts contain material liabilities relating to the local government pension scheme. The Council uses an actuary to provide an annual valuation of these liabilities in line with the requirements of IAS 19 Employee Benefits. Due to the high degree of estimation uncertainty associated with this valuation, we have determined there is a significant risk in this area.
Recognition of Covid-19 Government Grants	Enhanced Audit Risk	Throughout 2020/21, the Government has made available and provided substantial sums of grant support to local authorities. There is a risk the correct accounting treatment has not been applied, with the focus of our testing on the completeness and accuracy of this income in 2020/21.

Materiality

Our audit is planned and performed so as to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement and give a true and fair view. Our provisional materiality assessment is again set based on a benchmark of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement total gross expenditure. We consider that the total gross expenditure remains the key focus of users of the financial statements and, as such, we base our materiality levels around this benchmark. We identify a figure for materiality but identify separate levels for procedures designed to detect individual errors, and also a level above which all identified errors will be reported to the Audit Committee. The initial materiality thresholds are summarized below:

Overall Materiality - £1,450k

Performance Materiality - £1,090k

Trivial threshold for errors to be reported to the Audit Committee - £44k

2020/21 Audit Planning

Non-audit work and independence

We are committed to independence and are required by the Financial Reporting Council to confirm to you at least annually in writing that we comply with the FRC's Ethical Standard. In addition, we communicate any matters or relationship which we believe may have a bearing on our independence or the objectivity of the audit team. We confirm, as at the date of this document, that the engagement team and others in the firm as appropriate, Mazars LLP are independent and comply with relevant ethical requirements. We have confirmed that there are appropriate safeguards in place to address the principal threats to our independence in relation to the following specific non-audit pieces of work the Council has engaged us to carry out.

- Housing Benefits Grant Certification
- Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts Return Certification
- Homes England – Compliance Return

Audit fees

The 2019/20 actual and expected 2020/21 fees are set out below. We will confirm the actual fees later in the year in our Audit Completion Report and Annual Auditor's Report.

Area of work	Description	2020/21 proposed fee	2019/20 Actual fee
Scale fee		36,332	36,332
Fee variations:	Additional fee to reflect the Council's designation as a PIE	5,000	5,000
	Additional work to respond to regulators recommendations regarding the audit of property valuations and net pension liability valuation	7,067	7,067
	Other additional costs relating to additional testing and reporting of uncertainties in key estimates as a result of Covid-19		5,032
	Additional testing as a result of the implementation of new auditing standards, including ISA 220 (Revised): Quality control of an audit of financial statements; ISA 540 (Revised): Auditing accounting estimates and related disclosures.	2,000	
	Additional work arising from changes in the Code of Audit Practice (Value for Money commentary and Annual Auditor's Letter	TBC	

2020/21 Audit Planning

Value for Money

The new Code of Audit Practice (the Code) has changed the way in which we report our findings in relation to Value for Money (VFM) arrangements from 2020/21. Whilst we are still required to be satisfied that the Council has proper arrangements in place, we will now report by exception in our auditor's report where we have identified significant weakness in those arrangements. This is a significant change to the requirements under the previous Code which required us to give a conclusion on the Council's arrangements as part of our auditor's report.

Under the new Code, the key output of our work on VFM arrangements will be a commentary on those arrangements which will form part of the new Auditor's Annual Report.

The Code requires us to structure our commentary to report under three specified criteria:

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

The work falls into three primary phases:

- Planning and risk assessment – obtaining an understanding of the Council's arrangements for each specified reporting criteria.
- Additional risk based procedures and evaluation - Where our planning work identifies risks of significant weaknesses, we will undertake additional procedures to determine whether there is a significant weakness.
- Reporting - We will provide a summary of the work we have undertaken and our judgements against each of the specified reporting criteria as part of our commentary on arrangements in the Auditor's Annual Report.

We have not identified any significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements as part of the planning and risk assessment work to date.

2020/21 Audit Progress

Summary

We have included at page 5 of this report a summary of the key stages of the audit. As described earlier the delay in the completion of the 2019/20 audit has meant that we have needed to overlap work on audit years and be flexible in the timing of the audit stages.

The key progress points to highlight at this stage are summarised below.

Audit of the Financial Statements

This document and the formal Audit Strategy Memorandum completes the Planning stage. We are this month entering the Fieldwork stage and completing the outstanding work from the Interim stage, including following up with officers on the earlier information requests.

The main on-site fieldwork visits confirmed so far are scheduled for w/c 19 July and w/c 23 August. We have agreed the working papers required for the visits and made a start on some of the early substantive testing and sampling required for these visits. We are continuing to discuss with management the scheduling of the further work required to complete the work, including the assessment of the information requested from the Pension Fund auditor. We will keep the Audit Committee informed on progress and any matters arising.

Value for Money Conclusion

We have discussed the assessment criteria with management and have been provided with a self assessment. We are working through the evidence provided to support the self assessment and have at this stage not identified any significant weaknesses to bring to the Audit Committee's attention. We will provide our full commentary on the Council's arrangements in our Auditor's Annual Report later in the year and update the Audit Committee if any significant matters emerge during the work.

Non-Audit Work

We have carried out planning discussions with officers and Internal Audit for the Housing Benefits Grant Certification work and agreed the initial testing sample. DWP has now confirmed the deadline for the completion of this work is 31 January 2022.

02

Section 02: **National publications**

National publications

	Publication/update	Key points
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA)		
1.	Capital Strategy Guidance: A Whole Organisation Approach	Publication aims to support continuous improvement and includes a checklist.
2.	Successful Collaborations in the Public Services: the role of internal audit	Guide for internal auditors reviewing 'collaborations', but also of use to a wider audience given increased joint working.
3.	CIPFA Bulletin 09: Closure of the 2020-21 Financial Statements, 30 April 2021	This bulletin provides guidance for local government bodies on a range of issues that may need to be considered as part of their 2020-21 accounts preparation.
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)		
4.	Update to audit review response	New powers for Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority on local government audit. Public Sector Audit Appointments is reconfirmed as appointing body for audit procurement and contract management.
5.	Methodology for allocating £15 million to local bodies and review of Appointing Person regulations	Consultations were held on allocation of the funds.
National Audit Office (NAO)		
6.	Initial learning from the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic	Latest NAO report on learning from the government response to the pandemic.
7.	Framework to review programmes update	Framework for reviewing major programmes, along with examples of what 'good' looks like.
8.	NAO Updated Guidance for Auditors, April 2021	Revised guidance for VFM arrangements work under the new Code of Audit Practice, including extended deadlines, and updated guidance on consideration of going concern in the public sector context.

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

CIPFA

1. Capital Strategy Guidance: A Whole Organisation Approach, May 2021

This guidance focuses on a whole organisation approach to prudent, sustainable and resilient local government investment.

The development of capital strategies has been challenging and difficult to implement fully and it is clear from the examples examined that there is still room for improvement for all local government organisations. The intention of this capital strategy guidance is to learn from what has been achieved to date and to support local government organisations with continuous improvement and refresh. CIPFA has identified areas for improvement that may help in the form of a checklist.

This guidance has been brought to life by including points to consider and extracts from capital strategies reported in 2020, although CIPFA recognises that most were published prior to the more serious impact of COVID-19.

<https://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/publications/c/capital-strategy-guidance-a-whole-organisation-approach>

2. Successful Collaborations in the Public Services: the role of internal audit, May 2021

The guide considers key concerns for internal auditors as they become involved in collaborative arrangements including the need for a 'singular' entity; how they can safeguard their independence and how assurance can be co-ordinated across providers. The guide also sets out issues for the internal auditor to review at each stage of the collaborative process to help inform audit scope. The publication covers the following:

- collaborative arrangements – the role of the internal auditor: benefits and barriers;
- pressures to collaborate and emerging models;
- stages of collaboration and the role of the internal auditor at each stage; and
- working with other assurance providers and internal auditors.

The guide draws on the good governance principles set out in the *International Framework: Good Governance in the Public Sector* (CIPFA/IFAC, 2014) throughout. It will assist internal auditors to perform effectively in their roles in relation to collaborations and add value for their entities. It will also be useful for others providing assurance on, or looking to establish, collaborative arrangements, including audit committees, external auditors and chief financial officers. It will also assist those, such as members of the wider governing body, wishing to gain a greater understanding of how internal auditors can assist public service entities in achieving the objectives of collaborative ventures.

<https://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/publications/s/successful-collaborations-in-the-public-services-the-role-of-internal-audit>

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

CIPFA

3. CIPFA Bulletin 09: Closure of the 2020-21 Financial Statements, April 2021

Auditors will wish to be aware that CIPFA have published Bulletin 09: Closure of the 2020-21 Financial Statements. This bulletin provides guidance for local government bodies on a range of issues that may need to be considered as part of their 2020-21 accounts preparation.

Hot topics include accounting for grant funding in the pandemic, accounting for dedicated schools grant deficits and accounting for collection fund surpluses and deficits in 2020/21.

<https://www.cipfa.org/policy-and-guidance/cipfa-bulletins/cipfa-bulletin-09-closure-of-the-202021-financial-statements>

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

MHCLG

4. MHCLG – update to audit review response, May 2021

Further measures to help ensure taxpayers get value for money by improving the effectiveness and transparency of local government audit, were announced by the government.

The Audit, Reporting and Governance Authority (ARGA) – the new regulator being established to replace the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) – will be strengthened with new powers over local government audit, protecting public funds and ensuring councils are best serving taxpayers. The new regulator, which will contain a standalone local audit unit, will bring all regulatory functions into one place, to better coordinate a new, simplified local audit framework.

ARGA will continue to act as regulator and carry out audit quality reviews as the FRC does now. It will now also provide annual reports on the state of local audit and take over responsibility for the updated Code of Local Audit Practice – the guidelines councils are required to follow.

The government has confirmed that the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) will continue as the appointing body for local audit, in charge of procurement and contract management for local government auditors.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-publishes-update-to-audit-review-response>

5. MHCLG - Methodology for allocating £15 million to local bodies and review of Appointing Person regulations, 20 April 2021

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) announced as part of its response to the Redmond Review, that it would provide £15 million in additional funding in 2021/22 towards external audit fees and the development of the proposed new standardised statement of service information and costs. The department carried out a short, four-week consultation, seeking views on the methodology for allocating these funds to local bodies.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-allocation-of-15-million-to-local-bodies-for-audit/redmond-review-response-changes-to-the-audit-fees-methodology-for-allocating-15-million-to-local-bodies>

Running alongside this, the department carried out a separate six-week consultation on the implementation of changes to the fee setting process for principal bodies set out in the Local Audit (Appointing Person) Regulations 2015. The consultation primarily was seeking views on amending the timescale for setting fee scales, enabling the appointing person to consult on and approve a standardised additional fee, and for such payments to be made in year rather than at the completion of the audit.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/amendments-to-local-audit-fee-setting-arrangements>

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

National Audit Office

6. NAO Report – Initial learning from the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, May 2021

The NAO has recently published its *Initial learning from the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic* report, which is part of a programme of work the NAO is undertaking to support Parliament in its scrutiny of government’s response to COVID-19. The report finds that the COVID-19 pandemic has stress-tested the government’s ability to deal with unforeseen events and potential shocks. Government has often acted at unprecedented speed to respond to a virus which has caused dramatic disruption to people’s lives, public service provision and society as a whole. Government had to continue to deliver essential public services, while reprioritising resources to deliver its response to the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting staff to work from home. In its response, Government has had to streamline decision-making, work across departments and public bodies and use a range of delivery structures.

Departments will need to reflect on the lessons learned to ensure that they capitalise on the benefits and opportunities these new ways of working have brought.

This report draws out learning from the reports that the NAO has published to date, as well as other work it has published that covered the COVID-19 pandemic. It sets out this learning across six themes, with a summary shown below:

Risk management

- Identifying the wide-ranging consequences of major emergencies and developing playbooks for the most significant impacts.
- Being clear about risk appetite and risk tolerance as the basis for choosing which trade-offs should be made in emergencies.

Transparency and public trust

- Being clear and transparent about what government is trying to achieve, so that it can assess whether it is making a difference.
- Meeting transparency requirements and providing clear documentation to support decision-making, with transparency being used as a control when other measures, such as competition, are not in place.
- Producing clear and timely communications.

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

National Audit Office

6. NAO Report – Initial learning from the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, May 2021 (continued)

Data and evidence

- Improving the accuracy, completeness and interoperability of key datasets and sharing them promptly across delivery chains.
- Monitoring how programmes are operating, forecasting changes in demand as far as possible, and tackling issues arising from rapid implementation or changes in demand.
- Gathering information from end-users and front-line staff more systematically to test the effectiveness of programmes and undertake corrective action when required.

Coordination and delivery models

- Ensuring that there is effective coordination and communication between government departments, central and local government, and private and public sector bodies.
- Clarifying responsibilities for decision-making, implementation and governance, especially where delivery chains are complex and involve multiple actors.
- Integrating health and social care and placing social care on an equal footing with the NHS.
- Balancing the relative merits of central, universal offers of support against targeted local support.

Supporting and protecting people

- Understanding to what extent the pandemic and government’s response have widened inequalities, and taking action where they have.
- Providing appropriate support to front-line and other key workers to cope with the physical, mental and emotional demands of responding to the pandemic.

Financial and workforce pressures

The NAO will continue to draw out learning from the government’s response to the pandemic in its future work.

<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Initial-learning-from-the-governments-response-to-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf>

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

National Audit Office

6. NAO Report – Initial learning from the government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, May 2021 (continued)

Financial and workforce pressures

- Placing the NHS and local government on a sustainable footing, to improve their ability to respond to future emergencies.
- Ensuring that existing systems can respond effectively and flexibly to emergencies, including provision for spare or additional capacity and redeploying staff where needed.
- Considering which COVID-19-related spending commitments are likely to be retained for the long term, and what these additional spending commitments mean for long-term financial sustainability.

The NAO will continue to draw out learning from the government’s response to the pandemic in its future work.

<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Initial-learning-from-the-governments-response-to-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf>

7. NAO report - Framework to review programmes update April 2021

This NAO publication sets out updated questions to assess how well programmes are delivered and to highlight the risks a programme faces. Although designed for an audit approach, project professionals and those reviewing programmes may find these questions useful to challenge themselves about how well a programme is being delivered.

The framework comprises 18 key questions grouped into the four elements the NAO considers when it audits programmes:

- Purpose: need for programme, portfolio management and dependencies, stakeholder engagement.
- Value: options appraisal, business case, costs and duration, benefits.
- Set-up: governance and assurance, leadership and culture, delivery resources, putting the programme into practice, risk management
- Delivery and variation management: delivery strategy, change control, responding to external change, performance management, lessons learned, transition to business as usual.

<https://www.nao.org.uk/report/framework-to-review-programmes-update-april-2021/>

NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS

National Audit Office

8. NAO Updated Guidance for Auditors, April 2021

In April 2021, the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) approved and published updated auditor guidance:

Auditor Guidance Note 03 (AGN 03) - Auditors' Work on Value for Money Arrangements. This has been updated to enable auditors to give their opinion on the financial statements if they have not yet completed all their VFM arrangements work (where there is no material impact on the opinion), including the approach to reporting any further issues if necessary by exception when auditors issue their certificate. The AGN also introduced revised deadlines for the Auditor's Annual Report, which includes the new commentary on VFM arrangements, of up to 3 months after issuing the audit opinion.

Auditor Guidance Note 07 (AGN 07) – Auditor Reporting. This was updated to bring it into line with AGN 03 as above.

Supplementary Guidance Note 01 (SGN 01) - Going Concern – Auditors' responsibilities for local public bodies. The SGN focus is primarily on *Practice Note (PN) 8: Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom, (Revised 2020)*, setting an expectation that auditors will follow the approach it sets out. This recognises that going concern in the public sector context includes the concept of the 'continued provision of services' and the legislative basis for public services, which means that the circumstances that will give rise to a material uncertainty in going concern are relatively limited and rare, and would normally require legislative changes. This view is also reflected in the CIPFA Code, which recognises that the financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis.

The NAO guidance does, however, highlight the wider issue of financial sustainability and funding for public services. Management will still need to undertake a going concern assessment, and disclose an appropriate narrative within its financial statements in relation to the impact of the pandemic and pressures on funding, and disclose any potential material uncertainties should they exist.

All of the NAO auditor guidance is publicly available at this link: <https://www.nao.org.uk/code-audit-practice/guidance-and-information-for-auditors/>

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AUDIT COMMITTEE

22 JULY 2021

SUBJECT: DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2020/21

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND TOWN CLERK

LEAD OFFICER: COLLEEN WARREN, FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the draft Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2021, together with a short summary of the key issues reflected in the statutory financial statements, for scrutiny.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The Statement of Accounts (SOA) for 2020/21 provides a comprehensive picture of the Council's financial circumstances and are compiled to demonstrate probity and stewardship of public funds.

2.2 The Council is statutorily required to publish its Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 with an audit opinion and certificate by no later than 30th November 2021. This date has been extended from the ordinary deadline of 31st July as a result of Covid19.

2.3 The Audit Committee should note that the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 are still subject to external audit. The audit of the accounts is being undertaken by Mazars, who have commenced the audit in July. Should any material changes be necessary as a result of this external audit work, these will be reported to a meeting of this Committee when the audited Statement of Accounts are presented for approval.

2.4 The Council must make the Statement of Accounts available for public inspection for 10 working days. Following notification from Mazars, this runs from 2nd August until 13th August 2021 and the External Auditor is available to answer questions during this period.

2.5 The Council is also required to provide a documented annual review of the effectiveness of its governance arrangements (Annual Governance Statement), which sits alongside the Statement of Accounts. The overall level of assurance provided in 2020/21 was substantial (green) and is in line with our Code of Corporate Governance. However, there are currently two defined significant issues. In respect of IT Disaster Recovery significant progress has been made, however due to the impact of COVID19 on working arrangements it was felt that this issue should remain on the list of significant issues, and this will be regularly reported by management to the Audit Committee. In respect of the second issue the Vision 2025 the strategy was adopted but due to COVID19 there has been no formal launch. Vision 2025 may also need to be

revised to take into account the impact of COVID19 on the people and the City. These will be regularly reported by management to the Audit Committee. There were no new significant issues identified in 2021.

3. Background

3.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Statement of Accounts to be certified by the Council's Chief Finance Officer by the 31st May each year. However, due to the Covid19 pandemic this date has been relaxed to 31st July 2021. The Accounts are then released to be audited by the Council's external auditor, Mazars. After completion of the audit the accounts must be published with the audit opinion and certificate, and before that must have been approved by Full Council, by no later than 31st July each year, this date has also been relaxed to 30th September 2021. The timescales involved with the approval of the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21 are:

a) Report draft accounts to Audit Committee	22 nd July 2021
b) Report to Audit Committee	TBC September 2021
c) Report to the Executive	20 th September 2021
d) Approval by Council	21 st September 2021

3.2 In order to ensure that the statutory deadline of 30th September is met Mazars must complete their audit and issue the relevant audit opinion. Should any material changes be necessary as a result of this external audit work, these will be reported to a meeting of this Committee when the audited Statement of Accounts will be presented for approval. The Audit Committee will also receive the Audit Opinion from Mazars at that meeting.

3.3 There is a great deal of technical detail contained in the statutory rigid format of the Accounts that is not always easily understood by the reader unless they are familiar with accounting and audit standards. Training has been provided prior to this meeting to assist members in their understanding of the accounts and a short summary of the accounts will be produced to accompany the Final Statement of Accounts when it is presented to members in September. The remainder of this report sets out a short summary, which highlights the key figures in the financial statements which it is hoped will prompt questions in order for the Council to promote greater accountability and transparency for the significant sums of public money entrusted to the Council.

4. Summary of Key Issues in the Financial Statements

4.1 The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

4.1.1 **The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)** (SOA page 22) – in line with statutory accounting practice the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) shows the Council's actual performance for the year measured in terms of the resources consumed and generated over the last 12 months. It should not be misinterpreted as the financial outturn position of the Council as this statement contains a number of accounting entries required under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Regulation

allows local authorities to reverse these amounts out of the accounts before determining their outturn position. There is a note to the accounts (Expenditure & Funding Analysis (SOA page 53)) that adjusts the expenditure that is chargeable to general fund and the HRA balances (as per the actual outturn position) to the accounting entries in the CIES under IFRS. To further assist members interpretation of the CIES the table below summarises the reconciliation between the net surplus on the Provision of Services of £12.574m in the CIES to the outturn position of an increase in General Fund Balances of £0.432m and an increase on HRA balances of £0.075m as reported in the Financial outturn report (Executive 24th June 2021).

	£m	£m
Net (surplus)/deficit on the Provision of Services		-12.574

Of which:

General Fund	£m	£m
Net (surplus)/deficit on the Provision of Services		3.393
Adjust for:		
Depreciation, revaluation losses and gains & impairment of non-current assets	-5.567	
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under Statute	-0.97	
Direct Revenue financing of capital expenditure	0.034	
Contribution to/from the pensions reserve	-2.394	
Debt repayment and premiums & discounts on debt	1.507	
Short-term compensated absences	-0.167	
Contribution to Government's Housing Capital Receipts Pool	-0.529	
Capital grants & contributions unapplied credited to CI&ES	2.902	
Adjustment for Collection Fund	-11.768	
Adjustment for Financial Instruments	0.002	
Transfer to/from Earmarked reserves	13.125	
Total Adjustments		-3.825
(Increase)/decrease in General Fund Balances		-0.432

Of which:

HRA	£m	£m
Net (surplus)/deficit on the Provision of Services		-15.967
Adjust for:		
Depreciation, revaluation losses and gains & impairment of non-current assets	12.43	
Direct Revenue financing of capital expenditure	0.048	
Gain/loss on the sale of non-current assets	0.174	
Contribution to/from the pensions reserve	-1.298	
Short-term compensated absences	-0.142	
Capital grants & contributions unapplied credited to CI&ES	0.453	
Transfer to/from the HRA	2.898	
Transfer to/from Earmarked reserves	1.329	
Total Adjustments		15.892
(Increase)/decrease in HRA Balances		-0.075

Overall (Increase)/decrease in Balances		-0.507
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4.1.2 Clearly the most significant issue for Members to be aware of from the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is how the Council performed financially in 2020/21, in comparison to the revised budget for the year. As previously reported, there was a projected underspend against the General Fund budget of £122.7k at quarter 3, this underspend has increased and provisional outturn is now an overall budget surplus of £148.4k.

4.1.3 The Housing Revenue Account is reporting a provisional underspend against the revised budget of £74k. Allowing for this adjustment, HRA balances were £1.075m and the HRA Repairs Accounts balance was £1.250m as at 31st March 2021.

4.1.4 Further details on these are provided in the Narrative Report in the Statement of Accounts (SOA page 3) and were subject to a separate report to Performance Scrutiny Committee and Executive 22nd June 2021 and 24th June 2021 respectively.

4.2 **The Balance Sheet** (SOA page 23)

4.2.1 **The Balance Sheet** is fundamental to understanding the Council's financial position at the year-end. It shows the Council's balances and reserves, long-term indebtedness, and the non-current and current assets employed in the Council's operations. The key information for members to be aware of in the Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021 are:

4.2.2 **General Balances** – General balances have increased by £0.507m during the year, as analysed below:

Description	Opening Balance £m	Closing Balance £m	Increase/ (Decrease) £m
General Fund balances	2.236	2.668	0.432
HRA balances	0.995	1.070	0.075
HRS	0	0	0
Total	3.231	3.738	0.507

4.2.3 **Earmarked Reserves** - in total monies carried forward to pay for specific future commitments (including the insurance fund) have increased by £14.454m, as analysed below:

Description	Opening Balance £m	Closing Balance £m	Increase/ (Decrease) £m
Other Specific Reserves	11.589	26.043	14.454

This is due to a number of contributions to and from earmarked reserves as reported as part of the 2020/21 Provisional outturn to the Executive 24th June 2021 and as detailed in Note 10 (Transfers to/ from Earmarked Reserves) in the Statement of Accounts (SOA page 62). The most significant of these contributions was in relation to timing differences arising from the receipt of funding from MHCLG for Business Rate Reliefs awarded in response to Covid19, and the subsequent declaration of a deficit on the Collection Fund. Funding of £11.388m was transferred to the Business Rates Volatility Reserve to be used to finance the Collection Fund deficits in 21/22, 22/23 and 23/24.

4.2.4 **Liquidity** – a reliable indication of liquidity is the ratio of current assets (excluding inventories) to current liabilities. The Council’s current assets (excluding inventories) of £64.359m exceed current liabilities of £43.232 by a ratio of 1.49:1, which represents an increase from the previous year’s ratio of 1.38:1. This is due to a decrease in short term borrowing (as per the Council’s borrowing strategy).

4.2.5 **Debtors** – debtors have increased by £16.28m to £28.389m. The increase is mainly due to increases in balances on the Central Government and County Council shares of the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund deficits (£15.1m). These deficits will be recouped during primarily in 21/22.

4.2.6 **Creditors** – have increased by £18.549m to £33.814m. This is mainly due to S31Grants and Business Rates adjustment account (£15.7m) which absorbs the timing differences between statutory accounting requirements and full accruals accounting on the Collection Fund, and Covid 19 Grants (£5.5m).

4.3 Cross Cutting Key Issues

4.3.1 There are a number of areas that have significant impacts or are of particular interest that sit both within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Balance Sheet. To aid members understanding of the Accounts these are summarised below:

4.3.2 **Non-Current Assets** are shown in the Balance Sheet and represent the Council’s land, building, heritage, community and intangible assets.

- **The value of non-current assets and assets held for sale in the Balance Sheet has increased by £14.7m (4%) to £430m between 31st March 2020 and 31st March 2021 (see the Balance Sheet and Notes 14,**

15 and 16 for further detail). This net increase is the result of a number of factors:

- **Revaluations** - The Council's Assets are valued on a rolling programme, which ensures each asset is re-valued every 5 years as at the 31st March. In addition to this, all assets are reviewed for any material change in their value at the end of each financial year. The results for 20/21 have seen an **overall increase in value of £7m**, which is the net result of valuation gains and losses across a range of assets.

Accounting rules require that where a balance has not built up on the Revaluation Reserve for an individual asset (a reserve which holds accumulated gains following previous revaluations upwards) then any revaluation losses (downwards revaluation in asset values) must be recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CI&ES) and then reversed out in the Movement in Reserves Statement before it impacts on Council Tax payers. Accounting rules also require that where a revaluation loss previously recognised in the CI&ES on an individual asset is subsequently reversed by an upwards revaluation, then the revaluation gain should be recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement up to the value of the original revaluation loss. Within the £7m net upwards movements due to revaluation gains and losses in 20/21, there were:

- **£9.4m of net revaluation gain** required to be charged to Cost of Services in the CIES. This is mainly due to reflecting the social housing value of housing stock (£12.4m).
- **£2.4m of net downwards revaluations** were reflected in the Revaluation Reserve (shown in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the CIES). This was mainly due to the downward revaluation (£3.2m) an increase in the council's land and buildings.
- **Additions - New capital investment in assets belonging to the Council totalled £18.6m.** The main areas of expenditure include £12m spent on the Council's new build and acquisition programme, £3.7m improving Council dwellings including re-roofing, kitchens and landscaping and £0.635m improving our parks and open spaces. To pay for this investment, the Council has used £3.74m of capital grants and contributions, £1.63m of capital receipts, £4.62m of the Major Repairs Reserve, £8.54m of unsupported borrowing, and £0.08m of direct revenue financing.
- **Depreciation** – a charge is made to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure account for depreciation to reflect the use of assets in the provision of services during the year. The value of non-current assets in the Balance Sheet is reduced by an

equivalent amount. For General Fund services this charge is reversed out in the Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS) and replaced with a statutory charge for the repayment of debt. In the HRA under self financing, depreciation is a real charge to the service however, it is set aside in the Major Repairs Reserve for future investment in the housing stock. **In 2020/21 total depreciation was £9.09m** (of which £2.2m was charged for non-HRA dwellings and was replaced in the MiRS with £1.5m for the repayment of debt and £6.7m depreciation was charged to the HRA which is available in the Major Repairs Reserve for future investment).

- **Disposals – assets valued at £1.395m in the Balance Sheet were disposed** of in 2020/21. This included 33 Right to Buy sales of council dwellings.

4.3.3 **Pensions** – the payments made by the Council to the Lincolnshire County Council Pension Fund each year as employer contributions to the scheme and any addition costs relating to pension strain etc are reflected in the financial outturn position of the Council. However, accounting practice requires that in the Statement of Accounts pension costs are shown when the Council is committed to give them, even if the actual giving may be years into the future. This means that:

- The costs of providing retirement benefits to employees are recognised in the accounting period in which the benefits are earned by employees, and the related finance costs and any other changes in value of assets and liabilities are recognised in the accounting periods in which they arise.
- The financial statements reflect the liabilities arising from the Council's retirement obligations.
- The financial statements disclose the cost of providing retirement benefits and related gains, losses, assets and liabilities

Full details are provided in Note 44 to the accounts – Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (*SOA page 101*). The impact of these accounting requirements in the core financial statements are:

- **Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement (CIES)** - The cost of retirement benefits in the CIES is shown as an actuarial estimate of £4.973m reflecting the retirement benefits earned during 2020/21 and to be funded in the future. This includes £6.477m current service costs and a net interest cost on the defined benefit obligations of £1.896m. This net cost is reversed out in the Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS) and is replaced by the actual amount charged for pension contributions in the year of £4.681m.
- **Balance Sheet** – The Pension Reserve shows the underlying commitments

that the Council has in the long term to pay retirement benefits based on an assessment by the pension schemes actuary. The balance on the Pensions Reserve is the net position of the scheme's liabilities and assets. During 2019/20 the net liability has increased by £27.252m to £109.241m. The actuarial assumptions are detailed in note 44 to the accounts 'Defined benefit pension scheme'.

It is important for members to be aware that the statutory arrangements for funding the remaining liability of £109.241m means that this deficit will be made good by the increased level of annual employer contributions payable to the Pension Fund over the remaining estimated average working life of our employees in the Pension Scheme. The financial position of the Council remains healthy.

4.3.4 **Officer remuneration** – note 35 to the accounts (SOA page 92) details senior staff salaries and the number of employees receiving more than £50k remuneration during the year (this includes receipt of any redundancy payments). Also detailed within the note is the redundancy/pension/payment in lieu costs paid in year, in line with Executive approvals of Towards Financial Sustainability business cases and the Council's redundancy policy.

4.3.5 **Borrowing** – the Council takes borrowing to fund capital expenditure. It also occasionally takes short term borrowing for cash flow purposes.

- Between 31st March 2020 and 31st March 2021, the Council's total borrowing increased to £123.45m (excluding accrued interest which is shown in the Balance Sheet under short-term borrowing as at 31st March 2021).
- The total borrowing can be split between short term borrowing (payable within 12 months) of £7.71m and long term borrowing of £115.74m.
- The average rate of interest payable on borrowing was 3.25% which is a slight decrease on 2019/20 (3.62%) and due to the new low rate shorter-term loans taken being.
- The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for 2020/21 includes £3.9m interest payable on borrowing (excluding leases) of which £1.5m relates to the General Fund and £2.4m to the HRA.

The maturity profile of the outstanding borrowing as at 31st March 2021 is as follows:

Within	£m	% of Total Debt
1 year	7.7	6.20%
1 – 2 years	8.2	6.60%
2 – 5 years	6.1	4.90%
5 -10 years	10.7	8.70%
10 years and over	90.7	73.50%
Total	123.4	100.00%

4.3.6 **Investments** – in line with its Treasury Management Strategy, the Council invests surplus cash on the money markets, typically for periods less than one year to approved organisations, although core cash balances may be invested for periods over 1 year if interest rates and market conditions are favourable.

- As at 31st March 2021, total investments had increased by £3.35m from £30.55m to £33.9m compared to the previous year end.
- Average investment balances during 2020/21 were £35.8m, compared to £28.8m in 2019/20.
- The average interest rate received on investments in 2020/21 was 0.20% (a decrease of 0.64% on the average rate achieved in 2019/20 due to the low yield available on balances), which was 0.27% above the target average 7-day LIBID rate.

5. **Strategic Priorities**

5.1 The Council's Statement of Accounts are a financial summary of the Council's activities in support of its Vision 2025 and Strategic Priorities during the financial year 2020/21.

5.2 Communication - The draft Statement of Accounts is available on the Council's website and the period of public inspection has been advertised. The completion of the audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts will be published on the Council website by 30th November 2021. The Statement of Accounts will also be made available on the website with a summary version of the accounts published in the Council's Annual Report.

6. **Organisational Impacts**

6.1 Finance - The financial implications are contained throughout this report.

6.2 Legal - In accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2021 the Statement of Accounts must be approved and published by the Council, together with the audit opinion and certificate, by the 30th September 2021.

7. **Risk Implications**

7.1 There are no direct risk implications arising as a result of this report.

8. **Recommendation**

8.1 The Audit Committee are invited to scrutinise the Statement of Accounts.

Key Decision

No

Key Decision Reference No.

N/A

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply

No

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

No

Does the report contain Appendices?

Yes

List of Background Papers:

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020-2025
Financial Performance - Outturn 2020/21

Lead Officer:

Colleen Warren, Financial Services Manager
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STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021



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An introduction to the City of Lincoln's 2020/21 Statement of Accounts by J Gibson, Chief Finance Officer, Section 151 Officer.

The Statement of Accounts

The purpose of the Accounts, which follow, is to give electors, those subject to locally levied taxes and charges, Members of the Council, employees and other interested parties clear information about the Council's finances. The Accounts show the financial performance for 2020/21 and the financial position at 31 March 2021. The Accounts present expenditure and income incurred by the Council in the financial year 2020/21 and highlight changes in the financial position of the Council over the course of the year.

The accounts of the Council are, by their nature, both technical and complex. The information contained within the Accounts for 2020/21 is presented as simply and clearly as possible and the Narrative Report explains some of the statements and provides a summary of the Council's financial performance as at 31st March 2021 and its financial prospects.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK (the Code) published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

The Statement of Accounts consists of various sections and statements, which are briefly explained below:

A Narrative Report – this provides information on the format of this Statement of Accounts as well as a review of the financial position of the Council for the financial year.

The Statement of Responsibilities – this details the responsibilities of the Council and the Section 151 Officer concerning the Council's financial affairs and the actual Statement of Accounts.

The Audit Opinion and Certificate – this is provided by Mazars LLP following the completion of the annual audit.

The Accounting Policies – this statement explains the basis for the recognition, measurement and disclosure of transactions and other events in the accounts.

The Core Financial Statements, comprising:

- **The Movements in Reserves Statement** – this statement shows the movement in year on the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into 'usable' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other unusable reserves.
- **The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)** – this statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with accounting standards, rather than the amount funded from taxation. The Council raises taxation to cover the cost of expenditure in accordance with

regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The taxation position is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

- **The Balance Sheet** – this statement shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets (assets less liabilities) of the Council are matched by the reserves held by the Council.
- **The Cash Flow Statement** – this statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the year. It shows how the Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities.

The Notes to the Financial Statements – these provide supporting and explanatory information on the Financial Statements.

The Supplementary Statements, comprising:

- **The Housing Revenue Income and Expenditure Statement** - this statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and government grants. The Council charges rents to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis of which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the HRA Statement.
- **The Movement on the HRA Statement** – this statement takes the outturn on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement and reconciles it to the surplus or deficit for the year on the HRA Balance, calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- **The Collection Fund Statement** - this statement is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities (such as the City of Lincoln Council) to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the Council in relation to the collection from Council Tax and Business Rate payers and distribution to Lincolnshire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire (PCCL) and Government of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).

Financial Summary 2020/21

The City of Lincoln Council is a high performing an innovative organisation, focussed on providing quality services and delivering outcomes that matter. Our Vision 2025 is an ambitious strategic plan that is helping to transform both the Council and the City through our five strategic priorities.

Over the last decade the Council, alongside the majority of other local authorities, has experienced unprecedented financial challenges in various forms. We have had to adapt to; the impact of severe, unprecedented, central government funding reductions; radical reform of the methodology for funding local government - where councils are self-sufficient funded from local taxes with limited reliance on Central Government, changes in the use and demand for services; as well as escalating costs.

The reform of the methodology of funding local government has in particular transferred a significant amount of financial risk and uncertainty to local authorities, creating a greater degree of uncertainty over the budget planning parameters for the Council than has been experienced previously.

In response to this challenging financial environment the Council embraced a forward thinking, ambitious and commercial approach in maintaining a sound financial position. We have a strong track record of planning ahead, securing savings in advance, shifting away from traditional cost cutting exercises to more ambitious and forward thinking opportunities, re-investing in more efficient ways of working, adopting a more commercial approach, prioritising resources for economic development measures, whilst making careful use of reserves to meet funding gaps and mitigate risks. This is an approach that has served the Council well and allowed us to deliver savings in excess of £9m over the last decade, a significant reduction in comparison to the overall net expenditure budget.

The Council's successful financial management to date has enabled the protection of core services, whilst at the same time ensuring that resources are directed towards the priority areas in the Council's Vision.

However, the COVID19 pandemic, has had such devastating effect on our lives, families, friends, neighbours, communities and of course on our workplaces. The Council, like all other businesses, has had to make dramatic changes, not only to ensure that we can keep our critical services functioning, but also like councils across the country, to deliver a community leadership role for our city in this time of crisis.

We have created new services to support vulnerable people, taken rough sleepers off the streets and into safe accommodation and ensured key services such as kerbside waste and recycling collections have continued as usual. We have effectively led our communities during the emergency response and are now leading on supporting our communities as we tackle the social and economic challenges ahead.

These dramatic changes brought about by Covid19 have though taken its toll on the financial resilience of the Council as our income streams have plummeted and we have needed to incur additional expenditure to ensure our critical services functioned and to respond to consequences of the pandemic.

In response to the financial risks we were exposed to, and in advance of any financial support from Government, we took early action in 2020/21 to implement a range of measures to reduce some areas of expenditure. These measures were aimed at ensuring we were able to continue to deliver our critical services and to ensure our balances remained at an adequate level to provide resilience for future years.

Although these measures were primarily one-off opportunities and not ongoing reductions in services, they did still, in some circumstances limit service standards and performance during 2020/21. This was as a result of recruitment being initially restricted, expenditure budgets reduced, and staff furloughed. These interventions were not all 'easy wins' and will have had implications for the Council both now and in future years.

Subsequently an extensive financial support package was provided by the Government for all local authorities which included a sales, fees and charges income compensation scheme, un-ringfenced grant allocations and a local tax income guarantee scheme.

Although both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account have maintained balanced budget positions in 2020/21 this does not mean that the financial issues for the Council are resolved, it simply means that the in-year budget challenges have been addressed.

Performance

The Council has a new strategic plan known as Vision 2025, covering the period April 2020 to March 2025. This shared vision for the city retains the same key vision statement "Together let's deliver Lincoln's ambitious future", but now includes an additional aspiration of "Let's address the challenge of climate change".

We had to take the decision not to commence new projects as an immediate response to the pandemic situation, although a few larger ongoing projects kept moving throughout, albeit at a slower pace than originally envisaged.

Due to the impact of the pandemic, reporting on performance has had to change a little during 2020/21 to reflect on how the council not only kept their critical services going through the initial stages of the pandemic, but also delivered their community leadership role for the city.

A first report in 2020/21 called "Emerging from the Pandemic" was published in November 2021 as a joint Q1/2 performance report and covers a mix of performance results where they are available as well as updates on what all services are doing to maintain and support their customers, whilst planning their recovery back to a new normal.

A second report "Operational Performance Report Q3/4 2020/21" was published in July 2021 and takes us back to being able to report performance against targets for the majority of our services.

Together these two documents show how the council has been able to maintain all critical services, whilst also delivering key new services to vulnerable residents and to our businesses - and as we exit the 2020/21 year, that whilst performance has undoubtedly been hit by the effects of Covid-19, we have been able to demonstrate robust responses where it was needed.



Revenue Income and Expenditure

General Fund

The General Fund covers all net spending by the Council on services other than those accounted for in the Housing Revenue Account. General Fund services are partly paid for by government grants and contributions from Retained Business Rates, with the balance being funded from Council Tax and income from fees and charges.

For 2020/21, the approved net expenditure budget for General Fund services was £12.677m. After allowing for planned contributions of £0.286m to non-earmarked general reserves the total Net General Fund Budget for 2020/21 was £12.963m.

These budgets were set prior to the onset of the Covid19 pandemic and as a result there are a significant number of variations in income and expenditure against the approved budget, arising from the impacts of the pandemic, the measures taken to address the budget pressures and the financial support provided by Government.

In response to the pandemic, we have had to adjust our service provision to meet the needs of its users and residents as well as establish new services/responses cells and meet increased costs through contractual arrangements, this has led to the General Fund incurring a considerable amount of exceptional expenditure.

The most significant impact of Covid19 has been on the Council's income streams with monthly income levels plummeting across a range of discretionary services as well as through investments and rental streams, as a result of the shutdown of the economy and its likely phased path to recovery. The Council's reliance on local income streams has increased significantly in recent years as Government funding has reduced through austerity measures and new funding mechanisms have been introduced resulting in the Council having to be more self-sufficient and secure its own funding sources.

In response to the financial risks we were exposed to, and in advance of any financial support from Government, early action was taken in 2020/21 to implement a range of measures aimed at reducing expenditure in the current financial year. These measures included:

- Budget Review – A review of all of the Council's revenue budgets undertaken to identify one off budget reductions.
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – a range of staff from primarily income generating areas were placed on furlough.
- Towards Financial Sustainability – in the year savings programme target was increased.
- Direct Revenue Finance (DRF) – a review of capital financing was undertaken.
- Covid19 Reserve – monies allocated as part of the 19/20 closedown process and held in an earmarked reserve.

The total of these measures amounted £1.898m.

Subsequently, and in response to calls from the sector the Government allocated a total of £4.6bn of general purpose grant funding to support local authorities to cover expenditure related pressures and announced an income compensation scheme to recompense councils for approx. 75p in every £1 of lost sales, fees and charges

income. In addition a local tax income guarantee scheme was announced which sees the Government compensate local authorities for 75% of irrecoverable losses in Council Tax and Business Rates. During 2020/21 we received funding support of £1.877m for COVID19 related pressures and estimate to receive c£2.989m through the income compensation scheme and a further £0.778m through the local tax income guarantee scheme.

Despite this one-off financial support package announced by the Government, the General Fund would still have been unable to maintain a balanced budget position without having taken the measures implemented early in 2020/21.

The table that follows provides a summary of the final outturn position for the General Fund, against the net budget.

	ACTUAL 2020/21 £'000	REVISED BUDGET 2020/21 £'000	VARIANCE 2020/21 £'000
Chief Executive and Town Clerk	1,855	2,029	(174)
Directorate of Housing & Regeneration	202	201	1
Directorate of Communities & Environment	3,259	4,023	(764)
Directorate of Major Developments Corporate	218	218	0
	1,548	1,415	133
Net Operational Expenditure	7,082	7,885	(803)
Specific Grants	(2,668)	(1,393)	(1,275)
Savings Target	0	9	(9)
Earmarked Reserves	12,643	12,643	0
Insurance Reserve	76	45	31
Capital Accounting Adjustment	6,374	3,054	3,320
Contingencies	0	1,416	(1,416)
	23,506	23,659	(153)
Total Expenditure			
	434	286	148
Contribution To General Balances			
Total Net Budget	23,941	23,945	(5)
Business Rates -			
Retained Business Rates Income	(18,574)	(18,389)	(185)
Tariff	13,094	13,094	0
Section 31 grant	(12,657)	(12,543)	(114)
Levy Payment	1,444	1,140	304
Revenue Support Grant	(23)	(23)	0
Council Tax	(6,973)	(6,915)	(58)
Council Tax Section 31 Grant	(109)	(109)	0
Council Tax Surplus	0	(58)	58
NNDR Deficit	(144)	(144)	0
	(23,942)	(23,947)	5
Total Resources			

While total expenditure was £23.506m (£0.153m less than budget) this is offset by a £0.148m increase in the actual contribution to general balances. The actual contribution to general balances was £0.434m compared to the approved budget of £0.286m.

Included within the General Fund Budget was an assumed savings target of £0.550m, which were to be delivered in 2020/21 as part of the Council's Towards Financial Sustainability Programme. Despite the pressures of Covid19, this target was exceeded during 2020/21, with a total delivery of £0.559m. The programme continues to be successful and work continues in developing and delivering new projects as part of the programme to secure the additional savings required in 2021/22 and future years.

Although the General Fund maintained a balanced budget position in 2020/21 this does not mean that the financial issues for the Council are resolved, it simply means that the in-year budget challenges have been addressed.

As at 31 March 2021, the Council held £21.827m General Fund revenue reserves, comprising £19.156m earmarked reserves (to cover specific or potential financial risks and liabilities) and £2.671m non-earmarked general reserves. This latter balance represents 11.2% of the 2020/21 annual net service budget and provides an adequate level of reserves to cover unforeseen financial risks. General Balances are currently above the prudently assessed minimum requirements in the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy, which will provide additional resilience for the financial effects of COVID19.



Housing Revenue Account

The Housing Revenue Account has to be kept as a separate account for all the expenditure and income relating to the landlord functions associated with the provision, management and maintenance of Council owned dwellings.

For 2020/21, the approved net operating budget for the Housing Revenue Account was a deficit of £0.079m. Actual net expenditure for 2020/21 was £0.075m surplus, resulting in a £154k surplus variance against the budget.

These budgets were set prior to the onset of the Covid19 pandemic and as a result there are a significant number of variations in income and expenditure against the approved budget, arising from the impacts of the pandemic.

In line with the General Fund the Housing Revenue Account has also borne the financial impacts of Covid19 resulting in exceptional costs in responding to the pandemic and pressure on income streams.

However, the impacts on the Housing Revenue Account have not been on the same scale as the General Fund with the overall impact of Covid19 resulting in a significant underspend primarily due to delays in repairs and maintenance expenditure on Council dwellings being carried out due to the inability to access properties during the pandemic.

The table that follows provides a summary of the final outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account, against the net budget.

	ACTUAL 2020/21 £'000	REVISED BUDGET 2020/21 £'000	VARIANCE 2020/21 £'000
<u>Operational Expenditure</u>			
Repairs & Maintenance	7,574	8,959	(1,385)
Supervision & Management	7,443	7,545	(102)
Provisions (including Bad Debt)	279	297	(18)
Capital Financing	(6,181)	6,649	(12,830)
Sub Total	9,115	23,450	(14,335)
<u>Add:</u>			
HRS – repatriation of surplus	322	(136)	458
Contribution to/(from) HRS (IAS19 & Insurance Fund)	571	0	571
Interest Payable & Similar Charges	2,253	2,530	(277)
Total Expenditure	12,261	25,844	(13,583)
<u>Income</u>			
Rents & Service Charges	(29,076)	(29,021)	(55)
Interest	(22)	(43)	21
Net Expenditure	(16,837)	(3,220)	(13,617)
<u>Less:</u>			
Capital Accounting Adjustment	15,575	0	15,575
Appropriation to/(from) Major Repairs Reserves	2,940	3,184	(244)
Appropriation to/(from) Pension Fund Liability	(3,091)	0	(3,091)
Appropriations to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	1,334	111	1,223
Net HRA (Surplus)/Deficit	(79)	75	(154)

As at 31 March 2021, the Council held £3.692m HRA revenue reserves, comprising £2.617m earmarked reserves (to cover identified specific, potential financial risks and liabilities) and £1.075m non-earmarked general reserves.

Capital Expenditure

(Note 39)

Capital expenditure on the provision of new or enhanced assets is met from capital receipts, government grants, contributions from third parties and revenue contributions, with the balance funded from borrowing.

Capital spending in the year was £19.6m compared to the revised approved programme budget of £44.9m, representing an underspend of £25.3m against the profiled budget. The variance in 2020/21 is mostly due to the re-profiling of schemes within the general fund and housing programmes resulting from the delays in delivery of schemes due to the impacts of Covid19. The 2020/21 capital spending and funding position is summarised as follows:

	ACTUAL 2020/21 £'000	BUDGET 2020/21 £'000	VARIANCE 2020/21 £'000
Capital Expenditure			
General Fund	3,212	16,430	(13,218)
Housing Revenue	16,377	28,505	(12,128)
Total Expenditure	19,589	44,935	(25,346)
Financed by:			
Borrowing	8,697	18,292	(9,595)
Capital Receipts	1,633	2,722	(1,089)
Capital Grants and Contributions	4,553	8,028	(3,475)
Major Repairs Reserve	4,624	15,863	(11,239)
Revenue Contributions	82	30	52
Total Financing	19,589	44,935	(25,346)

Major Capital works carried out during 2020/21 are set out in the following table:

	£'000
Housing	
Decent Homes and improvements to Council dwellings	3,474
Health & Safety	179
Council house schemes	12,382
Other major works to housing stock	342
General Fund	
Leisure Centre/Sports Provision	210
Enhancements to corporate properties	64
Car Park enhancements	246
Disabled Facilities Grants	608
Town Centre Improvements	973
Parks Improvements	560
Western Growth Corridor	389
Other Schemes	162
Total	19,589

Capital Financing

The Council's capital programme is funded by a number of sources including the application of capital receipts, capital grants, contributions from the revenue account and long term borrowing. A summary of significant transactions in capital funding in 202/2021 is provided below:

Capital Receipts (Note 9)

The Council received £1.05m of HRA receipts. These will be used to support the new build programme within the Housing Investment Programme and investment in the housing stock.

Major Repairs Reserve (Note 9)

The Council is required to maintain a Major Repairs Reserve, which controls an element of the capital resources limited to being used on capital expenditure on HRA assets or the financing of historical capital expenditure by the HRA. The balance shows the capital resources that have yet to be applied at the year-end.



Long Term Borrowing (Note 18)

The Council undertakes long term borrowing, for periods in excess of one year, in order to finance capital expenditure. An assessment of the use of borrowing to fund capital expenditure is made through the application of the CIPFA Prudential Code in the Council's annual Treasury Management Strategy. This approach provides a framework for decision making highlighting the level of capital expenditure, the impact on borrowing and investment levels and the overall controls in place to ensure activity remains affordable, prudent and sustainable.

The Council satisfies its long-term borrowing requirement by securing external loans.

Although the Council requires long term borrowing in order to finance capital expenditure, it can temporarily defer the need to borrow externally by using cash set aside for longer term purposes (in line with its Treasury Management Strategy); this practice means that there is no immediate link between the need to borrow to pay for capital spend and the level of external borrowing. The effect of using the cash set aside is to reduce the level of cash that the Council has available for investment.

The Council's level of total principal long-term debt outstanding, (excluding loans of £0.03m which the Council holds for local charities and Bonds worth £0.003m), as at 31 March 2021 was £123.4m.

Total Long Term Borrowing Outstanding		
31/03/20	Source of loan	31/03/21
£'000		£'000
94,592	Public Works Loan Board	91,887
25,000	Market and Other Long-Term Loans	31,000
561	Other (3% stock)	561
120,153	Total	123,448

Long and short term borrowing of £13m was taken during 2020/21. Short term borrowing of £7m and £2.7m of PWLB borrowing was repaid during 2020/21. This represents a net increase of £3.3m of borrowing since 31 March 2020. The Council remains under borrowed by £12.6m (i.e. the Council's actual borrowing is £12.6m less than its borrowing requirement at 31 March 2021).

This means that the borrowing need (CFR) has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is considered prudent whilst investment returns are currently low and internal balances allow for this. Additional long-term borrowing will be taken in 2020/21 and future years to bring levels up to the Council's borrowing requirement, subject to liquidity requirements, if preferential interest rates are available.

Pension Costs

(Note 44)

The Council accounts for retirement benefits when it is committed to give them, even if the actual giving will be many years into the future. This means that:

- The financial statements reflect the liabilities arising from the Council's retirement obligations.
- The costs of providing retirement benefits to employees are recognised in the accounting period in which the benefits are earned by employees, and the related finance costs and any other changes in value of assets and liabilities are recognised in the accounting periods in which they arise.
- The financial statements disclose the cost of providing retirement benefits and related gains, losses, assets and liabilities

The Balance Sheet presents a increase in the estimated Pension Fund Reserve net liability over the 2020/21 year of £24.321m, up from £81.989m at 1 April 2020 to £106.310m at 31 March 2021. This increase in the Pension Fund deficit resulted mainly from changes in financial assumptions following the latest triennial review. This is

recognised as re-measurements on defined benefit obligation, which is shown in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The statutory arrangements for funding the remaining liability of £106.310m means that this deficit will be made good by the increased level of annual employer contributions payable to the Pension Fund over the remaining estimated average working life of our employees in the Pension Scheme. The latest triennial revaluation of the Council's Pension Fund took place at 31 March 2019, the results at that time identified that there has been a significant improvement in the funding position since the last actuarial review from a 69% funding level to 84%. The next actuarial revaluation is due as at 31st March 2022.

Although the overall funding position has improved, the employer contribution rates are still required to increase in order to improve the funding position further. Because of the guaranteed nature of Local Government Pension Scheme a stabilisation overlay mechanism is applied, whereby the employer's current contribution rate is capped at an affordable level. Without this in place the Council would be facing significantly higher contribution rates in order to increase the funding position.

This stabilisation approach has allowed the annual increase in the contribution rate to be capped at 1% p.a. over the period 2017/18 to 2019/20. Based on the latest triennial valuation rates will continue to be capped at 1% p.a. over the next three year period to 2022/23.



Future Plans

The Covid19 pandemic has fundamentally affected the way in which the Council works and will have long term and societal impacts. Elements of this change which relate directly to the response phase will, in time, revert largely back to normal. However, an event of this magnitude undoubtedly means that we will need to consider closely how our business and services should operate in the future.

As a result of the pandemic the Council is facing an unprecedented financial detriment. The measures introduced nationally to combat the virus have had direct and indirect negative impacts on our finances, which will need to be managed over future years. The Government has pumped billions of pounds into the economy to support the response phase of the pandemic and to protect jobs and services. In the medium-term the levels of additional borrowing and the budget deficit will need to be managed down at the same time as meeting ongoing needs to invest in recovery to achieve the growth required to repay the deficit. The Government's national strategy to address this challenge is not yet known, nor what it will mean for local government funding more generally. Furthermore, there remains potential

longstanding impacts on the Council's local income sources if behaviour, working practices and spending patterns in the city continue to change.

The financial implications are challenging to estimate with certainty, there continues to be a number of unknowns; from how long, and to what extent any restrictions will continue or be reimplemented and to what recovery will look like, such as how customers/residents/businesses will behave over time.

As we move forward from the pandemic, and as the Country continues through the recovery phase, the Council's faces it's biggest challenge in it's ability to lead on, finance and support key practical and relevant interventions which will be critical to the recovery of not only the council, but also Lincoln and Lincolnshire's economy, whilst ensuring it maintains a balanced financial position.

These interventions will form part of our Vision 2025.

Vision 2025 sets out the Council's vision for the future of the city, strategic priorities and core values. Although the Vision looks ahead for up to 30 years it specifically includes a programme of activity up to 2025, which seeks to not only deal with the most pressing issues in the city, but also details how the Council will work, with others, to further grow Lincoln's economy.

The Council's vision for 2025 remains as;

"Together, let's deliver Lincoln's ambitious future"

Underpinning this vision are now five strategic priorities, each with a number of supporting aspirations. The aspirations are in turn supported by groups of projects that will be delivered throughout the five-year programme.

The five strategic priorities are:

- Let's drive inclusive economic growth
- Let's reduce all kinds of inequality
- Let's deliver quality housing
- Let's enhance our remarkable place
- Let's address the challenge of climate change

Although the new Vision 2025 was adopted in March there was no formal public launch due to COVID-19. There is now a need to review Vision 2025 in light of COVID-19, re-profile the commitments in the strategy, identify any further interventions, and then communicate it widely. This will ensure that we target our priorities in new ways to lead and bolster the City's economic recovery, focussing on what is important right now and deferring some projects to the latter years of the Plan.



General Fund

The financial challenges created by the impact of Covid19 on the General Fund, coming on top of a decade of austerity in local government, cannot be underestimated.

Alongside these threats to local income sources and new expenditure pressures, local government financing is still set for future significant reform. The Fair Funding Review will re-establish the baseline need of every local authority, and, at the same time, business rates baselines will be reset for the first time. The government also intends to redesign the business rates retention system, moving to 75% local retention, while restructuring the system of risk and rewards. All of this has currently been delayed due to the pandemic and the current implementation date is as yet unannounced. The implications arising from these reforms will have significant, detrimental, implications for the Council

Although there is a significant level of uncertainty about future funding, based on what is currently known, or can be reasonably assumed, the General Fund will need to make further reductions in it's net cost base of £1.75m by 2023/24.

This is a significant target to achieve, particularly in light of the annual revenue reductions of £9m that have been delivered over the past decade. This level of savings has been achieved by re-investing in more efficient ways of working; adopting a more commercial approach; and prioritising resources for economic development measures, whilst making careful use of reserves to meet funding gaps.

However; it is becoming much more difficult to find additional efficiency savings and some being considered need to be delivered as part of longer-term transformational changes to the organisation, we are taking a more prudent approach to commercial ventures; and we cannot deliver the benefits from economic development measures in the short term. We are therefore left with little option but to revert to a more traditional cost cutting measures approach in order to deliver the scale of reductions required within the short lead in time, as well as using reserves in the short term. Ultimately, we will have to make some difficult decisions over the next 12 months as we prioritise which services we can afford to continue to deliver. It will also require the use of our earmarked reserves as a short-term response.

Although closing a gap of this size is a huge challenge it is not unprecedented, and we have the confidence of our track record of delivering strong financial discipline and that we can once again rise to the challenge.

In this current exceptionally uncertain period and funding position our overriding financial strategy therefore continues to be, to drive down the net cost base to ensure

we maintains a sound and sustainable financial position. The key mechanism for carrying out this strategy is through the Towards Financial Sustainability Programme which seeks to bring service costs in line with available funding and, alongside this over the medium term, using the Council's influence and direct investment through its capital programmes to create the right conditions for the City's economy to recover and once again grow.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

HRA Self-financing was implemented from 1 April 2012 following a one-off settlement to the Treasury, in order to 'buy out' of the old subsidy system. The new system incentivised landlords to manage their assets well and yield efficiency savings. With this however also came the transfer of significant risks from Central Government to local authorities. The Council now bears the responsibility for the long-term security and viability of council housing in Lincoln and has to fund all activity related to council housing from the income generated from rents, through long term business planning.

It was anticipated that there would be greater certainty about future income as councils were no longer subject to annual funding decisions by Central Government, enabling them to develop long-term plans, and to retain income for reinvestment.

A key element of the self-financing regime is for the Council to construct a 30-year Business Plan for the HRA. The Council's latest Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2016-2046 was approved in February 2016 following a fundamental review of resources, investment requirements and priorities. The Business Plan reflects the impact of government policy changes, the results of stock condition surveys and financial assumptions at the time. The Business plan sets out:

- the long-term plans for the Council's housing stock
- the finances to deliver plans
- how the Council will manage the income from its stock, demand for housing and stock condition, and:
- the Council's ambitious plans, alongside the resources to deliver, a significant number of new Council dwellings.

A review of the current Business Plan is scheduled for completion in 2021, this will follow on from the completion of refreshed stock condition surveys, agreement of a Lincoln housing specification, refresh of the Lincoln Standard to reflect low carbon/climate change, progression of the Social Housing White paper and to ensure the priority schemes from Vision 2025 are fully reflected.

Capital Expenditure

Despite the pressures the Council's revenue budgets face investment in the Council's assets, to maintain income generating assets, provide new income generating assets and support service delivery is still critical. The Council's capital strategy plans to deliver projects to the value of £89m over the next five years, with £69m estimated to be spent in 2021/22. This includes significant investment in the Council's key strategic projects notably the Western Growth Corridor development, the construction of an extra care facility at De Wint Court in addition to further investment on Council dwellings and Council buildings, including the construction of new council housing.

In addition, the Council has also been successful in securing £19m for the proposed Town Deal Programme. The Programme includes proposals to deliver long term

economic growth in the City and includes contributions to schemes to be delivered by the Council of c£7m. These proposed schemes will play a huge part in supporting the economic recovery of the City post pandemic.



Capital resources for the next five years include capital receipts, government grants, contributions from third parties and revenue contributions.

The Housing element of the capital programme represents the largest element of capital expenditure over the next 5 years and is funded through a combination of borrowing and revenue contributions from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) through both depreciation charges and direct revenue contributions. The HRA Business Plan includes the release of capital resource to fund significant capital investment in new housing stock over the medium term. It is critical that there continues robust budget management of the HRA to continue to allow the required investment.

Cash flows

The future cash flows will be dependent on the outcome of a number of key assumptions in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and HRA Business Plan, of which the Council has varying degrees of influence over the outcomes. Some of the key determinants will be:

- Actual Business Rates base in year compared to the assumed levels in the budget, and the ongoing risk of funding the backdated costs of any successful valuation office appeals by businesses within the city as well as potential reductions arising from the current economic conditions and legacy of COVID19.
- Collection rates for Council Tax, Business Rates and Rents, which are currently being detrimentally impacted by COVID19.
- Income received compared to income targets (e.g. car parking, planning and building control), income in these areas plummeted during 'lockdown' and whilst they are now beginning to recover and reductions have been factored into future years budgets, there is still a significant amount of uncertainty.
- Interest rates achieved on investments and secured on new borrowing
- Timescale for payment of invoices and collection of debts.
- Profile of capital spending and funding over the MTFs.
- Any further financial support provided by Central Government to mitigate cash-flow implications arising from COVID19.

Summary

Although both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account have maintained balanced budget positions in 2020/21 this does not mean that the financial issues for

the Council are resolved, it simply means that the in-year budget challenges have been addressed. Beyond 2020/21 we are set to face ongoing reductions in resources and increased service costs from the legacy of impacts of Covid19. This will require ongoing reductions in the net cost base in order to live within a significantly reduced resources envelope. The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-2026, approved by Full Council in March 2021 sets out the detail of the financial challenge the Council faces.

Whilst addressing the financial challenges we face in the forthcoming years we will also continue to maintain the correct balance between these challenges and ensuring that our limited resources are directed towards the Council's strategic priorities.

Vision 2025 is supported by a programme of activity, resourced through the Medium Term Financial Strategy, that seeks to not only deal with the most pressing issues in the city, but also how the Council will work, with others, to embrace and help recover Lincoln's economy through schemes such as delivering homes and infrastructure, stimulating jobs and growth, tackling climate change, providing and enhancing support systems for our vulnerable residents, and delivering the Towns Deal Programme. The recovery and growth of the City's economy is now more important than ever.



Group Accounts

The increasing scope and scale of local authorities moving away from traditional ways of providing services makes it increasingly difficult for the Council's own financial statements to present fairly all the aspects of control over service provision and accountability for all resources and exposure to risks that the Council has taken on. A consolidated set of group accounts can make a vital contribution towards giving users a full picture of the Council's sphere of control and influence.



The Council has a collaborative arrangement with North Kesteven and West Lindsey District Councils to provide the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit. This arrangement is hosted by North Kesteven District Council. The Council contributed £99k to the service which is contained within the Communities and Environment line

of the CIES. The Council also has a collaborative arrangement with North Kesteven to provide a shared Revenues and Benefits Service. This shared service is hosted by the City of Lincoln Council. The Council contributed £1.267m to the service which is contained within the Chief Executive's Directorate line in the CIES. Both of these arrangements are governed through a Joint Committee representing each of the partner authorities. Under these arrangements the ventures use their own resources to undertake an activity subject to joint control, and as such do not require consolidation into the Council's accounts. The Council's proportion of activity is accounted for separately within the Core Financial Statements.

Further Information

Further information about the accounts is available on request from the Chief Finance Officer, City Hall, Beaumont Fee Lincoln LN1 1DB. In addition, local electors have a statutory right to inspect the accounts before the audit is completed. The availability of the accounts for inspection is advertised on the Council's website.

J Gibson FCCA
Chief Finance Officer
(Section 151 Officer)

COUNCIL APPROVAL

The Statement of Accounts for the year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 has been prepared and I confirm that these Accounts were approved by the City of Lincoln Council, at the meeting held on xx November 2021

Councillor Jackie Kirk
Chair of Council

Date: xxth November 2021

THE STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority is required:

- to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to ensure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Authority, that officer is the Chief Finance Officer;
- to manage its affairs to ensure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets;
- to approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Chief Finance Officer Responsibilities

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK ('the Code').

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the 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.

The Chief Finance Officer has also:

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

The Accounts present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority at 31 March 2021 and its income and expenditure for the year ended on that date.

J Gibson FCCA
Chief Finance Officer
Date: 12th July 2021

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES

	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked Reserves £'000	Housing Revenue Account £'000	Major Repair Reserve £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Council Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2019	1,849	11,946	1,025	5,675	4,574	564	25,633	177,256	202,889
Movement in reserves during 2019/20									
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services	(5,712)	0	11,900	0	0	0	6,188	0	6,188
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28,562	28,562
Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	(5,712)	0	11,900	0	0	0	6,188	28,562	34,750
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (note 9)	6,106	0	(12,294)	3,492	573	4,660	2,537	(2,537)	0
Other adjustments	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	394	0	(394)	3,492	573	4,660	8,725	26,025	34,750
Transfers (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	(7)	(357)	364	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/Decrease in Year	387	(357)	(30)	3,492	573	4,660	8,725	26,025	34,750
Balance at 31 March 2020 carried forward	2,236	11,589	995	9,167	5,147	5,224	34,358	203,281	237,638

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES

	General Fund Balance £'000	Earmarked Reserves £'000	Housing Revenue Account £'000	Major Repair Reserve £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Council Reserves £'000
Movement in reserves during 2020/21									
Surplus or (deficit) on provision of services	(3,393)	0	15,967	0	0	0	12,574	0	12,574
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(26,129)	(26,129)
Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	(3,393)	0	15,967	0	0	0	12,574	(26,129)	(13,555)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (note 9)	16,951	0	(14,563)	9,596	(636)	(1,198)	10,150	(10,150)	0
Other adjustments	0	0	0	(4,624)	0	0	(4,624)	4,624	0
Net Increase/Decrease before Transfers (to)/from Reserves	13,558	0	1,404	4,972	(636)	(1,198)	18,100	(31,655)	(13,555)
Transfers (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	(13,126)	14,455	(1,329)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Increase/Decrease in Year	432	14,455	75	4,972	(636)	(1,198)	18,100	(31,655)	(13,555)
Balance at 31 March 2021 carried forward	2,668	26,044	1,070	14,139	4,511	4,026	52,458	171,626	224,083

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 2020/21

2019/20			Note	2020/21		
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
36,366	(29,507)	6,859	Chief Executive's Directorate	37,122	(29,718)	7,403
3,462	(2,389)	1,074	Housing and Regeneration	3,023	(2,486)	538
17,279	(28,578)	(11,299)	Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	9,573	(29,076)	(19,503)
19,757	(11,174)	8,583	Communities and Environment	22,007	(10,537)	11,470
681	(548)	133	Major Developments	803	(234)	569
(92)	(50)	(141)	Corporate Services	22,382	(23,002)	(621)
77,453	(72,246)	5,207	Cost of Services	94,910	(95,054)	(144)
		813	Other Operating Expenditure			1,206
		7,434	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	11		4,964
		(19,643)	Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	12		(18,600)
		(6,188)	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	13		(12,574)
		(4,914)	(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets	11		2,550
		0	Impairment Losses on Non- Current Assets charged to the Revaluation Reserve	14,22		0
		26	(Surplus) or deficit from investments in equity instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income	26e		19
		(23,674)	Total re-measurements on defined benefit obligation	44		23,560
		(28,562)	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			26,129
		(34,750)	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			13,555

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

31 March 2019 £'000	31 March 2020 £'000		Notes	31 March 2021 £'000
361,380	376,194	Property, Plant & Equipment	14,39,41	391,623
2,907	2,907	Heritage Assets	15	2,768
30,478	34,646	Investment Property	14,16	34,203
361	309	Intangible Assets	14,17,39	191
798	772	Long Term Investments	18,47	753
1,035	950	Long Term Debtors	18,47	837
396,959	415,778	Long Term Assets		430,375
1,500	1,500	Assets Held for Sale	22	1,500
29,216	30,609	Short Term Investments	18,47	33,907
88	138	Inventories	19	139
1	3	Cash at Bank	21	563
9,778	11,506	Short Term Debtors	18,20,47	28,389
40,583	43,756	Current Assets		64,498
(613)	(329)	Cash and Cash Equivalents	18,21,47	0
(21,476)	(11,460)	Short Term Borrowing	18,47	(9,418)
(12,987)	(15,265)	Short Term Creditors	18,23,47	(33,814)
(35,076)	(27,054)	Current Liabilities		(43,232)
(105)	0	Long Term Creditors	18,47	0
(3,428)	(2,405)	Provisions	24	(2,578)
(95,354)	(110,448)	Long Term Borrowing	18,47	(115,738)
(100,690)	(81,989)	Other Long Term Liabilities	44	(109,241)
(199,577)	(194,842)	Long Term Liabilities		(227,557)
202,889	237,639	Net Assets		224,083
25,633	34,358	Usable reserves	10,25	52,461
177,256	203,281	Unusable Reserves	26	171,622
202,889	237,639	Total Reserves		224,083

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

2019/20		Notes	2020/21
£'000			£'000
6,188	Net surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services		12,574
15,671	Adjustments to net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	28	26,003
(9,354)	Adjustments for items included in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	29	(5,032)
12,505	Net cash flows from Operating Activities		33,545
(13,907)	Investing Activities	30	(16,474)
1,688	Financing Activities	31	(16,182)
286	Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents		889
(612)	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		(326)
(326)	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	21	563

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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

The values held within the proceeding Notes to the Accounts may vary slightly when compared to the main Statements or other Notes, which may also include casting variances. This is due to amounts being rounded. It is not expected that a difference would be in excess of £2,000 in any single case.

Note 1 – Accounting Policies

1. General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2020/21 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2021. The Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21 (the Code), supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and statutory guidance issued under section 7 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

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

2. Accruals of Income and Expenditure

The revenue accounts of the Council are maintained on an accruals basis meaning that 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 and 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.
- 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.

3. Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

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.

4. Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies and Estimates and Errors

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

5. Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Service revenue accounts, central support services and trading accounts are charged with the following amounts to reflect the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

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

The Council is not required to raise council tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisation. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Council in accordance with statutory guidance. This is referred to as the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP). The Council's policy on MRP is approved by Council in March each year as part of the Treasury Management Strategy. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisation are replaced by the MRP and VRP, by way of an adjusting transaction between the

Capital Adjustment Account and the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement, for the differences between the two.

6. Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates

The Council (as the billing authority) acts as an agent, collecting council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Police (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 (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, all 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.

Where debtor balances for the above are identified as impaired because of a likelihood arising from a past event that payment due under the statutory arrangements will not be made, the asset is written down and a charge made. The impairment loss is measured as the difference between the carrying amount and the revised future cash flows.

7. 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 (e.g. cars) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Council. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements or time off in lieu, earned by employees but not taken before the year-end, which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which employees take the benefit. The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday 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, and are charged on an accruals basis to the appropriate service segment or, where applicable, to a corporate service segment for non-distributed costs in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Council recognises costs of restructuring.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, transfers are required to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove notional debits and credits for pension enhancement termination benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Council are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Lincolnshire County Council. This scheme provides defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees worked for the Council.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

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

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

Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate determined by the pension scheme actuary (based on the yield of UK Government Bonds plus a 'credit spread' allowance to reflect the extra risk involved in using AA corporate bond yields).

The assets of the Lincolnshire County Council pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:

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

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

- Current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked

- Past service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment which effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the comprehensive income and expenditure statement.
- Net interest cost on the net defined benefit liability (asset), i.e. net interest expense for the Council – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.
- Re-measurements comprising:
 - the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the defined benefit liability (asset) – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure
 - actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure
- Contributions paid to the Local Government Pension Fund – cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pension Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Discretionary Benefits

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

8. Events After the Balance Sheet Date

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

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

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

9. Financial Instruments

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. They are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges for interest payable are shown in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, and 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 Council has, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable, with accrued interest due within one year shown under short term borrowings; and interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

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

Financial Assets

Financial assets are classified based on a classification and measurement approach that reflects the business model for holding the financial assets and their cash flow 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

The Council'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 Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument. They are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. Annual credits to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. For most of the financial assets held by the Council, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable, with interest receivable within one year shown under short term investments and interest credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

However, occasionally the Council may make loans to other parties (e.g. voluntary organisations) at less than market rates (soft loans). When soft loans are made, a loss is recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the present value of the interest that will be foregone over the life of the instrument, resulting in a lower amortised cost than the outstanding principal. Interest is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at a marginally higher effective rate of interest than the rate receivable, with the difference serving to increase the amortised cost of the loan in the Balance Sheet. Statutory provisions require that the impact of soft loans on the General Fund Balance is the interest receivable for the financial year – the reconciliation of amounts debited and credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the net gain required against the General Fund Balance is managed by a transfer to or from the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account in the Movement in the Reserves Statement.

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

Expected Credit Loss Model

The Council recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost [or where relevant FVOCI], 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.

The Council has a number of loans to local organisations. It may not have reasonable and verifiable information to support the measurement of lifetime losses on individual loans without undue cost or effort to support the measurement of lifetime expected losses. It has therefore assessed losses for the portfolio on a collective basis.

The Council has grouped the loans into four groups for assessing loss allowances:

- Group 1 – Commercial investments in line with treasury management policy including counterparties that have external credit ratings of A or better. Loss allowances will be assessed on a group basis using the simplified approach of collective assessment.
- Group 2 – Loans to related parties. Loss allowances for these loans are assessed on an individual basis and / or an individual borrower basis.
- Group 3 – Money Market funds. Loss allowance will be assessed on market value of the investment in the fund.

Financial Assets measured at fair Value through Profit and Loss (FVPL)

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

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

- Instruments with quoted market prices in active markets for identical assets – the market price
- Other instruments with fixed and determinable payments in active markets for identical assets – 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 de-recognition of the asset are credited or debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Financial Assets measured at fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI)

Financial assets that are measured at FVOCI are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arise in Other Comprehensive Income

10. Foreign Currency Translation

Where the Council has entered into a transaction denominated in a foreign currency, the transaction is converted into sterling at the exchange rate applicable on the date the transaction was effective. Where material amounts in foreign currency are outstanding at the year-end, they are reconverted at the spot exchange rate at 31 March. Resulting gains or losses, if material, are recognised in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

11. Government Grants and Contributions

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

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

Amounts recognised as due to the Council are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the future economic benefits or service potential embodied in the asset acquired using the grant or contribution are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or future economic benefits or service potential must be returned to the transferor.

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

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

Unapplied reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

Business Improvement Districts

A Business Improvement District (BID) scheme applies across the whole of the Council. The scheme is funded by BID levy paid by non-domestic ratepayers. The Council acts as a principal under the scheme, and accounts for income received and expenditure incurred (including contributions to the BID project) within the relevant services within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Council has elected to charge a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The levy will be charged on new builds (chargeable development 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 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

12. Intangible Assets

Intangible assets are assets that do not have physical substance but are identifiable and controlled by the Council (e.g. software licences). Expenditure on intangible assets is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Council for a period of more than one year.

Internally generated intangible assets are capitalised where it is demonstrable that the project is technically feasible and is intended to be completed 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 the Council's website is not capitalised as the website is primarily intended to promote or advertise the Council's services.

Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Amounts are only re-valued where the fair value of the assets 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.

Intangible assets are amortised over their useful life and charged to the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the Other

Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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

13. Interests in Companies and other Entities

Councils are required to produce Group Accounts to include services offered to Council Tax payers by organisations other than the Council itself but in which the Council has an interest. There are a number of criteria set out by which the Council must determine whether the value of the company and the Council's interest is significant enough for Group Accounts to be produced. The Council has complied with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, and while it has identified a company over which it has joint control, it has concluded that the company does not meet the criteria that would require consolidation into the Council's accounts on materiality grounds.

14. Inventories and Long-Term Contracts

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is assigned using either the FIFO or weighted average costing formula.

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

15. Investment Property

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

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, based on the highest and best use value of the asset. Investment properties are not depreciated but are re-valued annually according to market conditions to ensure that they are held at the highest and best use value on the Balance Sheet date. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal.

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure 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.

16. Joint Operations

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

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

17. 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 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 financing charge (debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

Property, Plant and Equipment recognised under finance leases is accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, subject to depreciation being charged

over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life (where ownership of the asset does not transfer to the Council at the end of the lease period).

The Council is not required to raise council tax to cover depreciation or revaluation and impairment losses arising on leased assets. Instead, a prudent annual contribution is made from revenue funds towards the deemed capital investment in accordance with statutory requirements. Depreciation and revaluation and impairment losses are therefore substituted by a revenue contribution in the General Fund Balance, by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

Operating Leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense of the service benefiting from use of the leased asset. Charges are made on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease, even if this doesn't match the pattern of payments.

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 is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain and loss on disposal. A gain, representing the Council's net investment in the lease, is credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal), matched by a long-term lease debtor 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

The gain credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement 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 Receipt Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the amount due in relation to the leased 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.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against council tax, as the cost of 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 Reserve Statement.

Operating Leases

Where the Council grants an operating lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the asset is retained in the Balance Sheet. Rental income is credited to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Credits are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease. 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.

18. Overheads and Support Services

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

19. Non-Current Assets – Property, Plant and Equipment

Assets that have physical substance and are held for use in the supply of 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, with a deminimis level of £10,000.

Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant or Equipment 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 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. Generally, a deminimis level of £10,000 is applied however qualifying expenditure on assets which is lower than £10,000 but where the asset value exceeds this is recognised as capital expenditure.

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 initial estimate of the costs of dismantling and removing the item and restoring the site on which it is located.

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

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its current 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.

Donated assets are measured initially at fair value. The difference between fair value and any consideration paid is credited to the Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, unless the donation has been made conditionally. Until conditions are satisfied, the gain is held in the Donated Assets Account. Where gains are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

- Community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost
- Dwellings – current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV-SH)
- Investment properties and surplus assets – the current value measurement base is fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective.
- All other assets – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV).

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

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

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at current value are re-valued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains. However, in exceptional circumstances, gains may be credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement where they arise from the reversal of a loss previously charged to services.

When decreases in value 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 lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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

Impairment

Assets are reviewed at each year-end for evidence of reductions in value i.e. impairment. Where impairment is identified, 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.

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

- Where there is a balance in the 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

Depreciation

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

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Dwellings and Other buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the Valuer
- Vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment – straight-line allocation over the useful life of each class of asset

Where an item of property, plant or equipment asset has major components whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately.

In relation to Council Dwellings, depreciation is based on the Existing Use Social Housing Value (EU-SHV) on the components, deemed to be land and buildings.

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

20. Heritage Assets

The Council holds a number of Heritage Assets, which can be grouped into the following categories:

- Civic Insignia
- Art and Sculptures
- Ancient Monuments and War Memorials
- Miscellaneous

These are not held in a single collection but in a number of appropriate locations, where they are considered to contribute to increasing the knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the Council's history and local area.

Heritage Assets are recognised and measured (including the treatment of revaluation gains and losses) in accordance with the Council's accounting policies on Property, Plant and Equipment. However, some of the measurement rules are relaxed in relation to heritage assets as detailed below.

- **Civic Insignia**

The collection of civic insignia includes the Mayor's and Sheriff's badges and chains of office, mace and ceremonial swords. These items are reported in the Balance Sheet at insurance valuation which is based on market values. These insurance valuations are subject to periodic reviews by a specialist valuer. The civic insignia are deemed to have indeterminate lives and a high residual value; hence the Council does not consider it appropriate to charge depreciation.

- **Art and Sculptures**

This category includes paintings and a number of public art works such as statues and sculptures. Where a valuation is available e.g. an insurance valuation, the asset is reported in the balance sheet at this valuation. However, for a number of public art sculptures and statues, no cost or valuation information is available and consequently, these assets are not recognised in the balance sheet. Where artworks are recognised, they are deemed to have indeterminate lives and the Council does not consider it appropriate to charge depreciation.

- **Ancient Monuments and War Memorials**

This category includes various roman ruins and ancient structures and four war memorials. The Council does not consider that reliable cost or valuation information can be obtained for the items in this category. This is because of the nature of the assets held and the lack of market values. Consequently, these assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet.

- **Miscellaneous**

This category includes any other assets which are being held for their contribution to knowledge and culture but do not readily fall into the above categories. One example is the collection of Books of Remembrance held at the City crematorium. These items are reported in the Balance Sheet at either cost or insurance valuation where material. No depreciation is charged on these assets.

Heritage Assets – General

The carrying amounts of heritage assets are reviewed where there is evidence of impairment e.g. where an item has suffered physical deterioration or breakage or where doubts arise as to its authenticity. Any impairment is recognised and measured in accordance with the Council's accounting policies on impairment. The Council may occasionally dispose of heritage assets which are unsuitable for public display or to an appropriate body which will ensure the asset is maintained and displayed within a suitable collection e.g. to a museum or historical trust. The proceeds of such items are accounted for in accordance with the Council's accounting policy on disposal of Property, Plant and Equipment. Disposal proceeds are disclosed separately in the notes to the financial statements and are accounted for in accordance with statutory accounting requirements relating to capital expenditure and capital receipts.

21. 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 re-valued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less costs to sell. Where there is a subsequent decrease to fair value less costs to sell, the loss is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the Surplus and Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

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

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

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether Property, Plant and Equipment or Assets Held for Sale) is written off to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from the disposal (if any) are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. A proportion of receipts relating to housing disposals (75% for dwellings, 50% for land and other assets, net of statutory deductions and allowances) is payable to the Government. The balance of receipts is required to be credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve and can then only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow. Receipts are transferred 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 assets is fully provided under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account in the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

22. Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

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, 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 making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year that the Council becomes aware of the obligation, and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, 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 not 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 the reimbursement will be received if the Council settles the obligation.

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.

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.

23. Reserves

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by transferring amounts out of the General Fund Balance 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 to score against the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. 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, and retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Council – these reserves are explained in the relevant policies.

24. Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

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

25. VAT

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

26. Fair Value

The Council measures some of its non-financial assets, such as surplus assets and investment properties, and some of its financial instruments at fair value at the end of each reporting period. 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 Council measures the fair value of an asset or liability on the same basis that market participants would use when pricing an asset or liability (assuming they were acting in their economic best interest).

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the Council 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 Council uses appropriate valuation techniques, which takes into account the three levels of inputs to valuations for fair value assets:

- Level 1 – quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the Council can assess 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.

Note 2 – Accounting Standards Issued But Have Not Yet Been Adopted

The following Accounting Standards and amendments have been issued but will not be adopted until the 2021/2022 financial year.

- **Amendments to IFRS 3 Business Combinations**
- **Amendments to IFRS 9, IAS 39 and IFRS 7 – Interest Rate Benchmark Reform.**
- **Amendments to IFRS 9, IAS 39 and IFRS 7 – Interest Rate Benchmark Reform - Phase 2**

These accounting changes will be required from 1 April **2021**.

The adoption of these new and amended standards is not expected to have a material impact on the Council's Statement of Accounts.

Note 3 – Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

In applying the accounting policies in Note 1, the Council has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events.

The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

- **Local Government funding** - There is a high degree of uncertainty about the future levels of funding for local government. However, the Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities or reduce levels of service provision. The provisions in the Code on the going concern requirements reflect the economic and statutory environment in which local authorities operate. As the Council cannot be dissolved without statutory prescription, the accounts will be prepared on a going concern basis.
- **Group Boundaries** - The Council has a collaborative arrangement with Lincolnshire County Council, North Kesteven and West Lindsey District Council to provide the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit. This arrangement is hosted by North Kesteven District Council. The Council also has a collaborative arrangement with North Kesteven to provide a shared Revenues and Benefits Service. This shared service is hosted by the City of Lincoln Council. Both of these arrangements are governed through a Joint Committee representing each of the partner authorities. These arrangements are considered as a Joint Operation, where ventures use their own resources to undertake an activity subject to joint control, and as such do not require consolidation into the Council's accounts. The Council's proportion of activity is accounted for separately within the Core Financial Statements.
- **Leases** - The Council has examined its leases and classified them as either operational or finance leases. In some cases, the lease transaction is not always conclusive and the Council uses judgement in determining whether the lease is a finance lease arrangement that transfers substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership. In reassessing the lease the Council has estimated the implied interest rate within the lease to calculate interest and principal payments.

Note 4 – Assumptions Made about the Future and Other Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Council about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made 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 as at 31 March 2021 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
Business Rates (Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 – Provision for Business Rate Appeals £2.448m)	Since the introduction of the Business Rates Retention Scheme effective from April 2013, local authorities are liable for successful appeals against business rates charges to businesses in 2020/21 and earlier financial years in their proportionate share. Therefore, a provision has been recognised for the best estimate of the amount that businesses have been overcharged up to the 31 st March 2021. A third-party independent specialist has been used to estimate the required provision using the latest Valuation Office ratings list of appeals and an analysis of successful appeals to date.	The Council's share (40%) of the balance of business rates appeals at 31 March 2021 amounted to £2.448m, a decrease of £0.173m (8%) from the previous year. An increase or reduction of 10% of the estimated provision would increase/decrease the Council's share of NNDR appeals provision by £0.248m.
Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) (Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 – PPE £391m)	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the levels of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to the assets.	If the useful lives of the assets reduce, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the assets falls. It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for buildings would increase by £0.082m and for council dwellings £0.217m for every year that the useful lives had to be reduced.
Assets held for sale and investment properties (Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 - assets held for sale £1.5m - Investment properties £34.2m)	Assets classified as Held for Sale or as Investment Property are carried at fair value based on a recently observed market price. Market prices can fluctuate considerably due to global events. The value of these assets was current at the Balance Sheet date, but it cannot be determined for how long this value will be correct.	A 1% reduction in the value of investment properties and assets held for sale would result in a charge to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement of £0.357m; a 1% increase in value would result in the recognition of a gain of £0.357m in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement.
Arrears Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 - Debtors	As at 31 March 2020, the Council had a balance on current debtors of £32.26m. A review of significant balances suggested that an	If collection rates were to deteriorate by 5% the amount of the impairment of doubtful debts would require an additional

total of £32.26m includes £4.15m debtors (subject to arrears)	impairment of doubtful debts of £4.15m was required.	£0.21m to be set aside as an allowance.
Pension Liability (Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 - pensions liability £109.241m)	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 the expected return on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries (Hymans Robertson LLP) is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. For more information on the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme please refer to note 44.	The effects on the net pensions' liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For instance, a 1% decrease in the discount rate assumption would result in an increase in the pension liability of £5.732m.
Investments (Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 - Short term investments £33.907m - Long term investments £0.753m)	At 31 March 2021, the Council held £33.9m of short term investments. These comprise £14.9m invested in AAA-rated instant access Money Market Funds and £19m invested in A-rated UK banks, plus accrued interest, all for periods of up to 1 year.	As most of the investments are either in AAA-rated MMF's or short term deposits in A-rated UK banks, the risk of impairment is considered to be minimal.
Pension Fund Property Investment Assets Balance Sheet 31 March 2021 – Share of Other Net Long Term Liability £11.379m	The Council's net pension liability and disclosed at note 44 includes an estimate of the total value of the Council's share of the Lincolnshire Pension Fund investment assets. The valuation of the Fund's property investment assets may be impacted by Covid-19 and reported on the basis of 'material valuation uncertainty' as per the requirements of VPGA 10 of the RICS Red Book Global.	Less certainty and a higher degree of caution should be attached to the Council's share of these pension fund assets. The Council's actuary has estimated that the value of the Council's share of these property investment assets at 31 March 2021 was £11.379m.

Note 5 – Prior Period Adjustment

None

Note 6 – Events after the Balance Sheet Date

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Chief Finance Officer on 31st August 2021. 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 31st March 2021, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

Note 7 – Expenditure and Funding Analysis

2019/20					2020/21				
Net Expenditure Chargeable to General Fund and HRA Balances	Movement of Trading A/C's & Levies etc.	Adjustments Between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Net Expenditure Chargeable to General Fund and HRA Balances	Movement of Trading A/C's & Levies etc.	Adjustments Between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	
£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
4,994	349	1,516	6,859	Chief Executive's Directorate	5,848	(954)	2,509	7,403	
717	0	356	1,073	Housing and Regeneration	212	0	326	538	
(2,849)	0	(8,450)	(11,299)	Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	(4,034)	0	(15,469)	(19,503)	
5,674	99	2,810	8,583	Communities and Environment	6,601	0	4,869	11,470	
229	0	(96)	133	Major Developments	409	0	160	569	
194	818	(1,154)	(142)	Corporate Services	(295)	850	(1,176)	(621)	
8,960	1,266	(5,019)	5,207	Net Cost Of Services	8,742	(104)	(8,782)	(144)	
(8,960)	(1,266)	(1,170)	(11,396)	Other Income and Expenditure	(23,704)	104	11,170	(12,430)	
0	0	(6,189)	(6,189)	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	(14,962)	0	2,388	(12,574)	
GF		HRA	Total		GF		HRA	Total	
(13,705)		(1,115)	(14,820)	Opening Balance	(13,825)		(995)	(14,820)	
(120)		120	0	Less/ Plus Surplus or (Deficit) in Year	(14,887)		(75)	(14,962)	
(13,825)		(995)	(14,820)	Closing Balance at 31 March	(28,712)		(1,070)	(29,782)	

This analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, council tax and business rates) by Councils in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by Councils in accordance with generally accepted practices. The Expenditure and Funding Analysis also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's different categories of expenditure and income. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Further analysis can be found in Note 8.

Note 7A – Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

This note provides a reconciliation of the main adjustments to Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund and HRA Balances to arrive at the amounts in the Comprehensive income and Expenditure Statement. The relevant transfers between reserves are explained in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN FUNDING AND ACCOUNTING BASIS

2019/20					2020/21			
Adjustments for Capital Purposes	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments	Other Differences	Total Adjustments	Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments	Other Differences	Total Adjustments
£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
188	1,316	12	1,516	Chief Executive's Directorate	1,358	1,102	49	2,509
2	347	7	356	Housing and Regeneration	0	305	21	326
(10,254)	1,796	8	(8,450)	Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	(16,910)	1,298	142	(15,470)
1,740	1,067	3	2,810	Communities and Environment	3,871	908	90	4,869
(196)	96	4	(96)	Major Developments	68	85	7	160
0	(1,154)	0	(1,154)	Corporate	0	(1,176)	0	(1,176)
(8,520)	3,468	34	(5,018)	Net Cost of Services	(11,614)	2,522	310	(8,782)
(3,619)	1,505	944	(1,170)	Other Income & Expenditure from the Funding Analysis	(1,768)	1,170	11,768	11,170
(12,139)	4,973	978	(6,188)	Difference between General Fund Surplus/ Deficit and CIES Income & Expenditure Statement Surplus/ Deficit	(13,382)	3,692	12,078	2,388

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Note 7B – Segmental Income Analysis

Income received on a segmental basis is analysed below:

	Income from Services	Income from Services
Services	2019/20	2020/21
	£'000s	£'000s
Chief Executive's Directorate	(6,031)	(5,476)
Housing & Regeneration	(982)	(968)
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	(29,033)	(29,550)
Communities & Environment	(11,052)	(10,188)
Major Developments	(412)	39
Corporate	(0)	(142)
Total Income analysed on a Segmental Basis	(47,510)	(46,285)

Note 8 – Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

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

	2019/20	2020/21
	£'000s	£'000s
Expenditure/ Income		
Expenditure		
Employee Benefit Expenses	26,148	26,105
Other Services Expenses	64,163	83,300
Support Service Recharges	2,815	3,152
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	5,068	(267)
REFCUS	479	970
Interest Payments	9,708	8,337
Precepts and Levies	828	850
Payments to Housing Capital Receipts Pool	729	529
Total Expenditure	109,938	122,976
Income		
Fees, Charges and other Service Income	(64,890)	(59,386)
Interest and Investment Income	(3,582)	(2,615)
Income from Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates	(12,462)	(15,973)
Government Grants and Contributions	(34,427)	(57,403)
Gain/Loss on Disposal	(766)	(173)
Total Income	(116,127)	(135,550)
Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(6,188)	(12,574)

Note 9 – Adjustment between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

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

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

General Fund Balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of an authority are required to be 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 (the balance is not available to be applied to funding HRA services).

Housing Revenue Account Balance

The Housing Revenue Account Balance reflects the statutory obligation to maintain a revenue account for local authority council housing provision in accordance with Part VI of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. It contains the balance of income and expenditure as defined by the 1989 Act that is available to fund future expenditure in connection with the Council's landlord function or (where in deficit) that is required to be recovered from tenants in future years.

Major Repairs Reserve

The Authority is required to maintain the Major Repairs Reserve, which controls an element of the capital resources limited to being used on capital expenditure on HRA assets or the financing of historical capital expenditure by the HRA. The balance shows the capital resources that have yet to be applied at the year-end.

Capital Receipts Reserve

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

Capital Grants Unapplied

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

2020/21	Usable Reserves					
	General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Movement In Unusable Reserves
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments to Revenue Resources						
Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:						
Pensions costs (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve)	2,394	1,298	0	0	0	3,692
Financial Instruments (transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustments Account)	(2)	0	0	0	0	(2)
Council Tax and NNDR transfers to (or from) the Collection Fund Adjustment Account	11,768	0	0	0	0	11,768
Holiday Pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve)	167	142	0	0	0	309
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)	3,735	(11,479)	0	6,698	3,355	2,309
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	18,062	(10,039)	0	6,698	3,355	18,076
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources						
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	(100)	(1,620)	1,720	0	0	0
Admin costs of RTB	0	42	(42)	0	0	0
Payments to the Government Housing Receipts Pool (funded by a transfer from the Capital Receipts Reserve)	529	0	(529)	0	0	0
Posting of HRA resources to the Major Repairs Reserve	0	(2,898)	0	2,898	0	0
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account)	(1,507)	0	(150)	0	0	(1,657)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(34)	(48)	0	0	0	(82)
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(1,112)	(4,524)	999	2,898	0	(1,739)

2020/21	Usable Reserves					
	General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Movement In Unusable Reserves
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments to Capital Resources						
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	0	(1,633)	0	0	(1,633)
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	0	0	(4,624)	0	(4,624)
Application of Capital grants to finance capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	(4,553)	(4,553)
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	0	0	(1,633)	(4,624)	(4,553)	(10,810)
Total Adjustments	16,902	(14,515)	(634)	4,972	(1,198)	5,527

2019/20	Usable Reserves					
	General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Movement In Unusable Reserves
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments to Revenue Resources						
Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:						
Pensions costs (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve)	3,177	1,796	0	0	0	4,973
Financial Instruments (transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustments Account)	(2)	0	0	0	0	(2)
Council Tax and NNDR transfers to (or from) the Collection Fund Adjustment Account	944	0	0	0	0	944
Holiday Pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve)	26	8	0	0	0	34
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)	2,429	(7,527)	0	6,598	6,418	7,917
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	6,574	(5,723)	0	6,598	6,418	13,867
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources						
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	0	(2,934)	2,934	0	0	0
Payments to the Government Housing Receipts Pool (funded by a transfer from the Capital Receipts Reserve)	729	0	(729)	0	0	0
Posting of HRA resources to the Major Repairs Reserve	0	(3,637)	0	3,637	0	0
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account)	(995)	0	(150)	0	0	(1,145)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(202)	0	0	0	0	(202)
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(468)	(6,571)	2,055	3,637	0	(1,347)

Adjustments to Capital Resources						
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	0	(1,482)	0	0	(1,482)
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	0	0	(6,790)	0	(6,790)
Application of Capital grants to finance capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	(1,758)	(1,758)
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	0	0	(1,482)	(6,790)	(1,758)	(10,030)
Total Adjustments	6,107	(12,294)	573	3,445	4,660	2,490

Note 10 – Movements in Earmarked Reserves

These amounts are held to meet expenditure in future financial years. The movements on these Revenue Reserve Accounts during the year have been as follows:

	Balance @ 31.03.19 £'000	Movements	Appropriations		Balance @ 31.03.20 £'000	Movements	Appropriations		Balance @31.03.21 £'000
			Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000			Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	
General Fund									
Business Rates Volatility	1,456	0	800	(297)	1,959	0	11,417	0	13,376
Council Tax Hardship Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	531	0	531
Strategic Projects	303	0	0	(157)	146	0	2	(146)	2
Budget Carry Forwards	194	(22)	34	(72)	134	0	416	(68)	482
Grants & Contributions	1,545	(79)	1,476	(1,836)	1,106	0	591	(312)	1,385
Invest to Save (GF)	427	0	32	(123)	336	0	318	(200)	453
Mercury Abatement	414	0	14	(56)	371	0	0	(54)	317
Strategic Growth (GF)	14	0	43	0	57	0	0	(40)	17
Unused DRF	203	0	0	0	203	0	317	(179)	341
Backdated Rent Review	220	0	0	(50)	170	0	0	(170)	0
Funding for Strategic Priorities	1,214	5	0	(292)	926	0	0	(753)	174
IT Reserve	0	0	129	(35)	94	0	100	(71)	124
Revenues & Benefits Shared Service	163	0	25	(163)	25	0	0	(25)	0
Asset Improvement	55	0	0	(51)	4	0	0	(4)	0
Tree Risk Assessment	108	0	36	(38)	106	0	17	(26)	97
Vision2025	0	0	0	0	0	0	411	(206)	204
Organisational Development	85	0	0	(85)	0	0	0	0	0
Lincoln Lottery Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	9
Mayoral Car	47	0	0	0	47	0	0	(20)	27
Yarborough Leisure Centre	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Active Nation Bond Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	180	0	180
AGP Sinking Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Private Sector Stock Condition Survey	45	0	48	(48)	45	0	12	(30)	27
Property Searches	4	0	0	0	4	0	0	(4)	0
Corporate Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	60
Boston Audit Contract	14	0	0	0	14	0	0	(14)	0
Section 106 Interest	32	0	0	0	32	0	0	0	32

	Balance	Movements	Appropriations		Balance	Movements	Appropriations		Balance
	@ 31.03.19		Transfers In	Transfers Out	@ 31.03.20		Transfers In	Transfers Out	@31.03.21
	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
Crematorium	0	100	0	(100)	0	0	0	0	0
Christmas Decorations	17	(3)	0	0	14	0	0	0	14
Electric Van Replacement	11	0	4	0	15	0	4	0	19
Air Quality Initiatives	10	0	5	0	15	0	6	(10)	11
Commons Parking	25	0	11	(9)	27	0	0	(7)	20
Tank Memorial	10	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	10
HRS Reserve	89	0	0	(89)	0	0	0	0	0
City Hall Sinking Fund	60	0	0	0	60	0	0	0	60
Birchwood Leisure Centre	0	0	26	0	26	0	20	0	46
Covid Recovery Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,047	0	1,047
Covid Response	0	0	354	0	354	0	0	0	354
MSCP & Bus Station	0	0	60	0	60	0	0	0	60
Western Growth Corridor Plan	0	0	150	0	150	0	0	(70)	80
Total General Fund Earmarked Reserves	6,766	0	3,247	(3,501)	6,512	0	15,460	(2,409)	19,563
HRA									
HRA Strategic Growth	25	0	76	0	101	0	0	(75)	26
HRA Invest to Save	140	0	0	(7)	133	0	0	0	133
Capital Fees Equalisation	182	0	0	(42)	140	0	0	(30)	110
HRA Strategic Priority	240	0	0	(64)	176	0	625	(79)	722
De Wint Court	73	0	0	0	73	0	0	0	73
HRA Repairs Account	579	0	17	0	595	0	755	0	1,351
HRA Survey Works	60	0	3	(9)	54	0	0	0	54
Stock Retention	22	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	22
Housing Repairs Service	0	0	126	0	126	0	0	0	126
Total HRA Earmarked Reserves	1,321	0	222	(122)	1,420	0	1,380	(184)	2,617
Total Earmarked Reserves	8,087	0	3,469	(3,623)	7,932	0	16,841	(2,593)	22,180
Insurance Fund	3,862	0	445	(650)	3,657	0	375	(170)	3,862
Total Earmarked Reserves	11,949	0	3,914	(4,273)	11,589	0	17,216	(2,763)	26,043

Insurance Reserve

The insurance fund has been set up to ensure adequate funding for the insurance risk covered by the City of Lincoln Council. In **2020/21** the risk in respect of Public Liability Insurance had an excess of £100,000 (per claim) with no cap ceiling. The movements on the fund are as follows:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
3,862	Opening Balance	3,657
(150)	Funding of claims/losses	(170)
425	Contributions from revenue	375
20	Interest on balances	0
(500)	Contributions from reserve	0
3,657	Closing Balance	3,862

Note 11 – Other Operating Expenditure

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
828	Levies	850
729	Payments to the Government Housing Capital Receipts Pool	529
(744)	(Gains)/losses on the disposal of non-current assets	(173)
813	Total	1,206

Note 12 – Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
3,916	Interest payable and similar charges	3,915
2,452	Net interest on the net defined liability	2,039
1,370	(Surplus)/Deficit on Trading Operations	(877)
(26)	Dividends Receivable	(26)
(230)	Interest Receivable and similar income	(77)
(25)	Changes in fair value of investment properties – non trading	(10)
(22)	Gains/loss on disposal of investment properties	0
7,434	Total	4,964

Note 13 – Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(6,675)	Council Tax income	(6,859)
(5,772)	Retained Business Rates income and expenditure	(5,695)
(778)	Non service related government grants	(2,668)
(23)	RSG	(23)
(6,418)	Capital grants and contributions	(3,355)
(19,666)	Total	(18,600)

Note 14 – Non-Current Assets including Property, Plant & Equipment, Investment Properties and Intangible Assets

The movement in the Council's Assets during the year was as follows:

Movements in 2020/21										
	Council Dwellings	Land & Buildings	Vehicles Plant & Equip	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Property Plant & Equip Subtotal	Intangible Assets	Investment Properties	TOTAL
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or Valuation										
At 1 April 2020	257,607	89,222	12,890	5,235	19,750	2,740	387,444	1,992	34,646	424,082
Additions	11,854	53	320	686	0	5,706	18,619	0	0	18,619
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	53	(5,035)	0	0	(135)	0	(5,117)	0	0	(5,117)
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	6,109	(3,273)	0	0	(48)	0	2,788	0	294	3,082
De-recognition and disposals	(1,327)	(439)	0	0	0	0	(1,766)	0	(100)	(1,866)
Other movements in cost or valuation	205	737	(4,042)	0	(100)	(205)	(3,405)	0	(637)	(4,042)
At 31 March 2021	274,501	81,265	9,168	5,921	19,467	8,241	398,563	1,992	34,203	434,758
Depreciation										
At 1 April 2020	(20)	(2,457)	(8,646)	(119)	(7)	0	(11,249)	(1,683)	0	(12,932)
Depreciation/amortisation for year	(6,362)	(1,738)	(687)	0	(4)	0	(8,791)	(118)	0	(8,909)
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	0	2,691	0	0	0	0	2,691	0	0	2,691

Movements in 2020/21										
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	6,316	0	0	0	0	0	6,316	0	0	6,316
Impairment losses/(reversals) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
De-recognition – disposals	32	21	0	0	0	0	53	0	0	53
De-recognition – other	0	0	4,042	0	0	0	4,042	0	0	4,042
Other movements in cost or valuation	0	(1)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2021	(33)	(1,484)	(5,291)	(119)	(10)	0	(6,938)	(1,801)	0	(8,739)
Net book value of assets at 31.03.21	274,468	79,781	3,877	5,799	19,457	8,241	391,624	191	34,203	426,018
Net book value of assets at 31.03.20	257,587	86,763	4,244	5,116	19,744	2,740	376,192	309	34,646	411,147
Owned	257,587	86,763	4,053	5,116	19,744	2,740	376,001	309	34,646	410,956
Finance lease			191				191	0	0	191

Movements in 2019/20										
	Council Dwellings	Land & Buildings	Vehicles Plant & Equip	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Property Plant & Equip Subtotal	Intangible Assets	Investment Properties	TOTAL
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost or Valuation										
At 1 April 2019	249,411	93,811	10,680	4,955	11,823	1,679	372,359	1,932	30,478	404,769
Additions	10,768	236	2,203	280	0	1,073	14,560	55	6,888	21,503
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	74	3,204	0	0	89	0	3,367	0	0	3,367
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(442)	(152)	0	0	0	0	(594)	0	(2,741)	(3,335)
De-recognition and disposals	(2,202)	0	0	0	0	0	(2,202)	0	(20)	(2,222)
Other movements in cost or valuation	(2)	(7,879)	7	0	7,838	(12)	(48)	5	41	(2)
At 31 March 2020	257,607	89,222	12,890	5,235	19,750	2,740	387,444	1,992	34,646	424,082
Depreciation										
At 1 April 2019	(14)	(2,739)	(8,102)	(119)	(5)	0	(10,980)	(1,571)	0	(12,551)
Depreciation/amortisation for year	(6,354)	(1,699)	(544)	0	(2)	0	(8,600)	(112)	0	(8,712)
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	0	1,545	0	0	1	0	1,546	0	0	1,546
Movements in 2019/20										
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	6,294	435	0	0	0	0	6,729	0	0	6,729
Impairment losses/(reversals) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Movements in 2019/20										
	Council Dwellings	Land & Buildings	Vehicles Plant & Equip	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Property Plant & Equip Subtotal	Intangible Assets	Investment Properties	TOTAL
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
De-recognition – disposals	54	0	0	0	0	0	54	0	0	54
De-recognition – other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other movements in cost or valuation	0	1	0	0	(1)	0	0	0	0	(0)
At 31 March 2020	(20)	(2,457)	(8,646)	(119)	(7)	0	(11,249)	(1,683)	0	(12,932)
Net book value of assets at 31.03.20	257,587	86,763	4,244	5,116	19,744	2,740	376,192	309	34,646	411,147
Net book value of assets at 31.03.19	249,397	91,072	2,578	4,836	11,818	1,679	361,379	360	30,478	392,217
Owned	257,587	86,763	4,053	5,116	19,744	2,740	376,001	309	34,646	391,833
Finance lease	0	0	191	0	0	0	191	0	0	191

Valuation

The Council carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment are to be measured at current value are revalued at least every five years.

The valuations of the Council's freehold and leasehold properties have been carried out in accordance with the Statements of Asset Valuation Practice and Guidance Notes of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. All valuations are either undertaken by the following Council Officers, or by the District Valuer.

Principal Property Surveyor

Mr P Clifton

MRICS

The table below shows the council owned assets valued in each accounting period:

	Council Dwellings	Land & Buildings	Community Assets	Vehicles Plant & Equip.	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Valuation at historical cost			5,799	3,877		8,241
Valued at current value as at:						
Desktop review						
31/03/2021	96	490			109	
31/03/2021	273,835	44,225			870	
31/03/2020	472	19,650			1,200	
31/03/2019	65	7,525			16,376	
31/03/2018		1,196			902	
31/03/2017		6,695			0	
Total cost or valuation	274,468	79,781	5,799	3,877	19,457	8,241

Depreciation

Tangible Assets

Depreciation, as stated in the Accounting Policies, is calculated on a straight-line basis. The following useful lives and depreciation rates have been used in the calculation of depreciation:

<u>Category Of Asset</u>	<u>Useful Economic Life</u>
Council Dwellings	60 years for new properties 30 years for properties over 30 years old
Other Land & Buildings	
- Council Buildings	50 years
- Car Parks	60 years
- Cemeteries	50 years
- Crematorium	21 years
- Community Centres	50 years
- Offices	50 years
- Depots & Workshops	50 years

<u>Category Of Asset</u>	<u>Useful Economic Life</u>
- Public Conveniences	50 years
- Recreation Grounds	50 years
- Sports Centres	50 years
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	
- Computers	5 years
- Equipment	10 years
- Fixtures and Fittings	5 years
- Plant	7/10 years
- Vehicles	5/7 years

Intangible Assets

Intangible assets are amortised to service headings within cost of services as part of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on a straight-line basis, as stated in the Accounting Policies. The standard useful life, used for amortisation purposes is:

<u>Category Of Asset</u>	<u>Useful Economic Life</u>
Intangible Asset	
- Software	5 years

Note 15 – Heritage Assets

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

	Heritage Vehicles £'000	Musical Instruments £'000	Civic Insignia £'000	Other £'000	Total Assets £'000
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2019	38	3,285	2,359	409	6,091
Additions	0	0	0	0	0
De-recognitions	0	(3,185)	0	0	0
At 31 March 2020	38	100	2,359	409	2,906
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2020	38	100	2,359	409	2,906
Additions	0	0	0	0	0
De-recognitions	(38)	(100)	0	0	(138)
At 31 March 2021	0	0	2,359	409	2,768

Civic Insignia

The collection of civic insignia includes the Mayor's and Sheriff's badges and chains of office and mace. All items are on display at the Guildhall, Lincoln. It also includes four ceremonial and fighting swords of considerable historical significance, which together are valued at £2.4m. The Council's collection of civic insignia is reported in the Balance Sheet at insurance valuation which is based on market values. These insurance valuations are reviewed annually and revalued every five years by an

appropriately qualified external valuer. These were revalued at 31st March 2017 by external valuers Bamfords.

Other Heritage Assets

This category includes artwork and paintings and miscellaneous assets recognised in the Balance Sheet, such as the Books of Remembrance kept on display at the City Crematorium. These are reported at insurance valuation which is based on market values and are subject to periodic revaluation by an appropriately external qualified valuer. These were revalued at 31st March 2017 by external valuers Bamfords.

Heritage Assets not recognised in the Balance Sheet

In addition to the assets recognised in the Balance Sheet and disclosed in the above table, the Council holds a number of assets which are by their nature heritage assets but are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. The Council does not consider that reliable cost or valuation information can be obtained for these assets due to the nature of the assets and the lack of market values. Examples of this type of asset are ancient structures and ruins, War memorials and public art. These are listed below.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

St Paul in the Bail	Walls & Well
Saltergate Roman Wall and Posterngate	Wall & Gate
Mint Wall, West Bight	Wall
Pottergate	Arch
Lower West Gate & Wall, City Hall	Gate & Wall
St Marys Conduit	Conduit
Temple Gardens, Close Wall	Wall
Roman Wall, Mary Sookias House, Cecil Street	Wall

Memorials

High Street	War memorial
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Memorials

Dixon Street	War memorial
Birchwood Avenue	War memorial
Newark Road/Maple Street	War memorial

Public Art

The Chimes, Brayford Wharf North	Artwork
Empowerment, Waterside	Artwork
Exotic Cone I and II	Artwork
Lilies, Altham Terrace	Artwork
Lion, Arboretum	Artwork
Love Seat, The Lawn	Artwork
Dr Charlesworth Statue, The Lawn	Artwork
Mother and Child, The Lawn	Artwork
St Marks Obelisk	Artwork
Light Sculpture, Wigford Bridge	Artwork

Note 16 – Investment Properties and Surplus Assets

Movements in the value of Investment Properties are shown in note 14. The current value measurement base is fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective.

The following items of income and expenditure have been accounted for in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
2,329	Rental income from investment property	1,462
(105)	Direct operating expenses arising from investment property	(5)
(2,741)	Fair value gains/(losses) on investment properties	294
22	Gains/(losses) on disposal of investment properties	0
<u>(495)</u>	Net gain/(loss)	<u>1,751</u>

There are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Council's right to the remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property or repairs, maintenance or enhancement.

The movements in the value of investment properties are analysed below:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
30,478	Balance at 1 April	34,646
6,888	Additions	0
(20)	Disposals	(100)
(2,741)	Net gain/loss from Fair Value Adjustment	294
41	Transfers (to)/from Other Land and Buildings	(637)
<u>34,646</u>	Balance at 31 March	<u>34,203</u>

Fair Value Hierarchy

The Council's Investment Properties have been assessed as being Level 2 on the Fair Value Hierarchy (See Note 1 Accounting Policies, point 25 for an explanation of fair value levels).

Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 2 Fair Values for Investment Properties

An income-investment approach has been used to determine the fair value of Investment Properties. This technique involves an assessment of potential future net incomes flowing from the property. In the case of the majority of properties that are currently let, this reflects terms of the existing lease including passing rents and any scheduled rent reviews and, if later, ultimate reversion to full market rental value. In the case of properties that are currently vacant, it is assumed that a letting is immediately sought at full market rental value and otherwise on optimum letting terms from the perspective of a market participant. Potential future net income flows are then capitalised using market all-risks term and reversionary yields to derive a present value, thus representing Market Value.

There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for Investment Properties.

Highest and Best Use of Investment Properties

In estimating the fair value of the Council's investment properties, the highest and best use of the properties is deemed to be their current use.

Valuers

The Investment Properties that were valued at 31 March 2021 were valued in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Surplus Assets

Movements in the value of Surplus Assets are shown in note 14.

The current value measurement base for surplus assets is fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective. There have been no transfers between the levels of the hierarchy during the year. A transfer would occur when more detailed market information becomes available.

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.

The Council's surplus assets are all valued using level three inputs due to their latent value or specialist nature.

Note 17 – Intangible Assets

Movements in the value of Intangible Assets are shown in note 14. No internally generated intangible assets are recognised in the Balance Sheet. The carrying amount of intangible assets is amortised on a straight-line basis. Amortisation of £118k (£112k in 19/20) was charged to service headings in the Cost of Services.

Note 18 – Financial Instruments

The Council has the following investments at 31 March 2021:

Investors in Lincoln – on 1 April 2018 the Council held shares at cost of £14,000 which have been designated as fair value through Other Comprehensive Income. The fair value of the shares derived using IFRS13 Fair Value Measurement was £245k. No dividends are received for these instruments.

Dunham Bridge – On 1 April 2018 the Council held shares at a fair value, based on market evidence, of £458k with the accumulated gains being held in the Available for Sale Reserve. The fair value of the shares remained unchanged. Dividends are received for these instruments. Upon designation to fair value through Other Comprehensive Income the accumulated gains were transferred from the Available for Sale Reserve to the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve (see note 26).

All investments classified as loans and receivables have been classified as Amortised Cost as they are all simple principal and interest investments with no impairment allowance or other cash flows associated with them. The investments are carried at the same value on the Balance Sheet and any transactional costs are charged directly to the Income and Expenditure Account as they are incurred.

Investments in Equity Instruments Designated at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income

Fair Value of Equity Instruments designated at fair value through other comprehensive income include the following:

	31/03/2020	31/03/2021
	£000	£000
Non-listed securities	504	504
Total	504	504

Reconciliation of Fair Value Measurements for Financial Assets Carried at Fair Value Categorised within Level 3 of the Fair Value Hierarchy for Financial Assets

31 March 2021

	Unquoted Shares	Other	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Opening Balance	268	0	268
Transfers into level 3	0	0	0
Transfers out of Level 3	0	0	0
Total gains or losses for the period			
- Included in Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	0	0	0
- Included in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(19)	0	(19)
Additions	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0
Closing Balance	249	0	249

The borrowings and investments disclosed in the Balance Sheet are made up of the following categories of financial instruments:

Summary of Financial Instruments		31/3/20	31/3/21
		£000s	£000s
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost			
Long Term Borrowing	Level 1	(110,448)	(115,738)
Short Term Borrowing	Level 1	(11,459)	(9,417)
Long Term Creditors	Level 1	0	0
Short Term Creditors	Level 1	(9,474)	(7,869)
Cash and Cash Equivalents	Level 1	(329)	0
Total Financial Liabilities		(131,710)	(133,024)
Financial Assets at amortised cost			
Short Term Investments	Level 1	30,609	33,907
Long Term Debtors	Level 1	950	837
Short Term Debtors	Level 1	7,044	6,835
Cash and Cash Equivalents	Level 1	0	563
Total Financial Assets		38,603	42,142
Financial Assets at FVOCI*			
Long Term Investments	Level 2/3**	772	753
Total Assets at FVOCI		772	753

*Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income

** See table below for detail

There have been no transfers between levels in the hierarchy during 2020/21.

Under accounting requirements, the carrying value of the financial instrument value is shown in the balance sheet which includes the principal amount borrowed or lent and further adjustments for breakage costs or stepped interest loans (measured by an effective interest rate calculation) including accrued interest. Accrued interest is shown separately in short term debtors/creditors where the payments/receipts are due within one year. The effective interest rate is effectively accrued interest receivable under the instrument, adjusted for the amortisation of any premiums or discounts reflected in the purchase price.

Financial Instrument Gains/Losses

The gains and losses recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

2020/21	Financial Liabilities		Financial Assets		Total
	Amortised Cost		FVOCI		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Interest Expense	3,912				3,912
Interest Income credited to services			(77)		(77)
Dividend Income			(26)		(26)
Surplus or deficit arising on revaluation of financial assets			19		19
Net (gain)/loss for the year	3,912	(77)	(7)	(7)	3,828

2019/20				
Interest Expense	3,916			3,916
Interest Income credited to services		(230)		(230)
Interest Income			(26)	(26)
Surplus or deficit arising on revaluation of financial assets			26	26
Net (gain)/loss for the year	3,916	(230)	(0)	3,686

Fair Value of Financial Assets

Some of the Authority's financial assets are measured at fair value on a recurring basis and are described in the following table, including the valuation techniques used to measure them. Assets measured at Fair value through other comprehensive income are classified in this way due to the business model under which they are being held and that they have features which are not usually found in a basic lending agreement.

Financial assets measured at fair value				
Recurring fair value measurements	Input level in fair value hierarchy**	Valuation technique used to measure fair value	As at 31/3/21	As at 31/3/20
			£'000	£'000
Fair Value OCI				
Equity shareholding in Dunham Bridge Company	Level 2	Average price obtained during the last three share sales	504	504
Equity shareholding in Investors in Lincoln	Level 3	Discounted cash flow *	249	268
Total			753	772

* The Authority's shareholding in Investors in Lincoln - the shares in this company are not traded in an active market and fair value of £267,793 has been based on valuation techniques that are not based on observable current market transactions or available market data. The valuation has been made based on an analysis of the assets and liabilities in the company's latest audited accounts and assuming future profit will remain the same as current year profit.

**See Glossary for a definition of Fair Value Input Levels

Fair Values of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities that are not measured at Fair Value (but for which Fair Value Disclosures are Required)

Except for the financial assets carried at fair value (described in the table above), all other financial liabilities and financial assets held by the authority are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost:

- For loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and other loans payable, premature repayment rates from the PWLB have been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- For loans receivable prevailing benchmark market rates have been used to provide the fair value;

- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months, or is a trade or other receivable, the fair value is taken to be the carrying amount outstanding or the billed amount;
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The fair values calculated are as follows:

Financial Liabilities

31/03/20				31/03/21	
Carrying Amount	Fair Value		Fair Value hierarchy**	Carrying Amount	Fair Value
£'000	£'000			£'000	£'000
96,116	102,874	PWLB Debt	Level 2	93,354	106,461
16,175	26,540	Money Market Debt	Level 2	16,174	27,879
565	565	Stock	Level 2	565	561
9,051	9,108	Other	Level 2/3	15,062	15,199
121,907	139,087	Total Debt		125,155	150,099

The Council has £561,000 of listed debt. This stock has not been traded in recent years. Due to this debt being immaterial and the lack of market activity its fair value has been assessed to be its 'par' (or face) value inclusive of accrued interest at the year end.

The fair value is greater than the carrying amount because the Council's portfolio of loans includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate payable is higher than the rates available for similar loans in the market at the Balance Sheet date. This is to be expected given that the current rates of interest are at a historically low level.

**See Glossary for a definition of Fair Value Input Levels

Financial Assets

31/03/20			31/03/21	
Carrying Amount	Fair Value		Carrying Amount	Fair Value
£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000
30,609	30,609	Money Market Investments <1 year	33,907	33,907
0	0	Money Market Investments >1 year	0	0
950	950	Long Term Debtors	837	837
31,559	31,559	Total Investments	34,744	34,744

The differences are attributable to fixed interest instruments payable being held by the Council, whose interest rate is higher than the prevailing rate estimated to be available at 31 March. This increases the fair value of financial assets and raises the value of loans and investments held at amortised cost.

The fair value of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans of £106.461m measures the economic effect of the terms agreed with the PWLB compared with estimates of the terms that would be offered for market transactions undertaken at the Balance Sheet date. The difference between the carrying amount and the fair value measures the additional interest that the Authority will pay over the remaining terms of the loans under the agreements with the PWLB, against what would be paid if the loans were at prevailing market rates.

However, the Council has a continuing ability to borrow at concessionary rates from the PWLB rather than from the markets, termed the PWLB Certainty Interest rates. A supplementary measure of the fair value as a result of its PWLB commitments for fixed rate loans is to compare the terms of these loans with the new borrowing rates available from the PWLB. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £93.354m would be valued at £106.461m. But, if the Council were to seek to avoid the projected loss by repaying the loans to the PWLB, the PWLB would raise a penalty charge for early redemption in addition to charging a premium for the additional interest that will not now be paid. The exit price for the PWLB loans including the penalty charge would be £124.046m.

Trade debtors and creditors are carried at cost as this is a fair approximation of their value.

Note 19 – Inventories

In undertaking its work the Council holds reserves of inventories together with amounts of uncompleted work (work in progress). The figure shown in the Balance Sheet may be subdivided as follows:

	Consumable Stores		City Maintenance Services Materials		City Maintenance Services Work in Progress		Total	
	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000	2019/20 £'000	2020/21 £'000
Balance outstanding at the start of the year	85	138	2	2	0	0	87	141
Purchases	58	1	0	0	0	0	58	1
Recognised as an expense in the year	(5)	0	0	0	0	0	(5)	0
Balance outstanding at the year-end	138	139	2	2	0	0	141	142

Note 20 – Debtors

Debtors listed under current assets are monies due which the Council expects to collect within one year of the Balance Sheet date and are analysed as follows:

31/03/20		31/03/21
£'000		£'000
1,163	Central Government Bodies	13,843
3,195	Other Local Authorities	8,022
2	NHS Bodies	9
11,076	Other Entities and Individuals	10,664
15,436	Total Short-Term Debtors	32,537
(3,930)	Less Impairment Loss Allowance	(4,148)
11,506	Net Short-Term Debtors as per Balance Sheet	28,389

Debtors for Local Taxation

The past due but not impaired amount for local taxation (council tax and non-domestic rates) can be analysed by age as follows:

31/03/20		31/03/21
£'000		£'000
109	Less than three months	122
316	Three to six months	184
545	Six months to one year	3,438
5,854	More than one year	4,699
6,824	Total	8,444

Note 21 – Cash and Cash Equivalents

The balance of Cash and Cash Equivalents is made up of the following elements:

31/03/20		31/03/21
£'000		£'000
3	Cash held by the Council	1
(329)	Bank Current accounts	561
(326)		562

The overdrawn balance at 31/3/2012 shows the financial position which includes creditor payments awaiting clearance through the bank account.

Note 22 – Assets Held for Sale

The Authority had 1 piece of development land as assets held for sale at the beginning of the year. The sale of the asset has been approved but was not completed as at 31st March 2021. The asset is included as Current Assets as at 31st March 2021.

Current 2019/20 £000		Current 2020/21 £000
1,500	Balance at start of the year	1,500
0	Additions	0
	Newly classified:	
0	- Property Plant & Equipment	0
0	Revaluation gain/(loss)	0
0	Transfers from AHFS	0
0	Disposals	0
1,500	Closing Balance	1,500

Note 23 – Creditors

Creditors shown as current liabilities are amounts payable by the Council within one year of the Balance Sheet date and are analysed as follows:

31/03/20 £'000		31/03/21 £'000
(6,740)	Central Government Bodies	(24,825)
(567)	Other Local Authorities	(593)
(7,958)	Other Entities and Individuals	(8,396)
(15,265)	Total	(33,814)

Note 24 – Provisions

These amounts are set aside to provide for potential liabilities relating to specific occurrences and comprise the following balances:

	Business Rates RV Reduction the Think Tank	Compulsory Purchase Order	Local Authority Mortgage Scheme	Business Rates Appeals
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 1 April 2020	(37)	(94)	0	(2,275)
Additional Provisions made in 2020/21	0	0	0	(920)
Amounts used in 2020/21	0	0	0	167
Unused Amounts Reversed in 2020/21	0	0	0	579
Unwinding of Discounting in 2020/21	0	0	0	0
Balance at 31 March 2021	(37)	(94)	0	(2,448)

The provision for business rate appeals represents the Council's share (40% of £6.119m) of the total provision for appeals against the rateable valuation set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) not settled as at 31 March 2021. The total provision is accounted for in the Collection Fund. The amount and timing of outflows against the Business Rates Appeals provision is dependent on the processing and determination of business rates appeals by the Valuation Office.

Note 25 – Usable Reserves

Movements in the Council's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement and Note 10.

Note 26 – Unusable Reserves

The Council keeps a number of unusable reserves in the Balance Sheet. Some are required to be held for statutory reasons; some are needed to comply with proper accounting practice.

Reserve	Balance 31/03/20	Net Movement in Year	Balance 31/03/21	Purpose of Reserve	Further Details of Movements
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Revaluation Reserve	32,181	(2,832)	29,349	Store of gains on revaluation of assets	a) below
Pensions Reserve	(81,989)	(27,252)	(109,241)	Balancing account to allow inclusion of Pensions Liability in the Balance Sheet	Note 44 to the financial statements
Capital Adjustment Account	252,643	10,520	263,163	Store of capital resources set aside to meet past expenditure	b) below
Deferred Capital Receipts	57	0	57	Expected future repayments from sales of assets received in instalments	c) below
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	(53)	2	(51)	Balancing mechanism between the rates at which gains and losses are recognised under the Code of Practice	d) below
Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve	757	(19)	738	Store of gains on revaluation of investments not yet realised through sales	e) below
Collection Fund Adjustment Account – Council Tax	26	(222)	(196)	Store of Council's share of accumulated surpluses and deficits in relation to Council Tax on the Collection Fund	f) below

Reserve	Balance 31/03/20	Net Movement in Year	Balance 31/03/21	Purpose of Reserve	Further Details of Movements
	£'000	£'000	£'000		
Collection Fund Adjustment Account - NNDR	118	(11,546)	(11,428)	Store of Council's share of accumulated surpluses and deficits in relation to NNDR on the Collection Fund	f) below
Accumulated Absences Account	(460)	(310)	(770)	Absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year (i.e. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March	g) below
	203,280	(31,658)	171,622		

a) Revaluation Reserve

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

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(27,610)	Balance 1 April	(32,181)
(5,210)	Upward Revaluation of assets	(1,346)
296	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services	3,773
<hr/>		<hr/>
(4,914)	Surplus or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	2,427
265	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	281
78	Amounts written out to the Capital Adjustment Account	123
<hr/>		<hr/>
<u>(32,181)</u>	Balance 31 March	<u>(29,350)</u>

b) Capital Adjustment Account

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

The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties, *gains and losses on Assets held for Sale* and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Council.

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

Note 9 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(248,888)	Balance 1 April	(252,643)
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:	
8,712	Charges for depreciation and amortisation of non-current assets	8,909
0	Other movements of depreciation	0
(6,135)	Revaluation (gains)/losses and impairments on Property, Plant and Equipment	(9,104)
2,741	Fair value movements on Investment Properties	(294)
479	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	970
2,168	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	1,813
	Other adjustments	15
7,965		2,309
(344)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(281)
	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve prior period adjustment	
7,621	Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	2,029
	Capital Financing applied in year:	
(1,482)	Use of Capital Receipts to finance new capital expenditure	(1,633)
(150)	Use of Capital Receipts to reduce capital financing requirement	(150)
(6,790)	Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(4,624)
(202)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	(82)
(1,758)	Application of Capital Grants to finance new capital expenditure	(4,553)
(995)	Statutory Provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund and HRA balances (MRP/VRP)	(1,507)
(11,376)		(12,550)
(252,643)	Balance 31 March	(263,163)

c) Deferred Capital Receipts

This account contains the expected future repayments of capital from sales of assets which will be received in instalments over an agreed period of time. They arise principally from mortgages on sold council houses. When made, these payments are regarded as being of a capital nature and transactions during the year were as follows:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(57)	Balance 1 April	(57)
0	Council's share of (surplus)/deficit for the year	0
(57)	Balance 31 March	(57)

d) Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account provides a balancing mechanism between the rates at which gains and losses (such as premiums on the early repayment of debt) are recognised under the Code of Practice and are required by statute to be met from the General Fund and HRA balances.

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
55	Balance 1 April	53
0	Proportion of discounts incurred in previous financial years to be credited to the General Fund Balance in accordance with statutory requirements	0
(2)	Proportion of premiums incurred in previous financial years to be charged against the General Fund Balance in accordance with statutory requirements	(2)
53	Balance 31 March	51

e) Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve

The Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the authority arising from increases on the value of its investments measured at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income. The balance is reduced when investments with accumulated gains are either revalued downwards or impaired and the gains lost or disposed of and the gains are realised.

2019/20 £'000	Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve	2020/21 £'000
(783)	Balance 1 April	(757)
0	Transfer from Available for Sale Financial Instruments Reserve	0
26	Revaluations relating to previous years adjusted for in 18/19 (Gain)/Loss on FVOCI revaluations in year	19
(757)	Balance 31 March	(738)

f) Collection Fund Adjustment Account – Council Tax

The Council Tax Adjustment Account was introduced on 1 April 2009 to comply with the new accounting requirements for the Collection Fund contained within the Statement of Recommended Practice 2009/10 (SORP 2009). The difference between accrued income for the year as shown in the Income and Expenditure Account and the amount required to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account. The balance on the account represents the Council's share of the accumulated surpluses and deficits on the Collection Fund at the Balance Sheet date.

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(72)	Balance 1 April	(26)
46	Amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	222
(26)	Balance 31 March	196

g) Collection Fund Adjustment Account – NNDR

The NNDR Adjustment Account was introduced on 1 April 2013 to comply with the new regime for the collection of Business Rates and the resulting accounting requirements. The difference between accrued income for the year as shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the amount required to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account. The balance on the account represents the Council's share of the accumulated surpluses and deficits on the Collection Fund at the Balance Sheet date.

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(1,016)	Balance 1 April	(118)
898	Amount by which council non-domestic rates credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from non-domestic rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	11,546
(118)	Balance 31 March	11,428

h) Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund and HRA Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in year, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on General Fund and HRA Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from this account.

2019/20 £'000			2020/21 £'000	
	425	Balance 1 April		460
(425)		Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(460)	
460		Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	770	
		Amount by which officer remuneration charged in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements		310
	460	Balance 31 March		770

Note 27 – Cash Flow Statement - Operating Activities

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

2019/20 £'000			2020/21 £'000	
187		Interest received		129
(3,638)		Interest paid		(3,976)
26		Dividends Received		26
<u>(3,425)</u>				<u>(3,821)</u>

Note 28 – Cash Flow Statement – Adjustment to surplus or deficit on provision of services for non-cash movements

2019/20 £'000			2020/21 £'000	
8,600		Depreciation		8,791
(6,135)		Impairment and downward valuations		(9,104)
112		Amortisation		118
0		Increase/(decrease) in impairment for bad debts		0
6,014		Increase/(decrease) in creditors		22,216
(1,709)		(Increase)/decrease in debtors		(1,418)
(50)		(Increase)/decrease in inventories		(1)
4,973		Movement in pension liability		3,692
2,148		Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or derecognised		1,828
1,718		Other non-cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services		(119)
<u>15,671</u>				<u>26,003</u>

Note 29 – Cash Flow Statement – Adjustment to surplus or deficit on the provision of services for items that are investing & financing activities

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(2,934)	Proceeds from sale of PPE, investment property and intangible assets	(1,677)
(6,420)	Any other items for which the cash effects are investing or financing cash flows	(3,355)
<u>(9,354)</u>		<u>(5,032)</u>

Note 30 – Cash Flow Statement - Investing Activities

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(21,975)	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(18,008)
(131,555)	Purchase of short-term and long-term investments	(172,315)
0	Other payments for investing activities	0
2,934	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	1,677
130,205	Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments	168,965
6,484	Other receipts from investing activities	3,207
<u>(13,907)</u>	Net cash flows from investing activities	<u>(16,474)</u>

Note 31 – Cash Flow Statement - Financing Activities

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(237)	Cash payments for the reduction of outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases	(105)
25,001	Cash receipts of short & long-term borrowing	14,673
0	Other receipts from financing activities	0
(20,201)	Repayments of short- and long-term borrowing	(11,425)
(2,875)	Other payments for financing activities	(19,325)
<u>1,688</u>	Net cash flows from financing activities	<u>(16,182)</u>

Reconciliation of liabilities arising from financing activities

2020/21	01/04/2020	Financing Cash Flows		Other non-financing cash flows	31/03/2021
		New loans	Repayments		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Long Term Borrowing	110,448	(6,000)	0	2,710	107,158
Short Term Borrowing	11,460	(5,000)	9,705	(2,710)	13,455
Lease liabilities	105	0	(105)	0	0
Total Liabilities from financing activities	122,013	(11,000)	9,600	0	120,613

2019/20	01/04/2019	Financing Cash Flows		Other non-financing cash flows	31/03/2020
		New loans	Repayments		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Long Term Borrowing	95,354	25,001	(201)	(9,706)	110,448
Short Term Borrowing	21,476		(20,000)	9,984	11,460
Lease liabilities	342	0	(237)		105
Total Liabilities from financing activities	117,172	25,001	(20,438)	278	122,013

Note 32 – Trading Operations

The Council operates a Housing Repairs Service (HRS), which carries out day to day maintenance on council housing and other public buildings as well as environmental works, street furniture etc. It also manages a number of industrial estates and commercial properties.

2019/20				2020/21		
Exp. £'000	Inc. £'000	Net £'000		Exp. £'000	Inc. £'000	Net £'000
8,473	(7,734)	739	HRS	7,842	(6,949)	894
(210)	(378)	(588)	Industrial Estates	54	(408)	(355)
3,072	(1,951)	1,120	Lincoln Properties	62	(1,478)	(1,416)
11,334	(10,063)	1,271	Total (Surplus)/Deficit	7,958	(8,835)	(877)

Note 33 – Agency Services

In accordance with the Code, the collection and distribution of National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) and Council Tax is deemed to be an agency arrangement. The costs of collection of NNDR and the surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund for the year, are shown in the Collection Fund Statement.

Note 34 – Members' Allowances

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (Amendment) Regulations 1995 requires local authorities to publish the amounts paid to members under the members' allowance scheme.

The payments made to the City of Lincoln Council members during 2020/21 totalled £249,438 (£242,113 in 2019/20).

Payments are defined as:

- i. Basic Allowance
- ii. Special Responsibility Allowance
- iii. Other allowances

Note 35 – Officers' Remuneration

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Council to disclose remuneration paid to senior employees.

For the purposes of the regulation senior employees are persons whose salary is in excess of £150,000 per year or whose salary is £50,000 or more and are deemed to have responsibility for the management of the Council to the extent that they have the power to direct or control the major activities. The remuneration paid to the Council's senior employees is as follows:

Officers' Emoluments – Senior Employees

2020/21						
Post Title	Salary	Bonuses	Expense Allowances	Compensation for loss of office	Pension Contributions	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Chief Executive ¹	123,588	0	0	0	21,381	144,969
Strategic Director of Housing & Regeneration ²	96,657	0	0	0	16,722	113,378
Strategic Director of Communities & Environment	96,920	0	0	0	16,767	113,687
Strategic Director of Major Developments	96,584	0	0	0	16,709	113,293
Total	413,748	0	0	0	71,578	485,327

2019/20						
Post Title	Salary	Bonuses	Expense Allowances	Compensation for loss of office	Pension Contributions	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Chief Executive ¹	130,256	0	516	0	20,841	151,613
Strategic Director of Housing & Regeneration ²	91,197	0	321	0	14,592	106,110
Strategic Director of Communities & Environment	92,490	0	278	0	14,698	107,465
Strategic Director of Major Developments	91,008	0	0	0	14,561	105,569
Total	404,950	0	1,115	0	64,691	470,757

- 1) The salary costs for the Chief Executive include £6.9k relating to election expenses in 2019/20.
- 2) The salary costs for the Director of Housing & Regeneration is higher than 2018/19 due to previous year vacancy.

The numbers of other Council employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions) were paid as follows:

Remuneration Band	Number of Employees	
	2020/21	2019/20
£		
50,000 - 54,999	8	9
55,000 - 59,999	0	2
60,000 - 64,999	4	1
65,000 - 69,999	4	3
70,000 - 74,999	0	0
75,000 - 79,999	2	2
80,000 - 84,999	0	0

For employees receiving remuneration of £85,000 or more for the year see previous table 'Officers' Emoluments – Senior Employees'.

The figure above for 2020/21 includes no employees for whom an exit package was agreed.

The numbers of exit packages with total cost per band and total cost of the compulsory and other redundancies are set out in the following table:

Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band [b + c]		Total cost of exit packages in each band	
	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2019/20	2020/21
							£	£
£0 - £20,000	0	0	0	9	0	9	0	103,264
£20,001 - £40,000	0	0	1	4	1	4	36,398	108,353
£40,001 - £60,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
£60,001 - £80,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
£80,001 - £100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
£100,000 - £150,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total cost included in bandings							36,398	211,617
Add: Amounts provided for in CIES not included in bandings							0	0
Total cost included in CIES							36,398	211,617

None of the exit packages shown in the table above related to senior employees.

Note 36 – External Audit Costs

In 2020/21 the following fees relating to External Audit and Inspection were incurred and paid to Mazars, the Council's external auditors:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	Fees payable for statutory audit services	
36	Fees Payable with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor	36
36		36
	Fees payable for other audit services	
5	Fees payable with regard to other audit work	12
10	Fees payable for the certification of grant claims and returns	10
51	Total fee payable to external auditors	58

The fees relating to grant claims can vary from year to year depending on the number of claims to be audited. The figure for 2020/21 is an estimate, as the work will be carried out in the period July to September 2021.

Note 37 – Grant Income

The Council credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2020/21:

2019/20 £'000	Credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	2020/21 £'000
(22)	Revenue Support Grant	(23)
(721)	New Homes Bonus	(771)
0	Transparency Code Setup Grant	0
0	Business Rates Top Ups	(13)
0	Transparency Code Setup Grant	(8)
0	COVID	(1,877)
(35)	Brexit	0
(778)	Total Non-Ring-fenced Grants shown on CIES	(2,691)
(756)	Disabled Facilities Grants	(852)
(279)	Section 106 agreement	(107)
(1,400)	Lincolnshire County Council	0
(37)	Heritage Lottery Fund	(359)
(864)	Football Foundation	0
(81)	Sport England	0
(29)	Leaseholder Contributions	0
0	Historic England	(142)
0	Department of Transport	(40)
(2,954)	Homes England	(713)
0	MHLCCG Towns Fund	(1,000)
(18)	Other Capital Grants and Contributions	(142)
(6,418)	Total Capital Grants and Contributions shown on CIES	(3,354)
(1,663)	S31 Grants included in Non-Domestic Rates Income on CIES	(12,657)
(8,859)	Total Non-Ringfenced Grants included in CIES	(18,703)
2019/20 £'000	Credited to Services	2020/21 £'000
(12,364)	Rent Allowances	(12,453)
(12,161)	Rent Rebates	(11,277)
(179)	Discretionary Housing Payments	(227)
(345)	Housing Benefit Administration	(336)
(154)	New Burdens Grant Determination	(15,647)
0	Historic England	(29)
0	Local Council Tax Support Admin Subsidy	(137)
(56)	Home Office	(51)
(173)	Towns Fund	(70)
(1,281)	Homeless Specific	(1,517)
0	COVID Grants	(9,499)
(225)	Other Grants	(81)
(26,936)	Total Grants and Contributions credited to Services	(51,324)

2019/20	Credited to Services	2020/21
<u>£'000</u>		<u>£'000</u>
<u>(35,795)</u>	Total Grants, Contributions and Donated Assets	<u>(70,027)</u>

Note 38 – Related Parties

It is a requirement for the Council to disclose any transactions with a related party, including non-financial transactions. A 'related party' is defined as being an organisation with which the Council has dealings and where Officers or Members of the Council have a controlling interest or influence in the activities of that organisation. The code requires local authorities to disclose material transactions with 'related parties'. The disclosure is required in order that the true and fairness of the accounts can be understood by the reader of the accounts having knowledge of any 'related parties' of the Council.

Members/Officers - For 2020/21 the Council sent a letter, dated 1 April 2021, to all Members, Chief Officers and Assistant Directors, requesting disclosure of any 'related party transactions'. All letters were returned, one Member and one Officer declared pecuniary interests in accordance with section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972.

In addition, the table below details both Member and Officer representation on the boards of levying bodies, assisted organisations with which the Council makes material financial assistance and Joint Ventures.

Name of Organisation	Member Representative	Officer Representative
Upper Witham – Drainage Board	Cllr Hewson Cllr Vaughan	Chief Executive
Witham First – Drainage Board	Cllr Hewson Cllr Vaughan	Chief Executive
Witham Third – Drainage Board	Cllr Hewson Cllr Vaughan	Chief Executive
Lincoln Arts Trust	Cllr Murray	Director of Communities & Environment
Lincoln Dial-a-Ride/Shopmobility	Cllr Clayton-Hewson	Chief Executive
Lincoln Citizens Advice Bureau	Cllr Brothwell	Chief Executive
Investors in Lincoln	Cllr Metcalfe Cllr Murray	Chief Executive
Lincoln Business Improvement Group	Cllr Metcalfe Cllr Nannestad	Chief Executive
Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Partnership	Cllr Metcalfe Cllr Burke Cllr Hanrahan	Director of Communities & Environment
The Shared Revenues & Benefits Joint Committee	Cllr Metcalfe Cllr Nannestad	Chief Executive

None of the above Members or Officers took part in the decision making of any financial assistance awarded to any of the organisations.

UK Central Government - has significant influence over the general operations of the Council. It is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. housing benefits).

Details of transactions with government departments are set out in note 37.

Other Bodies - transactions with other bodies levying demands on the Council Tax - Levying bodies in 2020/21 were as follows:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
442	Upper Witham Drainage Board	453
129	Witham 1 st Drainage Board	135
257	Witham 3 rd Drainage Board	262
828	Total	850

Assisted Organisations - the Council made material financial assistance to the following organisations during the year: -

RESTATED

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
207	Lincoln Arts Trust	256
52	Lincoln Dial-a-Ride	26
56	Citizens Advice Bureau	28
32	Lincoln Shopmobility	16
50	Brayford	36

Collaborative Agreements – The Council holds 6.3% (£14,000) of the ordinary share capital of £224,000 of Investors in Lincoln Ltd (ILL).

The principal activity of the company is the promotion of economic regeneration and the development and expansion of industry, commerce and enterprise of all forms for the benefit of the community in and around the City of Lincoln. Investors in Lincoln Ltd grants the Council the sole and exclusive right to licence and manage its managed workspace development at Greetwell Place.

The company's accounting year-end is 31st March and the latest (audited) accounts are for the year ended 31st March 2020, showing net assets of £4.446m and a loss of £14,778. The accounts of the company may be obtained from The Company Secretary, c/o The Managed Workspace, Greetwell Place, 2 Lime Kiln Way, Lincoln LN2 4US.

The Council is fully responsible for meeting the first £100,000 of any cumulative deficit on operating the managed workspace units. In the event that the cumulative deficiency exceeds £100,000 the Council shall meet 75% of the deficiency. In 2020/21 a surplus on the managed workspace units of £25,748 was attributable to the Council.

Details of amounts received from ILL during 2020/21 are shown below:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
132	Property Management costs	133
90	Facility Fee	90
5	Management Fee	5

An amount of £4,845 was owed to ILL at 31st March 2021 in respect of property management costs, facility fees and management fees. This is included in the creditors balance in the Council's Balance Sheet.

Collaborative Agreements - The Council has a collaborative arrangement with North Kesteven and West Lindsey District Councils to provide the Central Lincolnshire Joint Planning Unit. This arrangement is hosted by North Kesteven District Council. The Council also has a collaborative arrangement with North Kesteven to provide a shared Revenues and Benefits Service. This shared service is hosted by the City of Lincoln Council. Both of these arrangements are governed through a Joint Committee representing each of the partner authorities. These arrangements are considered as Jointly Controlled Operations, where ventures use their own resources to undertake an activity subject to joint control, and as such do not require consolidation into the Council's accounts. The Council's proportion of activity is accounted for separately within the Core Financial Statements.

Note 39 – 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), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

Total Capital expenditure and financing during the year:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	Capital investment	
14,560	Property, Plant and Equipment	18,619
6,888	Investment Properties	0
55	Intangible Assets	0
479	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	970
21,982		19,589

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	Sources of finance	
(1,482)	Capital Receipts	(1,633)
(1,758)	Government grants and other contributions	(4,553)
(202)	Revenue Contributions	(82)
(6,790)	Major Repairs Reserve	(4,624)

(10,232)	Total sources of financing	(10,892)
(11,750)	Capital Financing Requirement	(8,697)
Capital Financing Requirement - Funded by:		
11,750	Unsupported Borrowing	8,697
11,750		8,697

Analysis of movements in the Capital Financing Requirement in Year:

120,130	Opening CFR	130,736
11,750	Unsupported borrowing	8,697
0	Adjustments in respect of leases disposed under finance lease	0
(995)	Minimum Revenue Provision/Voluntary Revenue Provision	(1,507)
(150)	Application of capital receipts to reduce CFR	(150)
130,736	Closing CFR	137,776

The Council has a five-year Housing Investment programme, of which £10.16m is contractually committed. This relates to a partnership arrangement to ensure all our properties continue to meet Decent Homes Standard and move towards achieving The Lincoln Standard. In addition to this the Council also has a five-year General Investment Programme, of which £2.672m is contractually committed. Crematorium improvements of £2.49m with the remainder to allow completion of schemes for Artificial Grass Pitches (£0.088m), IT and Telephony schemes (£0.044m), Electric vehicle charging points (£0.044m) and Car Park improvements (£0.006m).

Note 40 – Leases

Council as Lessee

Finance Leases

The Council holds fleet vehicles under finance leases. The assets acquired under these leases are carried as Property, Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet at the following amounts:

31/03/20		31/03/21
£'000		£'000
192	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	0
192		0

The Council is committed to making minimum payments under these leases comprising settlement of the long-term liability for the interest in the property acquired and finance costs that will be payable by the Council in future years while the liability

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

31/03/20		31/03/21
£'000		£'000
	Finance lease liabilities (net present value of minimum lease payments)	
105	Current	0
0	Non-current	0
<u>2</u>	Finance costs payable in future years	<u>0</u>
<u>107</u>	Minimum lease payments	<u>0</u>

	Minimum Lease Payments		Finance Lease Liabilities	
	31/03/20	31/03/21	31/03/20	31/03/21
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Not later than one year	107	0	105	0
Later than one year and not later than five years	0	0	0	0
Later than five years	0	0	0	0
	<u>107</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>0</u>

Operating leases

The Council has acquired the use of a number of assets, such as vehicles and buildings, under operating leases.

There are no future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years

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

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
<u>275</u>	Vehicles Plant & Equipment	<u>191</u>
<u>275</u>	Minimum lease payments	<u>191</u>

Council as Lessor

Finance Leases

The Council has granted a long-term lease to Lincolnshire County Council for the use of The Collection (City and County Museum) accounted for as a finance lease. Rental is at a peppercorn, meaning no rentals are receivable. There was no net investment in this asset in 2020/21.

Operating Leases

The Council leases out property under operating leases for the following purposes:

- for the provision of community services, such as sports facilities and community centres
- for economic development purposes to provide suitable affordable accommodation for local businesses
- for income generation purposes (investment properties)

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

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
1,928	Not later than one year	2,104
7,432	Later than one year and not later than five years	8,833
23,554	Later than five years	31,175
32,914		43,112

The minimum lease payments do not include rents that are contingent on events taking place after the lease was entered into, such as rent reviews. In 2020/21, £0.386m contingent rents were foregone by the Council (2019/20 £0.381m received).

Note 41 – Impairment Losses

There were no impairment losses during 2020/21.

Note 42 – Capitalisation of Borrowing Costs

As permitted by the code, the Council has adopted a policy of accounting for borrowing costs in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as they arise. No borrowing costs are capitalised.

Note 43 – Termination Benefits

The Council terminated the contracts of a number of employees in 2020/21, incurring liabilities of £0.212m (£0.036m in 2019/20) – see note 35 for the number of exit packages and total cost per band. These costs exclude any ill health retirements or departures as they are not termination benefits in accordance with the requirements of the code.

Note 44 – 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

make the payments (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Lincolnshire County Council. This is a funded scheme, meaning that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension's liability with investment assets.

The pension scheme is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme and the governance of the scheme is the responsibility of the pensions committee of Lincolnshire County Council. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pensions Fund Regulations.

The principal risks to the Council of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme, changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account the amounts required by statute as described in the accounting policies note.

Transactions Relating to Retirement Benefits

The Council recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the Net Cost of Services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge that is required to go against Council Tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of retirement benefits is reversed out in the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	<u>Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement</u>	
	Net Cost of Services:	
6,844	Current Service Cost	6,477
0	Past Service Costs (including curtailments)	0
	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure:	
2,451	Net Interest Expense	1,896
9,295	Total Post-Employment Benefits charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	8,373
2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:	
14,077	Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(26,167)
(8,342)	Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(2,407)
(19,888)	Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	54,612
(9,520)	Other	(2,478)
(23,673)	Total re-measurements recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	23,560
(14,378)	Total Post-employment Benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	31,933

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	<u>Movement in Reserves Statement</u>	
9,295	Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	8,373
(4,323)	Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:	(4,681)

Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

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

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(209,420)	Present value of the defined obligations	(261,978)
127,431	Fair value of plan assets	155,668
<u>(81,989)</u>	Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation	<u>(106,310)</u>

Reconciliation of Movements in the fair value of the scheme assets:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
139,623	Opening fair value of scheme assets	127,431
3,341	Interest Income	2,527
(14,077)	The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	26,167
4,323	Contributions from employer	4,681
965	Contributions from employees into the scheme	1,028
(6,744)	Benefits Paid	(6,674)
0	Administration Expenses	(105)
0	Settlement Prices received/(paid)	612
<u>127,431</u>	Closing Fair value of scheme assets	<u>155,667</u>

Reconciliation of Present Value of the scheme liabilities:

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
240,313	Opening balance at 1 April	209,420
6,844	Current Service Cost	6,159
5,792	Interest Cost	4,423
965	Contributions from scheme participants	1,028
	Re-measurement (gains) and losses:	
(8,342)	Actuarial gains/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	(2,407)
(19,888)	Actuarial gains/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	54,612
(9,520)	Other	(2,478)
0	Past Service Cost	0
	Liabilities assumed/(extinguished) on settlements	825
(6,744)	Benefits Paid	(6,674)
<u>209,420</u>	Closing Balance at 31 March	<u>264,908</u>

Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised:

RESTATED

Quoted in Active Markets 2019/20 £'000	Unquoted in Active Markets 2019/20 £'000	Total 2019/20 £'000		Quoted in Active Markets 2020/21 £'000	Unquoted in Active Markets 2020/21 £'000	Total 2020/21 £'000
			Fixed Interest Government Securities:			
1,657	0	1,657	UK	1,728	0	1,728
0	0	0	Overseas	0	0	0
1,657	0	1,657	Sub-total Fixed Interest Government Securities	1,728	0	1,728
			Index Linked Government Securities:			
2,549	0	2,549	UK	2,693	0	2,693
0	0	0	Overseas	0	0	0
2,549	0	2,549	Sub-total Index Linked Government Securities	2,693	0	2,693
			Corporate Bonds:			
14,655	0	14,655	UK	15,473	0	15,473
0	0	0	Overseas	0	0	0
14,655	0	14,655	Sub-total corporate bonds	15,473	0	15,473
			Equities:			
20,134	0	20,134	UK	25,218	0	25,218
48,934	0	48,934	Overseas	63,917	0	63,917
69,068	0	69,068	Sub-Total equities	89,135	0	89,135
			Property:			
10,832	127	10,959	All	10,975	405	11,379
10,832	127	10,959	Sub-Total Property	10,975	405	11,379
			Others:			
0	4,460	4,460	Hedge Fund	0	4,639	4,639
0	8,156	8,156	Private Equity	467	8,686	9,153
127	3,823	3,950	Infrastructure	903	4,016	4,919
382	255	637	Commodities	716	0	716
4,970	0	4,970	Bonds	5,075	0	5,075
0	1,529	1,529	Private Debt	0	1,526	1,526
1,784	637	2,421	Other Diversified Alternatives	2,460	420	2,880
0	510	510	Forward Currently Contracts	0	(109)	(109)
1,657	0	1,657	Cash/Temporary Investments	6,943	0	6,943
8,920	19,370	28,290	Sub-Total Others	16,563	19,178	35,741
			Net Current Assets:			
255	0	255	Debtors	109	0	109
0	0	0	Creditors	0	(592)	(592)
255	0	255	Sub-Total Net Current Assets	109	(592)	(483)
107,934	19,497	127,431	Total assets	136,676	18,991	155,668

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc.

The Local Government Pension Scheme has been assessed by Barnett Waddington, an independent firm of actuaries; estimates for the Lincolnshire Pension Fund are based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2019.

The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

2019/20		2020/21
	Mortality assumptions:	
	<u>Longevity (in years) at 65 for current pensioners:</u>	
21.4	Men	21.1
23.7	Women	23.6
	<u>Longevity (in years) at 65 for future pensioners:</u>	
22.4	Men	22.0
25.2	Women	25.0
2.2%	Rate of increase in salaries	3.2%
1.9%	Rate of increase in pensions	2.9%
2.3%	Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.0%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all other assumptions remain constant. The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice, this is unlikely to occur, and changes in some of the assumptions may be interrelated. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis below did not change from those used in the previous period.

Sensitivity Analysis:	Increase in Assumptions £'000s	Decrease in Assumptions £'000s
Adjustment to Discount Rate (increase or decrease by 1%)		
Present Value of Total Obligation	5,396	(5,513)
Projected Service Cost	213	(219)
Adjustment to Long Term Salary (increase or decrease by 1%)		
Present Value of Total Obligation	(893)	884
Projected Service Cost	(4)	4
Adjustment to Pension/Revaluation (increase or decrease by 1%)		
Present Value of Total Obligation	(4,568)	4,473
Projected Service Cost	(216)	211
Adjustment to Life Expectancy (increase or decrease by 1 year)		
Present Value of Total Obligation	(12,729)	12,129
Projected Service Cost	(358)	343

Impact on the Council's Cash Flow

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. The County Council has agreed a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve a funding level of 100% over the next 20 years. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation is due to be completed on 31 March 2022.

The scheme will need to take account of the national changes to the scheme under the Public Pensions Act 2013. Under the Act, the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales and the other main public service schemes may not provide benefits in relation to service after 31 March 2014. The Act provides for scheme regulations to be made within a common framework, to establish new career average revalued earnings schemes to pay pensions and other benefits to certain public servants.

Employer contributions payable to the scheme in 2020/21 are estimated to be £4.341m.

Note 45 – Contingent Liabilities

A contingent liability is a possible liability arising from past events whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control. Where a material loss can be estimated with reasonable accuracy a provision is accrued within the financial statements. If, however, a loss cannot be accurately estimated or the event is not considered sufficiently certain, a contingent liability will be disclosed in a note to the Balance Sheet. There is one contingent liability as at 31 March 2021.

As with other councils across the country a potential VAT liability exists in relation to an HMRC review of VAT treatment of market fees and the Council is liaising with their VAT advisor on this matter.

Note 46 – Contingent Assets

The Council has no Contingent Assets as at 31st March 2021.

Note 47 – Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

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

- ✓ Credit risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Council.
- ✓ Liquidity risk – the possibility that the Council might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments.
- ✓ Market risk - the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Council as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates movements.

Overall Procedures for Managing Risk

The Council's overall risk management procedures focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and implementing restrictions to minimise these risks. The procedures for risk management are set out through a legal framework set out in the Local Government Act 2003 and the associated regulations. These require the Council to comply with the CIPFA Prudential Code, the CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services Code of Practice and Investment Guidance issued through the Act. Overall, these procedures require the Council to manage risk in the following ways:

- ✓ by formally adopting the requirements of the Code of Practice;
- ✓ by the adoption of a Treasury Management Policy Statement and treasury management clauses within its standing orders;
- ✓ by approving, annually in advance, prudential indicators for the following three years limiting:
 - The Council's overall borrowing;
 - Its maximum and minimum exposures to fixed and variable rates;
 - Its maximum and minimum limits on the maturity structure of its debt;
 - Its maximum annual exposures to investments maturing beyond a year.
- ✓ by approving an investment strategy for the forthcoming year setting out its criteria for both investing and selecting investment counterparties in compliance with the Government Guidance;

These are required to be reported and approved at or before the Council's annual Council Tax setting budget. These items are reported with the annual Treasury Management Strategy, which outlines the detailed approach to managing risk in relation to the Council's financial instrument exposure. Actual performance is also reported semi-annually to Members.

The annual Treasury Management Strategy, which incorporates the prudential indicators was approved by Council on 3rd March 2020. The strategy is updated at the mid-year point and revised estimates calculated as below. It is available on the Council's website (www.lincoln.gov.uk). The key issues during 2020/21 were:

- The Authorised Limit for 2020/21 was forecast to be £158m (revised to £151m). This is the maximum limit of external borrowings or other long-term liabilities during the year.
- The original Operational Boundary was expected to be £143m (revised to £136m). This is the expected level of debt and other long-term liabilities during the year. The maximum amounts of fixed and variable interest rate exposure were set at £120m and £50m (mid year update) based on the Council's net debt.
- The maximum and minimum exposures to the maturity structure of debt are shown within this note.

These policies are implemented by the Treasury team in Financial Services. The Council maintains 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 through Treasury Management Practices (TMPs). These TMPs are a requirement of the Code of Practice and are reviewed regularly.

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, in accordance with the Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors Ratings Services. The Annual Investment Strategy also imposes maximum amounts and time limits in respect of each financial institution. Deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they meet the minimum requirements of the investment criteria outlined above. Details of the Investment Strategy are contained within the Treasury Management Strategy and can be found on the Council's website (www.lincoln.gov.uk).

The Investment Strategy is based on the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services (treasury management advisors to the Council). This uses a wide range of market information to produce a list of investment counterparties with recommended maximum investment durations. Link uses credit ratings, support ratings and credit default swap prices to arrive at a recommended counterparty list.

The criteria used as a minimum within the Capita methodology are as follows:

- Short Term credit ratings of F1, Long Term A, Support 3 and viability rating BBB (Fitch or equivalent rating), using the lowest common denominator principle.
- Inclusion of part Government owned UK banks based on support assumptions.

The full Investment Strategy for 2020/21 was approved by full Council on 3rd March 2020.

The following analysis summarises the Council's potential maximum exposure to credit risk, based on experience of default assessed by the Fitch credit rating agency and the Council's experience of its customer collection levels over the last five financial years, adjusted to reflect current market conditions:

	Carrying Values at 31/03/21	Historical experience of default	Adjustment for market conditions at 31/03/21	Estimated maximum exposure to default
	£'000	%	%	£'000
	a	b	c	(a * c)
Deposits with banks and financial institutions				
• AAA* rated counterparties (investments up to 1 year)	14,900	0.0000%	0.0000%	0
• AA-* rated counterparties (investments up to 1 year)	5,000	0.0000%	0.0000%	0
• A* rated counterparties (investments up to 1 year)	5,002	0.0130%	0.0130%	1
• A+* rated counterparties (investments up to 1 year)	7,005	0.0107%	0.0107%	1
• A- rated counterparties (investments up to 1 year)	2,000	0.0010%	0.0010%	0
Debtors	6,835	7.17%**	7.17%	490
	40,742			492

*See Glossary for a definition of ratings

**based on historical experience – this may change in future years due to the effect of Covid 19.

No breaches of the Council's counterparty criteria occurred during the reporting period and the Council does not expect any losses from non-performance by any of its counterparties in relation to deposits and bonds.

Whilst the current credit crisis in international markets has raised the overall possibility of default, the Council maintains strict credit criteria for investment counterparties. As a result of these high credit criteria, historical default rates have been used as a good indicator under these current conditions.

Analysis of Investments by country of origin

	Principal invested	Short term		Long term	
		Fixed rate	Variable rate	Fixed rate	Variable rate
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>UK Local Authorities</u>					
Brentwood Borough Council	5,000	5,000	0	0	0
<u>UK Banks & Building Societies</u>					
Lloyds TSB Bank plc	5,000	5,000	0	0	0
Santander	5,000	5,000	0	0	0
Goldman Sachs	2,000	2,000	0	0	0
Coventry Building Society	2,000	2,000	0	0	0
<u>UK Money Market Funds</u>					
Aberdeen Standard MMF	900	0	900	0	0
BNP Paribas MMF	7,000	0	7,000	0	0
Morgan Stanley MMF	7,000	0	7,000	0	0
Total Investments	33,900	19,000	14,900	0	0

The Council allows credit for its trade debtors, such that £1,308,963 of the £3,491,319 balance is past its due date for payment. The past due but not impaired amount can be analysed by age as follows:

31/03/20 £'000		31/03/21 £'000
218	Less than three months	450
300	Three to six months	201
203	Six months to one year	214
866	More than one year	1,317
1,588	Total	2,182

Collateral – During the reporting period the Council held no collateral as security.

Liquidity risk

The Council manages its liquidity position through the risk management procedures above (the setting and approval of prudential indicators and the approval of the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy reports), as well as through a comprehensive cash flow management system, as required by the Code of Practice. This seeks to ensure that cash is available when it is needed.

The Council has ready access to borrowings from the Money Markets to cover any day to day cash flow need, and whilst the PWLB provides access to longer term funds, it also acts as a lender of last resort to councils (although it will not provide funding to a council whose actions are unlawful). The Council is also required to provide a balanced budget through the Local Government Finance Act 1992, which ensures sufficient monies are raised to cover annual expenditure. There is therefore no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under

financial instruments.

The maturity analysis of financial liabilities is as follows: -

31/03/20 £'000		31/03/21 £'000
11,459	Less than one year	9,382
2,710	Between one and two years	8,215
3,160	Between two and five years	6,072
<u>104,578</u>	More than five years	<u>101,451</u>
<u>121,907</u>	Total	<u>125,121</u>

Market risk

Interest rate risk - The Council is exposed to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council, depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods. For instance, a rise in variable and fixed interest rates would have the following effects:

- ✓ borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise;
- ✓ borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the borrowing liability will fall;
- ✓ investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise; and
- ✓ investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall.

Borrowings are not carried at fair value in the Balance Sheet, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and affect the General Fund Balance, subject to influences from government grants. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure, unless the investments have been designated as Fair Value through the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, in which case gains and losses will be posted to the Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services.

The Council has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. The Annual Treasury Management Strategy draws together the Council's prudential indicators and its expected treasury operations, including an expectation of interest rate movements. From this Strategy a prudential indicator is set which provides maximum and minimum limits for fixed and variable interest rate exposure. The central treasury team will monitor market and forecast interest rates within the year to adjust exposures appropriately. For instance, during periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate investments may be taken for longer periods to secure better long-term returns, similarly the drawing of longer term fixed rate borrowing would be postponed.

If all interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant the financial effect would be:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
(155)	Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	(252)
<u>(155)</u>	Impact on Income and Expenditure Account	<u>(252)</u>
(60)	Share of overall impact credited to the HRA	(172)
<u>(95)</u>	Share of overall impact credited to the General Fund	<u>(80)</u>
<u>(155)</u>	Total	<u>(252)</u>

The approximate impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as above but with the movements being reversed. These assumptions are based on the same methodology as used for Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities carried at Amortised Cost.

Price risk - The Council does not generally invest in equity shares but does have shareholdings to the value of £0.77m in a number of joint ventures and in local industry. Whilst these holdings are generally illiquid, the Council is exposed to losses arising from movements in the prices of the shares.

As the shareholdings have arisen in the acquisition of specific interests, the Council is not in a position to limit its exposure to price movements by diversifying its portfolio. The majority of the shareholdings are in the Dunham Bridge Company (£0.504m) and Investors in Lincoln (£0.268m). A representative of the Council sits on the Investors in Lincoln Board, enabling the Council to monitor factors that might cause a fall in the value of specific shareholdings.

The shares are all held at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income, meaning that all movements in price will impact on gains and losses recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Foreign exchange risk - The Council has no financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies. It therefore has no exposure to loss arising from movements in exchange rates.

MOVEMENT ON THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STATEMENT

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
1,025	Balance on the HRA at the end of the previous year	996
11,901	Surplus or (deficit) for year on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	15,967
(12,294)	Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under statute	(14,555)
(393)	Net increase or (decrease) before transfers to or from reserves	1,412
364	Transfers (to) or from reserves	(1,334)
(29)	Increase or (decrease) in year on the HRA	79
996	Balance on the HRA at the end of the current year	1,075

NOTES TO THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Note 1 – Assets

The number of dwellings in the Council's housing stock, as at 31 March 2021, totalled 7,768 properties. The type of properties and the period in which they were built, were as follows:

Property Type	<1945 No.	1945-64 No.	1965-74 No.	>1974 No.	TOTAL No.
Low Rise Flats (Blocks up to 2 Storeys)					
1 Bed	43	885	562	538	2,028
2 Bed	5	119	80	102	306
3 Bed	0	0	12	1	13
Sub-Total	48	1,004	654	641	2,347
Medium Rise Flats (Blocks of 3 up to 5 Storeys)					
1 Bed	2	50	236	216	504
2 Bed	1	214	111	126	452
3 Bed	0	15	3	1	19
Sub-Total	3	279	350	343	975
High Rise Flats (Blocks of 6 Storeys or more)					
1 Bed	0	56	138	0	194
2 Bed	0	30	71	0	101
Sub-Total	0	85	209	0	295
Houses / Bungalows					
1 Bed	157	143	32	24	356
2 Bed	722	766	99	331	1,918
3 Bed	797	546	69	306	1,718
4 or more Beds	97	25	0	28	150
Sub-Total	1,773	1,480	200	689	4,142
Total Dwellings 31 March 2021	1,824	2,849	1,413	1,673	7,768

Note 2 – Housing Revenue Account Assets Valuation

The Council's in-house Valuation Officers, and the District Valuer, have valued the HRA dwellings, land, and other property in accordance with Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyor guidelines.

The Balance Sheet value of council dwellings is calculated by applying a Social Housing discount factor. This represents the market value for the Council's total housing stock adjusted to reflect the fact that the property is socially rented (this adjustment is currently 42%). The discount factor is then applied to the open market or vacant possession value as determined by the District Valuer, as shown below:

	£ 000
Vacant possession value of council dwellings at 31 March 2021	651,988
Balance sheet valuation applying the Social Housing discount factor	273,835

The Balance Sheet value of HRA Assets is as follows:

RESTATED

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
256,990	Council Dwellings	273,835
6,152	Other Operational Assets	5,897
17,658	Non-Operational Assets	21,885
280,800	Total at 31 March	301,617

Note 3 – Depreciation

The Depreciation of HRA Assets is as follows:

Depreciation:		
2019/20	Operational Assets:	2020/21
£'000		£'000
6,337	Council Dwellings	6,348
308	Other Operational Assets	351
6,645	Total at 31 March	6,698

Note 4 – Major Repairs Reserve

The Major Repairs Reserve is an earmarked reserve to which the Council transfers an amount annually to finance capital expenditure on council dwellings. This amount includes annual depreciation, which is charged to the Housing Revenue Account and then transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve. This may be supplemented by additional revenue contributions from the HRA to support the HRA capital programme. The balance on the Major Repairs Reserve shows the amounts that have yet to be applied to financing.

RESTATED

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
(5,675)	Balance on 1 April	(9,168)
	Amount transferred from the HRA	
	- Depreciation	
(6,337)	Dwellings	(6,348)
(309)	Other Assets	(351)
-	- Other revenue contributions	(2,898)
(19,048)		(18,764)
3,153	- HRA Capital Expenditure	4,624
(9,168)		(14,139)

Note 5 – Housing Repairs Account

The Housing Repairs Account was set up on 1 April 2001 in order to assist with the longer-term planning of repairs and maintenance expenditure. The following analysis details the movement on the Housing Repairs Account during the year.

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
(579)	Balance on 1 April	(595)
	Expenditure in year	
3,274	Tenant Notified Repairs	2,221
1,539	Void Repairs	1,899
1,688	Servicing Contracts	1,710
561	Painting Programme	(8)
63	Asbestos Removal/Surveys	60
415	Aids & adaptations	363
0	Aids & adaptations (Non HRS)	13
0	Cleansing	84
0	Minor Works	81
55	Decoration Grants	47
0	Tenants Compensation	1
0	COVID Charges	990
0	Skip Recharges	92
0	Control Centre Recharge	27
0	Estate Shops	8
1,075	Other Expenditure	(13)
8,670		7,575
	Income in year	
(8,671)	Contribution from HRA	(7,575)
	Contribution to HRA	(750)
0	Reduction in Repairs Reserve	0
(1)	Contribution from Leaseholders	0
(16)	Interest Received in year	(5)
(8,688)		(8,330)
(595)	Surplus Balance on 31 March	(1,351)

Note 6 – Capital Expenditure in the year

The Housing Revenue Account capital expenditure and sources of funding during the financial year are detailed in the following table:

RESTATED

2019/20 £'000		2020/21 £'000
	Capital investment	
11,969	Property, Plant and Equipment – HRA	16,377
0	Property, Plant and equipment – GF used as council housing	0
0	Non-Current Assets held for sale	0
8	Intangible Assets	0
0	Revenue Expenditure funded from Capital under Statute	0
11,977		16,377
	Sources of funding	
(1,321)	Capital Receipts	(1,504)
0	Revenue Contributions	(48)
(6,790)	Major Repairs Reserve	(4,625)
(3,866)	Prudential Borrowing	(8,099)
(0)	Government grants and other contributions	(2,101)
(11,977)		(16,377)
0	Balance unfunded at 31 March	0

* REFCUS is created when expenditure has been incurred on items that are not capitalised as assets but have been financed from capital resources. It is written down to the Housing Revenue Account over an appropriate period, usually in the same year in which the expenditure has been incurred. The total amount of REFCUS is £0.000m for 2020/21 (£0.000m in 2019/20).

Prior to the implementation of HRA Self-financing on 1 April 2012, supported borrowing levels had been issued annually by Central Government, authorising the Council to borrow monies, which were funded by Central Government to cover capital expenditure. Additionally, the Council was able to take out unsupported or prudential borrowing, which must be financed from its own resources. Post self-financing implementation and the end of the housing subsidy system, all borrowing will be prudential borrowing. In 2020/21, there was £8.099m of prudential borrowing undertaken to fund the HRA capital investment.

Note 7 - Capital Receipts

The cash receipts from the disposal of land, houses and other property within the HRA in the year are summarised as follows:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
	Council dwellings	
(2,946)	- Right to Buy	(1,559)
0	- Discounts repaid	(60)
	Other Receipts	
	- Land Sales reimbursements	
	- Reimbursement of expenditure on	
(62)	General Fund property on sale	0
	Land receipts	
<u>(3,008)</u>		<u>(1,620)</u>
729	Less Pooled (Paid to Central Government)	529
<u>(2,279)</u>	Total	<u>(1,091)</u>

Note 8 - Rent Arrears

During the year 2020/21 total rent arrears increased by £0.229m or 11.9%, to £2.154m. A summary of rent arrears and prepayments is shown in the following table:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
956	Current Tenant Arrears @ 31 March	1,218
969	Former Tenant Arrears @ 31 March	936
<u>1,925</u>	Total Rent Arrears	<u>2,154</u>
(430)	Prepayments @ 31 March	(191)
<u>1,495</u>	Net Rent Arrears	<u>1,963</u>

A bad debt provision of £279,056 has been made in this year's accounts in respect of potentially non-collectable rent arrears, as detailed above, and associated miscellaneous debts. The value of the bad debt provision held in the Balance Sheet at 31 March 2021 is £1.907m (£1.778m at 31 March 2020).

Note 9 - Pension Costs

In line with the full adoption of IAS 19 'Employee Benefits' the Net Cost of Services includes the cost of retirement benefits when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge that is required when determining the movement on the HRA Balance for the year is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of retirement benefits is reversed out of the HRA in the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement. The following transactions have been made in the HRA during the year:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
	HRA Income & Expenditure Statement	
2,519	Current Service Cost	2,365
0	Past Service Costs	0
947	Net interest expense	726
3,467	Total	3,091
<u>(1,671)</u>	Amount to be met from HRA	<u>(1,793)</u>
<u>1,796</u>	Movement on Pension Reserve	<u>1,298</u>

THE COLLECTION FUND STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

2019/20 £'000 Total		2020/21 £'000 Council Tax	2020/21 £'000 NNDR	2020/21 £'000 Total	Note
INCOME					
(44,185)	Council Tax Payers	(45,458)	0	(45,458)	2
(112)	Income from Ministry of Defence	(108)	0	(108)	
<u>(44,375)</u>	Income from Business Ratepayers	0	(16,681)	(16,681)	3
(88,672)		(45,566)	(16,681)	(62,247)	
EXPENDITURE					
Precepts:					
6,679	- City of Lincoln Council	6,915	0	6,915	
31,405	- Lincolnshire County Council	33,024	0	33,024	
5,865	- Police & Crime Comm. Lincolnshire	6,206	0	6,206	
Business Rates:					
21,028	- Payments to Government	0	22,372	22,372	3
16,791	- Payments to City of Lincoln Council	0	17,707	17,707	3
4,198	- Payments to Lincs County Council	0	4,426	4,426	3
145	- Cost of Collection	0	143	143	
Bad and Doubtful Debts					
7	- Provisions	338	(5)	333	
756	- Write Offs	181	118	299	
210	- Provision for appeals	0	432	432	
2,732	Transfer of Collection Fund Surplus	383	802	1,185	4
<u>89,816</u>		<u>47,047</u>	<u>45,995</u>	<u>93,042</u>	
1,144	Deficit / (Surplus) for the year	1,481	29,314	30,795	
COLLECTION FUND BALANCE					
(2,051)	Balance brought forward at 1 st April	(170)	(737)	(907)	
1,144	Deficit/(Surplus) for the year (as above)	1,481	29,313	30,794	
<u>(907)</u>	Balance carried forward at 31st March	<u>1,311</u>	<u>28,576</u>	<u>29,887</u>	
Allocated to:					
(145)	- City of Lincoln Council	196	11,430	11,626	
70	- Lincolnshire County Council	938	2,858	3,796	
(22)	- Police & Crime Comm. Lincolnshire	177	0	177	
(810)	- Government	0	14,288	14,288	
<u>(907)</u>		<u>1,311</u>	<u>28,576</u>	<u>29,887</u>	

NOTES TO THE COLLECTION FUND

Note 1 - General

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation of billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) and its distribution to local government bodies and the Government.

The Council has a statutory requirement to operate a Collection Fund as a separate account to the General Fund. The purpose of the Collection Fund therefore, is to isolate the income and expenditure relating to Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Business Rates. The administrative costs associated with the collection process are charged to the General Fund.

Collection Fund surpluses declared by the billing authority in relation to Council Tax are apportioned to the relevant precepting bodies in the subsequent financial year. Deficits likewise are proportionately charged to the relevant precepting bodies in the following year. For the City of Lincoln, the Council Tax precepting bodies are Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire (PCCL).

In 2013/14, the local government finance regime was revised with the introduction of the retained business rates scheme. The main aim of the scheme is to give councils a greater incentive to grow businesses in the City. It does, however, also increase the financial risk due to non-collection and the volatility of the NNDR tax base.

The scheme allows the Council to retain a proportion of the total NNDR received. For 2020/21, the City of Lincoln's proportionate share remained consistent with that of 2019/20, as follows:

	2020/21 'Pool'
City of Lincoln	40%
Lincolnshire County Council	10%
Central Government	50%

NNDR surpluses declared by the billing authority in relation to the Collection Fund are apportioned to the relevant precepting bodies in the subsequent financial year in their respective proportions. Deficits likewise are proportionately charged to the relevant precepting bodies in the following year.

The national code of practice followed by local authorities in England stipulates that a Collection Fund Income and Expenditure account is included in the Council's accounts. The Collection Fund Balance Sheet meanwhile is incorporated into the Council's Balance Sheet.

Note 2 - Council Tax Base

Council Tax derives from charges raised according to the value of residential properties, which have been classified into 9 valuation bands (A-H) for this specific purpose. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund by the Council for the forthcoming year and dividing this by the Council Tax base (i.e. the equivalent numbers of Band D dwellings).

The Council Tax base for 2020/21 was 24,689.50 (24,300 in 2019/20). The increase between financial years is as a result of a combination of new builds and a reduction in the level of Council Tax Discounts and Exemptions. The tax base for 2020/21 was approved at the Executive on 6th January 2020 and was calculated as follows:

Band	Ratio	Dwellings	Equivalent Dwellings after discounts, exemptions and reliefs	Equivalent Band D Dwellings
A Reduced	5/9	0	56	31
A	6/9	27,791	22,797	15,046
B	7/9	8,982	7,717	5,939
C	8/9	4,903	4,350	3,825
D	9/9	2,542	2,296	2,271
E	11/9	1,315	960	1,160
F	13/9	412	357	510
G	15/9	131	129	212
H	18/9	47	10	19
Total		46,123	38,672	29,014
Deduction for Non-Collection				(366)
Crown Properties Adjustment				62
Adjusted to Band D Equivalent				29,014
Council Tax Relief Scheme				(4,324)
Tax Base for the Calculation of Council Tax				24,690

Dwellings for residents entitled to 'disabled relief reduction' are reduced to the next lowest band for the calculation of Council Tax. As band 'A' is the lowest band, 'A reduced' has been introduced to give effect to this reduction for those who reside in Band 'A' properties.

Income received from Council Taxpayers in 2020/21 was £45.458m (£44.185m in 2019/20).

Note 3 - Income from Business Ratepayers

The Council collects National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) for its area based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) multiplied by a uniform business rate set nationally by Central Government. Historically the total amount due, less certain allowances, was paid to a central pool (the NNDR pool) administered by Central Government, which, in turn, paid to local authorities their share of the pool, such shares being based on a standard amount per head of the local adult population.

In 2013/14, the administration of NNDR changed following the introduction of a business rates retention scheme which aims to give councils a greater incentive to grow businesses but also increases the financial risk due to volatility and non-collection of rates. Instead of paying NNDR to the central pool, local authorities retain a proportion of the total collectable rates due. For 2020/21, the City of Lincoln's retained share remained consistent with that of the previous year as follows:

	2019/20 'Pool'	2020/21 'Pool'
City of Lincoln	40%	40%
Lincolnshire County Council	10%	10%
Central Government	50%	50%

The business rates shares payable for 2020/21 were estimated before the start of the financial year as **£22,130m** (£20.989m in 2019/20) to Central Government, **£4,426m** (£4.198m in 2019/20) to LCC and **£17,704m** (£16.791m in 2019/20) to the City of Lincoln Council. These sums have been paid in 2020/21 and charged to the Collection Fund in year.

When the scheme was introduced, Central Government set a baseline level for each authority identifying the expected level of retained business rates and a top up or tariff amount to ensure that all authorities receive their baseline amount. Tariffs due from authorities payable to Central Government or to Top-up authorities within an NNDR Pooling arrangement are used to finance the top ups to those authorities who do not achieve their targeted baseline funding. In 2020/21 the City of Lincoln made a tariff payment from the General Fund to the County Council to the value of **£13.094m** (£12.884m in 2019/20).

The total income from business rate payers collected in 2020/21 was **£16.681m** (£44.375m in 2019/20).

In addition to the top up/tariff, a 'safety net' figure is calculated at 92.5% of baseline amount which ensures that authorities are protected to this level of Business Rates income (either through support from Central Government if they are not in a NNDR Pool/Pilot or as first call on gains from pooling/pilot if authorities are members of an NNDR Pool/Pilot). For the City of Lincoln the value of the safety net figure (net of tariff) is **£3.528m** (£3.472m in 2019/20). The comparison of business rate income to the safety net uses the total income collected from business rate payers and adjusts for losses in collection, losses on appeal, transitional protection payments, the cost of collection and the revision to Small Business Rate Relief and other reliefs not allowed for when the safety net was set. The Council does not qualify for a safety net payment for 2020/21.

In addition to the local management of business rates, authorities are expected to finance appeals made in respect of rateable values as defined by VOA and hence business rates outstanding as at 31st March 2021. As such, authorities are required to make a provision for these amounts. Appeals are charged and provided for in proportion of the precepting shares. **The total provision withdrawn from the collection fund for 2020/21 has been calculated at £0.432m (£0.210m was added in 2019/20).**

For 2020/21, the total non-domestic rateable value at the year-end is **£112.4m** (£112.7m in 2019/20). The national multipliers for 2020/21 were **49.9p** for qualifying Small Businesses, and the standard multiplier being **51.2p** for all other businesses (49.1p and 50.4p respectively in 2019/20).

Note 4 - Contributions to Collection Fund Surpluses and Deficits

The Council has a statutory requirement to prepare an estimate each January of the surplus or deficit expected to arise at the end of the financial year. In January 2020 it was estimated that the Collection Fund would have a Council Tax surplus of **£0.383m** (£0.268m in January 2019) and a Business Rates surplus of **£0.802m** (£2.464m surplus in January 2019), a combined Collection Fund surplus of **£1.185m** (£2,732m surplus in January 2019) and so the following amounts were due to or from the preceptors in 2020/21:

2019/20		2020/21
£'000		£'000
(1,588)	City of Lincoln Council	(202)
(1,279)	Lincolnshire County Council	(88)
(34)	Police & Crime Comm. Lincolnshire	(52)
169	Central Government	(843)
<u>(2,732)</u>	Total	<u>(1,185)</u>

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO MEMBERS OF CITY OF LINCOLN
COUNCIL**

1 The council's responsibility for sound governance

1.1 Scope of responsibility

City of Lincoln Council must ensure that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised.

Governance is about how we ensure that we are doing the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner. In discharging this overall responsibility, we must put in place proper governance arrangements to manage our affairs. The council must ensure that there is a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control) and based on the principles of the "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016"

How we are meeting these defined responsibilities is detailed in the City of Lincoln's Code of Corporate Governance, which is found on our website under your council/information policies & publications/corporate publications. www.lincoln.gov.uk

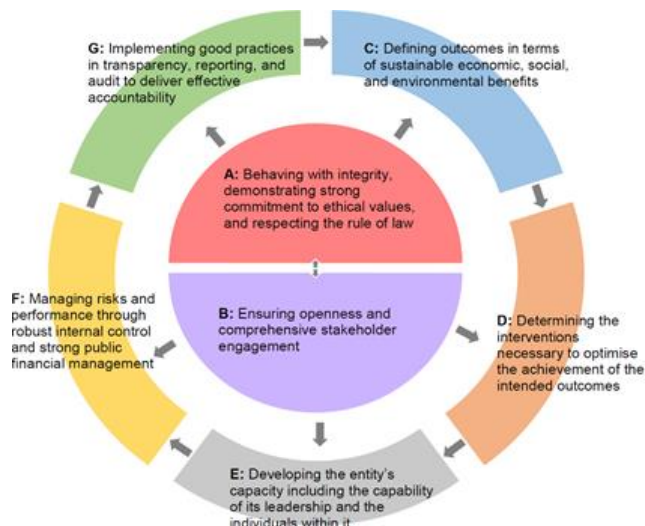
The council's Code of Corporate Governance, comprehensively reviewed in 2017, is updated annually. A further comprehensive review was completed in April 2021, considering the impact of COVID-19.

This Annual Governance Statement details how the city council has complied with its own Code of Corporate Governance over the last year and meets the statutory requirements for all relevant bodies to prepare such a statement. It also includes a new section on the impact on the council, and actions taken as a result, of the COVID-19 pandemic.

For a glossary of terms used – see Appendix B

1.2 The Code of Corporate Governance sets out the documentation, systems and processes by which the authority transparently controls its activities and defines its cultures and values. It enables us to monitor achievement of our strategic objectives and to consider whether these have led to the delivery of appropriate value for money services.

The code is based on a set of seven core principles:



1.3 Responsibility rests within a range of areas – the key ones are detailed in the table below:

KEY ELEMENTS OF COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK		
Key elements of the governance framework at City of Lincoln Council are summarised below:		
<p>Council, Executive, Leader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Provide leadership; set, develop and implement policy ❖ Ensure the Vision 2025 strategies are taken forward ❖ Develop, adopt and implement the budget framework ❖ Support the city's diverse communities and neighbourhoods to thrive 	<p>Leadership and decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ All decision meetings held in public (except those identified as 'part B') ❖ Decisions recorded on the council's public website ❖ Resources directed according to priorities as set out in Vision 2025 	<p>Risk management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Risk registers identify both operational and strategic risks ❖ Strategic risks are considered by CMT and Executive every quarter ❖ Internal audit provides independent objective assurance ❖ Council's arrangements comply with the requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit
<p>Scrutiny and review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Scrutiny committees review council policy and can challenge decisions to hold Executive to account ❖ Audit and Performance committees review governance, costs vs budget, risk, internal control and delivery of agreed plans ❖ Ethics and Engagement Committee and/or Monitoring Officer deals with complaints about, or suspected breaches of member conduct ❖ Any two members can hold the Executive to account outside of scrutiny and review by requesting Call-In and reconsideration of an Executive decision 	<p>Corporate Management Team (CMT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The CX is the Head of Paid Service and is responsible for all council staff and for leading an effective Corporate Management Team (CMT) ❖ CMT ensures there is clear accountability for the use of resources in achieving desired outcomes for service users and the community ❖ The Chief Finance Officer (CFO) is the council's Section 151 Officer and is responsible for safeguarding the council's financial position and securing value for money. The council's financial management arrangements comply with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the role of Chief Financial Officer in Local Government ❖ The City Solicitor is the council's Monitoring Officer and is responsible for ensuring legality, good governance and promoting high standards of conduct 	

1.4 In the following sections the AGS considers whether the Code has been applied effectively providing commentary on how the framework itself has operated over the last 12 months. The first of these sections covers how the council has maintained good governance during the COVID-19 pandemic – some of the activities mentioned are also mentioned under the core principles.

1.5 Impact of COVID-19 and maintaining good governance

As with all councils the COVID-19 pandemic caused major disruption to the day to day work of the council, including cancellation of some committee meetings, and changing priorities to protect our most vulnerable residents and local businesses. This meant there was a need to initiate business continuity procedures as well as introducing new or varied governance arrangement in some areas.

Actions taken to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020/21:

- Co-ordinated response to the pandemic working with Lincolnshire Local Resilience Forum
- Review of governance arrangements following introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020, including introduction of virtual council and other key meetings
- Prioritisation of resources to ensure ongoing provision of key services
- Development of a Befriending and Community Helpline service to support the most vulnerable, including council tax support discounts.
- Reallocation of teams to support COVID-19 response, e.g. Civic, Audit and Policy Teams
- Support for local businesses in applying for business rate-payers discounts and business grants payments
- Initial response to the pandemic in terms of delivery of critical services, protection of staff, support for community and vulnerable persons, impact on the local economy and financial impacts on the council
- Some key meeting such as DMTs were temporarily suspended, until it was practical to restart them
- Several HR interim procedures and checklists for managers were introduced to support employees working from home and support their health and wellbeing
- Development of activities to support the city and high street, including leading on multi-agency partnership to support high street recovery.
- One Council – under the Organisational Development pillar we are putting processes in place and revising policies as required in response to COVID-19, particularly around work styles and support for staff and members to ensure we have the governance in place to make sure these new ways of working and new activities are fit for purpose
- Implementation of ongoing support for the community and vulnerable persons through working with partner organisations
- Re-establishment of committee meetings via electronic means to ensure democratic responsibility
- Development of policies and procedures to enable delivery of services, including critical services, whilst ensuring protection of staff and customers.
- Transfer of Befriending service to voluntary sector organisations for those requiring it
- Ensure processes in place to enable businesses in the city to access support, e.g. Environmental Health Officer utilising legal powers to manage re-opening of businesses under COVID-19
- Management of the financial impacts of COVID-19, including an MTFS review
- Performance reporting adapted to identify the impact of the pandemic across all council services and show how individual service areas have responded to changes in demand.
- Q4 19/20 Performance report was a review of 19/20 including initial COVID-19 response

- A combined Q1 and Q2 2020/21 Performance report to help assess impact of COVID-19
- A Q3 2020/21 review of service responses to the ongoing pandemic and recovery plans
- Q4 2020-21 returned to performance measure format
- Reprofiled of Vision 2025 Delivery Action Plan to reprioritise projects
- Progressing of access to various central funding pots to support High Street recovery

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Evidenced review of the longer-term effects of Covid on the city (especially health) and any changes in priorities that may be required
- Confirmation of reprofiled Vision 2025 and final Year 2 Delivery Action Plan
- Review of actions taken, and lessons learned from response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Review of Business Continuity plans in the light of lessons learned
- Many of these actions are covered under the key principles below and further activities will be identified once the council emerges from the current recovery stage
- Protecting Vulnerable People Group will include the impact from Covid on PVP/ safeguarding into an internal audit we have scheduled for 2021

1.6 CORE PRINCIPLE A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Ethical values, standards and formal codes of conduct are defined in the council's constitution and form the basis for developing our policies, procedures and actions as well as for the behaviour of our members and staff. We have appropriate processes in place to ensure that members and staff are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest when engaging and making decisions with stakeholders, as well as effective systems to protect the staff rights. All council decisions consider legal and equality implications with support from Legal Services.

Our Audit Committee (which includes an independent member) provides assurance on the adequacy of the internal control environment, by ensuring high standards of conduct are embedded within the council's culture, monitoring governance issues raised and overseeing internal and external audit arrangements.

Activity within Principle A in 2020/21:

- Modern Slavery Charter and Statement reviewed
- Communications plan in place for Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) (social media)
- PVP – children's safeguarding internal audit completed – response July 2021
- A full review of the Code of Corporate Governance was conducted
- Regular portfolio holder meetings re-established following COVID-19 effects
- Revised audit plan developed due to COVID-19. Taken to the Audit Committee in Sept 20
- Regular attendance at both CLT and Service Managers meeting by the Data Protection Officer who provides clear information on any changes of regulations, risks or procedures

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Annual update Code of Corporate Governance
- Update member code of conduct in accordance with government guidelines
- Internal audit on protecting vulnerable people – safeguarding audit
- Review of needs to meet the proposed Subsidy Control Bill
- Review of needs to meet the Electoral Integrity Bill
- Follow up on the feedback from the Children's safeguarding audit

- Adults safeguarding Audit – 2021
- Review proposals for a peer review on Children’s safeguarding in 2022
- Review Domestic Abuse bill – the Victims Bill - summer 2021
- Review proposals in the new Planning Bill
- An External Quality Assessment of Internal Audit is scheduled for 2021/22

1.7 CORE PRINCIPLE B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

The council makes sure our partners, in the private, public and voluntary sector as well individual citizens and service users are engaged in and have full access to information relating to decisions made. We expect reports to decision makers to be open, provide all the necessary material to ensure informed decisions in the best interests of the city and communities, and to have engaged stakeholders and service users in arriving at proposals under consideration.

Activity within Principle B in 2020/21:

- Daily staff briefings during initial COVID-19 emergency, weekly on resumption of services
- Consultation with Befriending Service users prior to transfer to alternative providers
- Consultation with service users ahead of changes to service delivery (e.g. public toilets, Central Market, Town Deal)
- Consultation with partner organisations ahead of changes to funding arrangements (Drill Hall, Dial a ride and Citizens Advice)
- Review of Consultation and Engagement Strategy commenced with member workshop

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Complete the review of the Consultation and Engagement Strategy
- Citizen Panel consultation regarding High Street recovery to inform action plan
- Consultation with service users relating to Climate Change
- Undertake consultation in respect of repurposing of Vision 2025

1.8 CORE PRINCIPLE C: Defining outcome in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

Vision 2025 is the council’s vision for the five years to 2025 and forms the second phase of our Vision from 2017 to 2030. As with previous strategic plans, Vision 2025 was developed using a robust evidence base including information gained through consultation with local residents and businesses, and evidence from the Lincoln City Profile. The priorities in Vision 2025 remain broadly similar, but with the addition of a priority to address the challenges of climate change:

- Let’s drive inclusive economic growth
- Let’s deliver quality housing
- Let’s address the challenge of climate change
- Let’s reduce all kinds of inequality
- Let’s enhance our remarkable place

Although the plan was adopted in February 2020, little progress was made during 2020/21 due to the pandemic, although a number of key large projects did continue as soon as restrictions allowed. (e.g. Boutham Park restoration; De Wint Court build). Those projects that continued were monitored through their respective MEGA Boards. Progress towards achieving projects has been included in Quarterly performance reports alongside recovery information.

In the latter part of the year the plan was reprofiled to take account of changing priorities brought about by Covid-19 and associated budget pressures. In addition every directorate identified any key priorities necessary to bring services back to the new normal.

Activity within Principle C in 2020/21:

- Approval of the MTFS which is a financial representation of the council's Vision 2025
- Ongoing development for embedding sustainability over the next 3 to 5 years
- Repurpose Vision 2025 to support the recovery of the city and council economically and ensure community support
- Plans agreed to improve Lincoln Crematorium facilities and sustainability
- One Council programme development in the IT areas, accelerated as a result of Covid-19
- Participant in Business and Economy recovery cell for Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland with six-month economic recovery plan developed.
- Review the delivery plan for Vision 2025 to take account of the health impact on the council and residents of COVID-19.
- Worked closely with Lincolnshire Resilience Forum partners to support recovery
- Lead on implementation of Business and Economy Recovery Cell short term forward plan for construction sector and place marketing.
- Key partner in Infrastructure Recovery Cell covering Lincolnshire, which includes housing, to ensure infrastructure is in place enabling growth plans to be implemented
- Signed up to civic university agreement with BGU and Lincoln University

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Re-energised implementation on the place strategy for Park Ward/Sincil Bank, highlighted as an area for regeneration following delay as a result of Covid-19.
- Develop 5-year recovery plan linked to Town Investment Plan for the City.
- Further evidence-based review of the Vision 2025 following new data release
- Review of whether the health of our residents is actively considered at an appropriate level throughout the vision
- Public communication of the year 2 Vision 2025 Delivery Plan

1.9 CORE PRINCIPLE D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

The council clearly defines its priorities and plans which are aimed at delivering the outcomes it intends. Whilst service plans for 2020/21 were not completed work is ongoing to ensure robust service management during the recovery stage. All projects are subject to the Lincoln Project Management Model (LPMM), through which we continuously assess the risks of not fully delivering plans and ensure that there are mitigating actions in place to support the achievement of intended outcomes.

The council's financial management arrangements ensure that there is adequate resource available to deliver plans. The council reviews progress against delivering those outcomes through its performance management framework.

Activity within Principle D in 2020/21:

- The TFS programme Team has worked on the phase 7 programme to meet the increased MTFS savings target
- Development of One Council through the four pillars – Organisational Development, Value Processes, Use of Assets and Technology
- Pilot of Office 365 has been extended

- Pilot of desktop refresh
- Technology introduced to adapt to COVID-19
- Review of workstyles to understand technology required
- Refreshed infrastructure platform
- Conducted a PIR on implementation of the revised Lincoln Project Management Model
- Housing repairs online pilot commenced – to enable booking of repairs online.

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Reprofiled Vision 2025 with Year 2 delivery plan
- Complete roll out of Office 365 by September 2021
- Complete desktop refresh
- Look at investment in IT required to support new ways of working
- Establish micro-sites for key services, e.g. Christmas Market, Building Control, Visitor services.
- Identify top 10 interactions with customers and move to online forms where possible to take pressure off contact centre.
- Review of my-info.

1.10 CORE PRINCIPLE E: Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

The council ensures a management structure that provides leadership and creates the opportunity for staff to work effectively and efficiently to achieve the council objectives. We have a programme in place under the organisational development pillar of our One Council approach which will ensure the workforce has the necessary skills and behaviours to deliver the vision for the city and is effectively engaged to champion the council's priorities. Partnership working extends the capacity for key projects beyond the council's own resource and is embedded within the Vision 2025 objectives.

Activity within Principle E in 2020/21:

- HR policies relating to home working have been reviewed with training delivered to managers and team leaders
- Continued regular HR line management briefings
- Daily briefings from Chief Executive during COVID-19 emergency, reducing to weekly by the end of 2020/21
- Ongoing implementation of the People Strategy
- Development of One Council pillars – Organisational Development and Create Value Processes, including piloting Office 365 and remote working and introduction of Microsoft Teams for all staff on a planned roll out basis
- Review of space at City hall and Hamilton House to support new ways of working
- Visitor information centre successfully brought back in house

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Needs analysis to be completed on Leadership Development
- Ongoing weekly briefings by Chief Executive
- Ongoing review of space at City Hall and Hamilton House following COVID-19. This will also include community centres and other buildings
- Look at ways to increase and strengthen City hall as a public sector hub
- One Council organisational Pillar to review whether any new issues arise from Covid-19 that need to be addressed either temporarily or more permanently

1.11 CORE PRINCIPLE F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

The council recognises the need to implement an effective performance management system that will allow us to deliver services effectively and efficiently. We understand that risk management, internal control and strong financial management are essential for us to achieve our objectives and we have put appropriate arrangements in place.

Activity within Principle F in 2020/21:

- A successful two-phase savings and income generation programme was developed and the first phase (TFS 7a) implemented to address reductions in central government funding.
- Development of One Council activities – the Creating Value Processes programme
- The External auditor issued an unqualified opinion on the authority's final statement of accounts and Value for Money conclusion
- Developed the council's response to the financial situation caused by covid-19 including, ensuring strong financial management to make sure that we manage public funds correctly, e.g. revised budget estimates, enhanced TFS programme, open MARS offer to staff, expenditure control budget review process.
- Review of the Value for Money Statement
- Introduction of the new CIPFA Financial Management Code

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- A key piece of work will be to review control systems to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose with the new ways of working
- Development of measures by Priority Theme Groups to report progress on Vision 2025
- Reinstatement of monthly Vision Priority meetings
- A review of the Corporate Procurement Bill to accommodate the new procurement green paper, which is going through the legal/parliamentary process
- Implementation of agreed action plan to ensure compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code
- Review of value for money arrangements to ensure requirements of the new external audit VFM assessment are met

1.12 CORE PRINCIPLE G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

The council recognises that effective accountability is concerned not only with reporting on actions completed but ensuring stakeholders are able to understand and respond as the council plans and carries out its activities in an open, transparent and proportionate manner. Performance is managed under the principles of the Performance Management Framework

Activity within Principle G in 2020/21:

- Due to COVID-19 a revised audit plan was developed and presented to the Audit Committee in September 2020
- A review of the Code of Corporate Governance has been conducted in March 2021
- For those periods in 2020/21 when performance data could not be collected due to covid-19, an alternative report was produced giving members full updates on which services were active, at what level and including additional specific short-term activities
- Despite effects of covid-19, data transparency requirements were met for the year

- A review of the Data transparency website page was conducted to improve visibility

Proposed activity for the coming year:

- Further development of the performance management system
- Review of Lincoln Performance Management Framework
- Reinstatement of monthly Vision Priority meetings and thus the annual reports to committee
- CMT to consider the option for a follow up Peer Review
- Completion of the updated partnerships register, identifying the key partnerships for the council

2 Review of effectiveness of the governance framework

We undertook an assessment of the council's governance framework during 2020/21 through a review of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance (policies and processes) and the review process to develop the AGS and identify any significant issues, or other areas that may require monitoring. We took account of relevant governance audits, third party assurances, combined assurance work, committee reports, risk management, performance management, projects and partnership governance, Vision 2025/One Council, financial management, interviews with senior management and statutory officers.

The Head of Internal Audit is required annually to give an opinion on the overall adequacy of and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk and control framework and therefore the extent to which the Council can rely on it. For 2020/21 the Council was performing adequately across all areas. The audit plan was reduced in 2020/21 due to Covid, however audits completed included governance, risk, financial control, ICT, Covid 19 risks, Projects as well as Combined Assurance. Internal audit was involved in supporting Covid grants during 2020/21 and to help mitigate this there are external assurances in this area through central government, NFI data matching and external audit.

Supporting this assessment is the detailed work undertaken by Internal Audit during the course of the year as part of the Internal Audit plan and Combined Assurance work.

Whilst this identified some agreed actions none were considered significant enough to highlight as potential AGS significant governance issues.

There were two areas of combined assurance assessed as red; however, these risks are being managed – these were not considered significant governance issues. There were several Amber areas; one of these areas - IT DR was a 19/20 significant issue.

As at March 2021 there were a number of high priority audit recommendations both made and outstanding. Outstanding agreed actions were in respect IT security, risk management, information governance, service-related actions. Progress towards addressing these recommendations will be monitored through existing monitoring arrangements and as part of the review of the AGS none were considered significant governance issues.

The introduction of the CIPFA Financial Management Code 2019 (FM Code)

The CIPFA FM Code is applicable in shadow form during 20/21 with compliance expected from 21/22.

An assessment against the FM Code has been completed and the CFO reported the findings to Executive 17 March 2021 and Audit committee 23 March 2021. Some actions have been identified, most of which were already planned in for action during 2020/21:

- Continue to support professional development
- Review FPR
- Review CPR
- Review the Code of Corporate Governance
- External quality assessment of IA
- Implement Finance Business Partnership approach
- MTFS to include reference to scenario testing
- Assess implications of changes to the Prudential Code
- Consider use of Citizens Panel for budget consultation
- Annual reporting of key partnerships to Audit committee
- Consider if other major balance sheet items can be made more visible in quarterly reporting

Progress will be monitored through the Audit committee.

3 Level of assurance provided

We can provide a high level of assurance that the governance arrangements operating at City of Lincoln Council, in line with our Code of Corporate Governance are appropriate, fit for purpose and working well in practice.

4 Status of significant governance issues monitored from 2019/20

The council has regularly monitored its 2019/20 significant governance issues through senior management and the Audit Committee during 2020/21. Three issues were identified for monitoring:

- **The Disaster Recovery plan in place for IT arrangements:** during 2019/20 significant progress was made towards alignment with the Business Continuity plans that are in place for restoring key services in terms of IT needs. Overall, all but one action had been completed. Also the introduction of an alternative site at Hamilton House for data security has been implemented. However, COVID-19 has made such an impact to both the short and possibly long term working arrangements of the council, that it is felt that this issue should not be removed from the list of significant issues – but instead should remain with a revised focus on what the required outcome needs to be, including a review of the expectations of our IT recovery and resource needs to meet the agreed BC plan needs

THIS ISSUE WILL REMAIN – but with a revised aim and action plan

- **Review of impact of Coronavirus on the council’s service delivery and embedding new ways of working for staff.** COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the council’s budget resulting in the need to undertake a comprehensive review of how and what services are delivered ensuring our statutory requirements are met. The council was already undertaking a pilot to enable more agile working, and with the lockdown intervention the council fast tracked this approach and as a part of this specifically reviewed the effectiveness of working conditions for staff and members, now and in the future. Steps have been taken throughout the latter part of 2020/21 to ensure that as the council develops its different approaches to service delivery and new ways of working, that governance is at its heart, recognising that governance arrangements may still need to adapt and change in order that they remain fit for purpose in the future.

THIS ISSUE TO BE REMOVED – initial steps have been taken and it is now part of business as usual activity

- **Vision 2025 needs to be re-profiled and communicated to a wider audience in the light of COVID-19.** The strategy was adopted but there was no formal public launch was held due to COVID-19 impact. The council's response to the pandemic was to proactively divert resources to tackle the emergency, and all projects and programmes that could be paused/had not already commenced were stopped in a planned way. Tackling the emergency situation and resulting recovery phase has been a long process due to the prevalence of COVID-19 nationally and there is now a need to reflect on how Vision 2025 supports the health of the people of Lincoln and also the health of the city. This may lead to some changes which will be decided before wider communication commences

THIS ISSUE WILL REMAIN – but with a revised aim and action plan

5 Significant governance issues identified from 2020/21

New significant issues identified from 2020/21

There were no NEW significant issues identified, but as noted above, there will be a revised focus on two of the previous year's issues. A new action/monitoring plan will be drawn up for monitoring purposes.

7 Conclusion

The council's governance arrangements are under continual review and refinement. The council will monitor improvement plans for its significant governance issues quarterly and report progress in the next annual review.

Signed



Leader:

Date: 8 June 2021



Chief Executive:

Date: 6 June 2021

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN THE GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

AGS	Annual Governance Statement
CFO	Chief Finance Officer
CMT	Corporate Management Team
CX	Chief Executive
HMO	Houses in Multiple Occupation
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LPMM	Lincoln Project Management Model
MTFS	Medium Term Financial Strategy
PIMS	Performance Information Management System
PIR	Post Implementation Review
TFS	Towards Financial Sustainability
Vision 2020	The council's strategic plan 2017-20
Vision 2025	The council's strategic plan 2020-25

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. The modifier "+" or "-", may be appended to the rating to denote relative status within the category.

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. The modifier "+" or "-", may be appended to the rating to denote relative status within the category.

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 Council in monetary terms. Assets are categorised as either current or fixed:

- A current asset will be consumed or cease to have material value within the next financial year (e.g. cash and stock);
- A fixed asset provides benefits to the Council 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 Council's financial affairs.

BALANCE SHEET

A statement of the recorded assets, liabilities and other balances at the end of the accounting period.

BORROWING

Government support for capital investment is described as either Supported Capital Expenditure (Revenue) known as SCE(R) or Supported Capital Expenditure (Capital Grant) known as SCE(C). SCE can be further classified as either Single Capital Pot (SCP) or ring-fenced.

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 Council intends to carry out over a specific period of time.

CAPITAL RECEIPT

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other 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.

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

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 Council, i.e. it is "clawed-back" by the Government.

COLLECTION FUND

A separate fund that records the income and expenditure relating to Council Tax and non-domestic rates.

COMMUNITY ASSETS

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

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 Council's control.

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 Council'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 costs 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 Council 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 Council 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.

DEFERRED CHARGES

Expenditure which can be properly deferred (i.e. treated as capital in nature), but which does not result in, or remain matched with, a tangible asset. Examples of deferred charges are grants of a capital nature to voluntary organisations.

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 Council's 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 Council's discretionary powers such as the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996.

EQUITY

The Council'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.

EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS

Material items which derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the Council and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give fair presentation of the accounts.

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.

EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS

Material items, possessing a high degree of abnormality, which derive from events or transactions that fall outside the ordinary activities of the Council and which are not expected to recur. They do not include exceptional items, nor do they include prior period items merely because they relate to a prior period.

FAIR VALUE

The fair value of an asset is the price at which it could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction less, where applicable, any grants receivable towards the purchase or use of the asset.

FAIR VALUE INPUT LEVELS

Basis for recurring fair value measurements:

- Level 1 Inputs - quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities 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 or liability, either directly or indirectly.
- Level 3 Inputs - unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

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 Council 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 Council. These grants may be specific to a particular scheme or may support the revenue spend of the Council in general.

HOUSING BENEFITS

A system of financial assistance to individuals towards certain housing costs administered by authorities and subsidised by Central Government.

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA)

A separate account to the General Fund, which includes the income and expenditure arising from the provision of housing accommodation by the Council.

IMPAIRMENT

A reduction in the value of a fixed asset to below its carrying amount in the Balance Sheet.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

The revenue account of the Council 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.

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 Council'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 Council 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 Council 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 Council.

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES (NNDR)

The National Non-Domestic Rate is a levy on businesses, based on a national rate in the pound set by the Government and multiplied by the assessed rateable value of the premises they occupy. It is collected by the Council on behalf of Central Government and then redistributed back to support the cost of services.

NET BOOK VALUE

The amount at which 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 Council'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-OPERATIONAL ASSETS

Assets held by the Council 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

Assets held and occupied, used or consumed by the Council 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 on 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 Council's members, the Chief Executive, its Directors and their close family and household members.

RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Code requires the disclosure of any material transactions between the Council 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 Council. 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 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 a Council 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 Council for such purposes as prizes, charities, specific projects and on behalf of minors.

USEFUL ECONOMIC LIFE (UEL)

The period over which the Council will derive benefits from the use of a fixed asset.

WORK IN PROGRESS (WIP)

The cost of work performed on an uncompleted project at the Balance Sheet date, which should be accounted for.

SUBJECT: INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

REPORT BY: AUDIT MANAGER

LEAD OFFICER: AUDIT MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the Internal Audit Progress Report to the Audit Committee, incorporating the overall position reached so far, and summaries of the outcomes of audits completed during the period.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report highlights progress against the audit plan.

3. Background

- 3.1 A key requirement of public sector internal audit standards is that Internal Audit should report progress periodically to those charged with governance. The Audit Committee has within its terms of reference the responsibility for receiving a regular progress report from Internal Audit on the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan. The latest progress report for 2021-22 is attached as the appendix to this report.

3.2 Internal Audit Progress Report

- 3.3 The Internal Audit progress report attached (Appendix A) covers the following areas :-
- Progress against the plan
 - Summary of Audit work
 - Current areas of interest relevant to the Audit Committee

4. Organisational Impacts (nb. Finance, Legal and E & D sections below are mandatory, others to be completed only where there is an impact)

- 4.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)
There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.
- 4.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules
There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.
- 4.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (including the outcome of the EA attached, if required)
There are no direct E and D implications arising as a result of this report.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Audit Committee is asked to review and comment on the content of the latest Internal Audit Progress Report for 2021-22.

Key Decision

No

All key decisions require 28 days' public notice. If in doubt, please check with Democratic Services.

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply?

No

28 days' public notice must be given to Democratic Services before any Executive meeting held in private. If in doubt, please check with Democratic Services.

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

One

List of Background Papers:

Please note that any background papers must be provided to Democratic Services with your report for publication. If in doubt as to the definition of a background paper, please contact Democratic Services.

Lead Officer:

Audit manager Telephone 873321

Internal Audit Progress Report



City of Lincoln Council
July 2021

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Overview of Assurances
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- 1 Limited / Low Assurance Reports (None)
- 2 Assurance Definitions
- 3 Audit Recommendations
- 4 2021/22 Audit Plan

John Scott - Audit Manager (Head of Internal Audit)
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Paul Berry – Principal Auditor
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This report has been prepared solely for the use of Members and Management of Boston Borough Council. Details may be made available to specified external organisations, including external auditors, but otherwise the report should not be used or referred to in whole or in part without prior consent. No responsibility to any third party is accepted as the report has not been prepared, and is not intended for any other purpose.

The matters raised in this report are only those that came to our attention during the course of our work – there may be weaknesses in governance, risk management and the system of internal control that we are not aware of because they did not form part of our work programme, were excluded from the scope of individual audit engagements or were not brought to our attention. The opinion is based solely the work undertaken as part of the agreed internal audit plan.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide details of audit work during the period April – June 2021
- Advise on progress with the 2020/21 and 2021/22 Plans
- Raise any other matters that may be relevant to the Audit Committee role

Key Messages

In this period we have completed seven assurance reviews and produced the 2021/22 Annual IA Report.

The 2020/21 Plan was scheduled to run to the end of April 21, and at this point it was 89% complete. Since then all outstanding pieces of work have been finalised except for the Western Growth review, which is with management for approval.

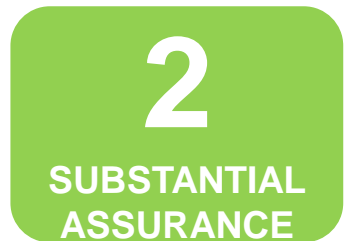
Work on the 2021/22 Plan has commenced and is on track. Details can be found in Appendix 4.

Assurances

Seven assurance reviews have been completed in this period;

Governance – High Assurance
Risk Management - Substantial Assurance
Office 365 – Substantial Assurance
NNDR - High Assurance
Accountancy Key Controls - High Assurance
Creditors Key Controls - High Assurance
Debtors Key Controls – High Assurance

Note: The assurance expressed is at the time of issue of the report but before the full implementation of the agreed management action plan. The definitions for each level are shown in Appendix 1.



High Assurance

We found that;

- Management rated Corporate Governance as Green in the 2021 Combined Assurance map.
- The Council's Code of Corporate Governance was last updated in 2018 and is currently being refreshed, and will include any changes brought about by Covid / working from home. The refreshed version will be presented to Audit committee for approval, hopefully in July.
- An assessment against the current Code is being done to inform the AGS, and it will include any changes identified by the refresh.
- In previous years the AGS layout and content has been in accordance with good practice and the new guidance issued by CIPFA on the content of the AGS (including reference to Covid and the CIPFA Financial Management Code) will be taken into account.
- The process to produce the AGS and identify any potential significant governance issues is robust. A wide range of intelligence is gathered and the Council's senior management and statutory officers are interviewed. Two different officer groups consider and refine potential significant issues before they are considered by CLT and CMT, and finally Audit Committee.
- Interviews with the CX, Directors, Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer did not raise any significant concerns about the Council's governance arrangements during 2020/21.
- During 2020/21 Audit Committee received quarterly monitoring reports on the three significant issues in the 2019/20 AGS.
- CIPFA's Financial Management Code is applicable in shadow form during 2020/21 with compliance expected from 2021/22. The guidance suggests a self-assessment against the FM Code and this has already been done and reported to Executive and Audit committee, in March. Some actions have been identified which will be included in the 20/21 AGS and monitored through the Audit committee.

We did not identify any areas for improvement, although there a few areas that are still in progress.

High Assurance

Debt recovery has been significantly affected by the lockdown. In accordance with Government requirements all recovery was suspended for the period March to August 2020. Reminders restarted in September 2020 but the initial closure of magistrate's courts due to the pandemic meant that there were only two court dates in 2020/21. The Courts have now fully reopened.

The 12-month payment holiday (100% reduction in liability) was applied in accordance with Government guidance on Retail, Hospitality & Leisure businesses and qualifying Nursery businesses.

Government support initiatives for the business sector reduced the gross collectable income due to each Council. However, the collection of income during a global pandemic, with businesses remaining in lockdown and subsequent impact of closures has been and will remain a challenge for the team. Despite these difficulties the year end collection figures that have been achieved for 20/21 are 98.97% for COLC (0.08% up on previous year),

We also found that;

- All payment methods continue to operate with appropriate controls in place.
- There is an adequate separation of duties between the between day to day NNDR work and income collection.
- Income is posted daily and reconciled; suspense accounts are regularly reviewed
- There is a process in place to guard against fraudulent refunds; refunds are reconciled and appropriately authorised
- Write offs are authorised and actioned in accordance with each Council's Financial Procedure Rules.
- Claims for reliefs and discounts are correctly processed and reflected in Northgate - supporting evidence is obtained where required.

One recommendation was made to introduce a quarterly supervisory review of accounts where recovery action is on hold – this has been accepted and will also be implemented in respect of Council Tax accounts.

**NNDR
2020/21**

High Assurance

We found that the expected key controls are in place and operating as expected;

- Access to the Main Accounting System (MAS) is restricted
- Budget roles and responsibilities are clearly defined
- There is an effective and robust process in place to monitor budgets, any variances are identified , explained and reported.
- Financial impact of Covid is closely monitored and reported to members
- Capital programme is effectively monitored and reported; member approval to capital schemes (and changes) is obtained where required.
- Virements and changes to the budget are authorised and reported in accordance with financial procedure rules
- There is a regular reconciliation of cash receipting to the general ledger and review of the suspense account.

We identified one area for improvement; Financial Services are not always notified when agency staff leave the Council and need to be deleted from Agresso; a bi-annual review of users should be undertaken to address this issue.

High Assurance

Creditors Key Controls 2020/21

We found that the expected key controls are in place and operating as expected;

- System parameters are set at an appropriate level and access is restricted to user needs.
- The Creditors system enforces a separation of duties through user roles and permissions.
- The ability to set up and amend creditor data (such as bank account details) is restricted and well controlled.
- The Agresso system is able to recognise and produce a system alert for potential duplicate payments; additional checks are also undertaken by the Exchequer Officer.
- A reconciliation is undertaken between Creditor and BACS payment reports
- An audit trail supports all actions taken when processing creditor payments, including Covid Business Grants and Track & Trace payments.
- A reconciliation is undertaken between Creditor and BACS payment reports

We have identified one area for improvement; a list of authorising officers needs to be reviewed and approved by Assistant Directors to comply with Financial Procedure Rules.

High Assurance

Debtors Key Controls 2020/21

We found that the expected key controls are in place and operating as expected;

- Ability to set up and amend customer master file data (eg bank accounts) is limited to relevant staff; anti fraud checks are undertaken.
- Automated double entry posting to debtors and ledger is now an automated part of the debtors system.
- Authorisation of sales and credit invoices is set at the correct level.
- The reconciliation of debtor income and clearing of the suspense account is undertaken regularly
- Write off have been authorised and administered in accordance with financial procedure rules.

We have identified one area for improvement; consider whether low value amounts due to the Council can be recovered in a more cost effective / efficient way.

Substantial Assurance

Office 365 2020/21

The purpose of the review is provide assurance that the design and implementation of the controls for managing Microsoft Office 365 are adequate to maintain the confidentiality, integrity and availability of data and meet organisational needs. The Council, with assistance from a specialist supplier, have deployed Office 365 to 652 users, some with different licence types. The Council are aware that they are reaching capacity with Office 365 licences and intend to procure more as and when needed.

Full scale migration of data is yet to be completed. Some key documentation for users has been migrated and users are storing newly created documents on SharePoint. The main bulk of data still exists on the on-premises network and only files that are specifically required are intended to be migrated. There are no detailed plans for full scale migration at the current time. There are still further actions to be completed, particularly the implementation of Data Loss Prevention (DLP) prior to migrating the main bulk of data. Standard operating procedures to support the day-to-day operational management and administration of the Office 365 tenant have not yet been documented.

We reviewed technical configurations and noted other improvement areas.

In terms of project management, overall responsibility rests with the Organisational Change Lead and the project team includes members of Business Development and IT. Microsoft planner is used to manage the deployment of Office 365 to new users. There are regular reports into the One Council Technology Board, as well as Corporate Management Team. The Lincoln Project management model is followed. A DPIA has been completed and an EHRA is in progress. This is a complex project involving software and new hardware being rolled out in a relatively short timescale across the Council and CMT have recently requested that this roll out should be brought forward to September 2021 from the previous December target. Officers are looking at resource options to meet this new target.

We identified a small number of areas for improvement relating to project management including updating project plan lists and risk registers, formal financial reporting to Board and consideration of 365 migration as a separate project.

Substantial Assurance

Risk Management 2020/21

There is a current Risk Management Strategy, which states that the Council's risk appetite is 'Creative and Aware'. The Strategy sets out the responsibilities for risk management at strategic and operational levels.

The Strategic risk register is being actively reviewed each quarter by CMT and presented to the Executive. Strategic risks have an owner and any actions have a target date. In the past year five new risks have been added (mostly connected to Covid) and three risks have been re-scored. The SRR does not currently include a specific Cyber Security or associated ICT risk, but this already due to be included in the next update.

Directorate risk registers are, on the whole, being updated on a quarterly basis. However, the Major Developments risk register was last updated in May 2020. Whilst it is appreciated that the work of this directorate is largely project based and there were significant other pressures during 2020/21 the same issue of infrequent reviews has been found for the last three years and a high priority recommendation has been made to introduce a robust process to ensure that regular reviews are undertaken in all directorates.

The Fraud risk register was refreshed in December 2020 and presented to the Audit committee in February 2021.

Risk management is operating in other areas such as ICT, programme and project management, Medium Term Financial Planning, Brexit preparation and committee reporting.

Due to Covid and the need to prioritise resources some actions due in 2020/21 were postponed to 2021/22;

- A review of the Risk Management Strategy and Framework
- Communication and training on the RM Framework

Other work

Audits in Progress

- Housing Benefits & Council Tax Support – fieldwork in progress

Other work

- Housing Benefit Subsidy testing – work has commenced and is approximately 50% complete
- Elections – Police & Crime Commissioner claim reviewed (there are two further claims to review)
- Counter Fraud
 - National Fraud initiative- ongoing work
 - Fraud policies – fraud strategy completed
 - Money Laundering risk assessment – in progress
 - Scam awareness – linking into national schemes (June)
 - Annual fraud report - completed
 - LCFP liaison - ongoing
- Grants
 - Assistance as required

Non-Audit Work

Partnership Governance – IA will continue to liaise with the Chief Finance Officer and Assistant Director's on this area assisting with assurance reviews and Audit Committee reporting.

Audit Plan changes

It was agreed with the S151 officer that the VFM audit would be replaced by a Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support audit that couldn't be undertaken in 2020/21. The VFM audit was to support External Audit's annual VFM commentary required under the new code of practice and the CIPFA Financial Code, but as EA have started their work it was felt this would be a duplication.



Internal Audit's performance is measured against a range of indicators. The statistics below show our performance on key indicators year to date.

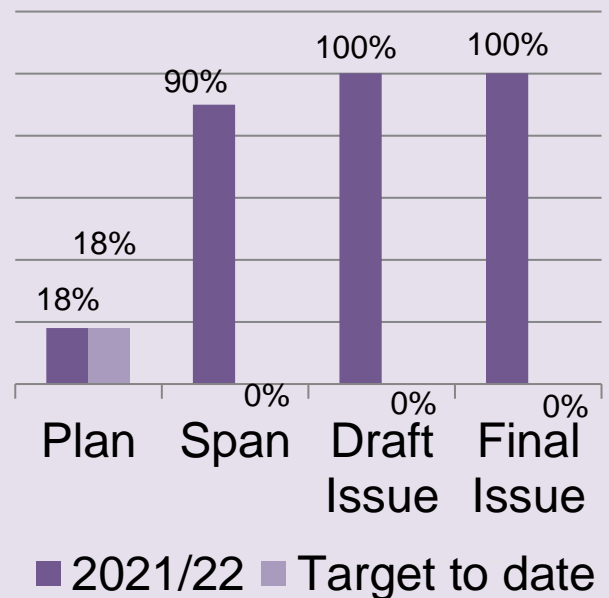
Performance on Key Indicators (2021/22)

No audits have been completed yet so only plan completion data is available

Rated our service Good to Excellent

18% Plan Completed

Achievement of Audit KPI's to date



Other matters of interest

A summary of matters that will be of particular interest to Audit Committee Members.

External Audit providers

PSAA launches consultation on its plans for the second appointing period for the national scheme for local auditor appointments. PSAA will issue invitations later in 2021 to all eligible local bodies to join the national auditor appointment scheme for the next appointing period commencing in April 2023.

There are none.

High

Our critical review or assessment on the activity gives us a high level of confidence on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and the operation of controls and / or performance.

The risk of the activity not achieving its objectives or outcomes is low. Controls have been evaluated as adequate, appropriate and are operating effectively.

Substantial

Our critical review or assessment on the activity gives us a substantial level of confidence (assurance) on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and operation of controls and / or performance.

There are some improvements needed in the application of controls to manage risks. However, the controls have been evaluated as adequate, appropriate and operating sufficiently so that the risk of the activity not achieving its objectives is medium to low.

Limited

Our critical review or assessment on the activity gives us a limited level of confidence on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and operation of controls and / or performance.

The controls to manage the key risks were found not always to be operating or are inadequate. Therefore, the controls evaluated are unlikely to give a reasonable level of confidence (assurance) that the risks are being managed effectively. It is unlikely that the activity will achieve its objectives.

Low

Our critical review or assessment on the activity identified significant concerns on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and operation of controls and / or performance.

There are either gaps in the control framework managing the key risks or the controls have been evaluated as not adequate, appropriate or are not being effectively operated. Therefore the risk of the activity not achieving its objectives is high.

An update is provided in a separate report.

Audit	Scope of Work	Start Planned date	Start Actual date	End Actual date	Status/ Rating
Annual IA Report	Audit opinion & coverage for 2020/21	Q1	May	June	Completed
Partnership Governance	Consultancy to assist in providing assurance for management & Audit cttee	Q1-2			In progress
Housing Benefit Subsidy	Detailed testing on behalf of External Audit	Q1-2	May 21		In progress
Housing Benefit & CTS	Assurance that HB, CTS, DHP & CTS Hardship Fund are administered correctly	Q1	May 21		In progress
Leisure Centres	Assurance that appropriate contingency planning is being undertaken	Q2			
Planned Maintenance	Assurance on the closedown of the Kier contract and the establishment of new arrangements	Q2			
Elections / Electoral Registration	Review of the 2021 expenses claim & maintenance of the electoral register	Q2	May 21		PCC claim completed
Safeguarding	Review of Protecting Vulnerable People processes during Covid	Q2			
Visitor Information Centre	Assurance on the operation of the service	Q2-3			
Western Growth Corridor	Assurance on partnership governance and programme management arrangements for Phase 1a	Q3			
Rogue Landlord	Consultancy work on the PIR	Q3			
Health & Safety	Risk assessment processes	Q3			
Income	Assurance on income controls in key areas	Q3			
Stores	Assurance on the changeover of contractor	Q3			

Audit	Scope of Work	Start Planned date	Start Actual date	End Actual date	Status/ Rating
Combined Assurance	Update the assurance map and produce a 2022 Combined Assurance report	Q4			
IA Strategy & Planning	Produce a 2022/23 Audit Plan	Q4			
Town Deal	Assurance on governance, programme & project management arrangements	Q4			
ICT – Projects & Programmes	Assurance on general project management plus specific projects for PSN and IT security training	Q4			
ICT – Disaster Recovery	Assurance on IT DR planning, incident response & infrastructure resilience	Q4			
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Assurance that assumptions, reserve levels, etc are appropriate and there is integration with other strategic documents	Q4			
Performance Management	Assurance that the revised PM Framework enables the Council's performance to be effectively monitored.	Q4			
Housing Repairs	Assurance on the operation of the new repairs process and the void repairs process	Q4			
Counter Fraud	Consultancy / advice work on strategy, training, NFI, money laundering, identity fraud, business grants	Q1-4	April		In progress

SUBJECT: INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATION FOLLOW UP

REPORT BY: AUDIT MANAGER

LEAD OFFICER: AUDIT MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present an update to the Audit Committee on outstanding recommendations.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The report provides members with information on audit recommendations and the ability at the meeting to request managers to provide further feedback.

3. Background

3.1 It was agreed that audits over 12 months and 24 months would be separated and managers would also attend for the very oldest reports. There would be no continued monitoring by the Audit Committee after 24 months.

3.2 Audit recommendations

3.3 The attached Appendix (A) provides details of the relevant audits, outstanding recommendations / agreed actions and current position.

4. Organisational Impacts (nb. Finance, Legal and E & D sections below are mandatory, others to be completed only where there is an impact)

4.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)
There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.

4.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules
There are no direct legal implications arising as a result of this report.

4.3 Equality, Diversity & Human Rights (including the outcome of the EA attached, if required)
There are no direct E and D implications arising as a result of this report.

5. Recommendation

5.1 The Audit Committee is asked to review the attached Appendix and responses.

Key Decision

No

All key decisions require 28 days' public notice. If in doubt, please check with Democratic Services.

Do the Exempt Information Categories

No

28 days' public notice must be given to Democratic

Apply?

Services before any Executive meeting held in private. If in doubt, please check with Democratic Services.

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

One

List of Background Papers:

Please note that any background papers must be provided to Democratic Services with your report for publication. If in doubt as to the definition of a background paper, please contact Democratic Services.

Lead Officer:

John Scott, Audit Manager Telephone 873321



City of Lincoln Council



Audit Recommendations

July 2021

Recommendations over 2 years old

Audit Area	Date	Assurance	No of Recs	Implmtd	Outstanding (extended or overdue)	Not Yet Due	Comments / Progress
IT Applications	Oct 18	Limited	8	8*	0		<p>Update & circulate System Administrator guidance (High)</p> <p><u>July 2021 update</u> Completed</p> <p>Application system administrators/owners will need to review the guidance to ensure compliance.</p> <p>*There were outstanding areas linked to specific applications reviewed. These are no longer tracked, and officers will need to review guidance and complete the checklist attached to the System Administrator guidance.</p>
Malware / Anti-virus	Nov 18	Substantial	9	7	1 High 1 Medium		<p>Device control software will be introduced and approved encrypted devices authorised and issued (High)</p> <p><u>July 2021 update</u> Rolling out devices over next few months. - configuration complete. Aiming to get all devices out by end September 21.</p> <p><u>Complete revised IT Security Policy (Med)</u> Extended to September 2021</p>
Transport Hub	Dec 18	Substantial	3	2	1 Medium		<p>Formal project closure & post implementation review</p> <p>Extended to 31st August 2021</p>

Recommendations less than 2 years old

Audit Area	Date	Assurance	No of Recs	Implmtd	Outstanding (extended or overdue)	Not Yet Due	Comments / Progress
Information management	June 19	Substantial	16	15	1 Medium		Assist Information Asset Owners to review their network drives. <u>Update July 2021</u> Exploring new options for doing this. Linked to 365 migration. Extended to September 21
Housing Rents	Dec 19	Substantial	4	3	1 High		The possibility of producing a report from Universal Housing which flags up new tenancies not at the target rent will be investigated. (High) <u>Update July 2021</u> Very close to completion, requires some further work. Should be finalised July 21

Audit Area	Date	Assurance	No of Recs	Implmntd	Outstanding (extended or overdue)	Not Yet Due	Comments / Progress
Licensing	Feb 20	Substantial	7	3	4 Med		<p>Pro-active licensing spot checks completed; conflicts of interest system updated and an annual report completed (verbal update).</p> <p>July 21 Update (to be advised)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an operational enforcement strategy • Introduce a formal quality control system • Develop KPIs further • Establish a consistent process for logging issues / complaints onto APP <p>Delayed due to COVID Some actions moved to September 2021</p>

ICT Anti-Malware	Mar 20	Substantial	10	4	6 (1 High)	<p>July 21 Update.</p> <p>Implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the wording on the alert (computer message) • Consider the business requirement for access to file types. Reviewed and no changes. • Review incident reporting arrangements (out of hours) – no changes proposed. • Ensure that any configuration changes to the AV solution (and other pertinent security controls) are subject to careful consideration and documented (Change control spreadsheet in place). <p>July 21 update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT security training – extended to October 21 due to license issues • Agree minimum compliance standards for suppliers (remote access). Extended to September 2021. • Security policy linked to mobile device management. Technical polices have been reviewed and agreed – wider written policies still being worked on. Extended September 21 • Review web filtering arrangements – currently consulting on categories with relevant parties currently – unlikely to be much change as these have been in place for some time - September 2021 • Smartphones and Tablets - review the (security) policy. Technical polices have been reviewed and agreed – wider written policies still being worked. Extended to September 2021 • Complete a briefing note/guidance and training for other IT officers relating to Alien Vault –
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							reviewing AlienVault suitability – request for additional funding for other types of cyber Protection – being reviewed by BDITM extended to September 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update the Incident management policy/procedure - Extended September 2021
Recommendations less than 1 year old							
De Wint Court project management	Jul 20	Substantial	6	6	0		The outstanding recommendation has been implemented.
Housing Allocations	Aug 20	Substantial	4	3	1		Introduce and document a sample quality check across all assessors <u>July 21 Update</u> Completed Annual review of applications <u>July 21 Update</u> There has been a delay due to a system upgrade extension to 31/8/21
Homelessness	Aug 20	Substantial	2	1	1		Review document retention - workflow (Med) <u>Update July 2021</u> The Workflow system has recently been upgraded and additional work is now required to address this. Extended to 31 August 2021
Council Tax	Feb 21	Substantial	1	1	0	0	Review of refund spreadsheet implemented

Covid-19	Feb 21	Substantial	1	0		1	<p>Covid-19 Assessment. The IAO checklist will be updated to reference additional data collected for Covid-19 purposes and responses will be monitored.</p> <p>The checklist will be issued for return in the period October – December 2021.</p>
NNDR	May 21	Substantial	1	0	0	1	<p>A quarterly check of NNDR accounts that have been on hold Due Sept 21</p>
Risk Management	May 21	Substantial	1	0	1	0	<p>Directorate risk registers - on the report to CMT information will be included as to when they were last updated and what the red risks are.</p> <p>Due June 21</p>
Office 365	May 21	Substantial	6	0	0	6	<p>1. We made a recommendation relating to project management including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Updating the project plan list and reporting to Technology Board as well as change logs/lessons learned logs b. Considering whether the migration of data from existing network files to 365 should be treated as a separate project - to be discussed with Board c. Updating Board on any impacts on other IT projects due to the prioritisation of 365 d. Update the project risk register and report into Board periodically e. Formally report financial spend for licences, hardware, and other project expenditure to the Board (discussed currently) f. The DPIA has been finalised and the EHRA will be finalised shortly

							<p>Due August 2021</p> <p>2. Day to day operational procedures will be completed (by July 21)</p> <p>3. Review of calendar options (by Dec 21)</p> <p>4. Review DLP policies for Exchange Online and SharePoint Online content. (by Dec 21)</p> <p>5. Review storage providers that are integrated with Outlook on the Web (by Mar 2022)</p> <p>6. Review options for utilising 365 audit reporting (by Dec 21)</p>
Creditors	June 21	High	1	0	0	1	<p>Template to be prepared and issued to Assistant Directors identifying all authorising officers on FSM to be reviewed and approved</p> <p>Due July 21</p>
Accountancy	June 21	High	1	0	0	1	<p>Six monthly review will be carried out by Agresso Admin to check all users and remove any that are no longer working for the authority.</p> <p>Due Sept 21</p>
Debtors	June 21	High	1	0	0	1	<p>Exchequer Team to monitor the low value invoices and to enquire as to whether we can combine the invoices or raise them for longer periods. (This may not be feasible due to leasing terms and conditions and legal requirements)</p> <p>Due Dec 21</p>

External Audit Recommendations

Audit Area	Date	Assurance	No of Recs	Implmntd	Outstanding (extended or overdue)	Not Yet Due	Comments / Progress
ISA 260 Report	Mar 21	N/A	3	1		2	<p>1) The Council should review its approach for identifying and actioning the removal of Active Directory access following an employee's termination of employment.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Management response</u> Completed. The Council will remind all managers to ensure that appropriate IT forms are filled into remove leavers from all systems Reminder has been issued; all current disabled IT access is under review (ongoing). IT are actioning any leavers notifications promptly.</p> <p>2) It is important that the Council takes the steps necessary to re-establish robust arrangements and staffing to support the 2020/21 year-end. Quality control procedures in respect of the account's preparation process need to be strengthened and the Council, in its closedown procedures for 2020/21, should include sufficient time for a robust quality control process to be implemented.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Management response</u> Completed. We have recruited into vacant posts and have a stable team in place going forward.</p>

							<p>3) The Council should review its approach to the calculation of its debt impairment to ensure that this accords with the requirements of IFRS 9 and the CIPFA Code.</p> <p><u>Management response</u> Completed We have reviewed a model utilised by another LA and mirrored their approach</p>
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SUBJECT: REVIEW OF INTERNAL AUDIT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS

DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TOWN CLERK

REPORT AUTHOR: AUDIT MANAGER/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To review the effectiveness of Internal Audit and the Audit Committee benchmarking against best practice and audit standards.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The report provides an assessment of effectiveness for both Internal Audit and the Audit Committee.
- 2.2 A review group consisting of the Chair of Audit Committee, the Independent Member, Cllr Tom Dyer, the Chief Finance Officer and the Audit Manager met in June 2021.
- 2.3 The assessment is summarised within the report and the appendices. Improvement plans are attached for both Internal Audit and the Audit Committee

3. Background

- 3.1 A member/officer review group was established to review background documents in detail and provide summary feedback to the Audit Committee.
- 3.2 The review was split into different areas covering:

Internal Audit

- Audit standards and quality
- Audit performance
- Resources
- Feedback
- Improvement
- Summary and conclusions

Audit Committee

- CIPFA audit committee assessments
- Core self-assessment
- Knowledge and skills
- Summary and conclusions

4. Internal Audit Review of Effectiveness

4.1 Audit Standards

Public sector internal audit standards (PSIAS) set out a number of core principles for internal audit. The objectives of the PSIAS are to:

- define the nature of internal auditing within the UK public sector
- set basic principles for carrying out internal audit in the UK public sector
- establish a framework for providing internal audit services, which add value to the organisation,
- leading to improved organisational processes and operations, and establish the basis for the evaluation of internal audit performance and to drive improvement planning

Compliance against these core principles is set out in a summary assessment attached at Appendix A. This includes some improvement actions which are outlined in the Quality and Improvement Plan (QAIP) and cross referenced on the Appendix B.

4.2. Quality review/supervision

All audits are supervised by the Audit Manager and the Principal Auditor.

This covers terms of reference (TOR), audit research and risk assessment, working papers and draft and final reports.

Feedback is provided and recorded through the audit work system, or through the Council network (where audits are undertaken outside the audit work system). There have been a small number audits completed by County Council staff (Assurance Lincolnshire) in the past and work is reviewed by LCC line managers; draft and final reports reviewed by CoIC.

Any contract staff / agency staff (such as IT auditors) work is reviewed by the Audit Manager / Principal auditor and where appropriate the respective Contract Manager.

4.3. Quality checks are undertaken which review:

- Planning and research
- Identification of risks
- Terms of reference
- Controls and tests completed/documentation
- Evaluation of findings
- Report review / adherence to house style and original terms of reference
- Appropriate assurance – overall and on individual risks
- Agreed actions supported by findings
- Management feedback – comments and questionnaire

There were no significant issues from reviews undertaken.

4.4 Terms of Reference/Charter

The Audit Charter follows best practice (CIPFA/IIA) and was recently reviewed by the Committee in February 2021. No changes were required

4.5 Audit performance

The following table shows the key performance indicators for 2020/21 and 2019/20

Table A

Performance Indicator	Target	Actual 2020/21	Actual 2019/20
Percentage of (revised) plan completed.	100%	89%	96%
Percentage of key financial systems	100%	100%	75%
Percentage of recommendations agreed.	100%	100%	98%
Percentage of recommendations due implemented.	100%	100%*	83%
Timescales:			
Draft report issued within 10 working days of completing audit	100%	100	100
Final report issued within 5 working days of closure meeting / receipt of all management responses.	100%	100	100
Period taken to complete audit within 2 months from fieldwork commencing to the issue of the draft report.	80%	30%	90%
Client Feedback on Audit (average)	Good to excellent	Good to excellent	Good to excellent

4.6 The 2020/21 internal audit plan was reduced due to Covid and re-prioritisation of resources towards Covid mitigation actions. A revised plan was presented to the Audit Committee in September 2021.

4.7 Completion of the revised 20-21 plan was not as expected due to the further national restrictions which were announced following agreement of the revised plan in September 2020. This meant that officer resources were again diverted to the emergency response.

4.8 There were delays on some audits in 20-21 which is linked to the lower percentage of audits being completed within expected timescales (fieldwork to draft report), again this was primarily due to officer capacity whilst responding to the pandemic.

4.9. Due to the late start on audits few (new) recommendations have fallen due for implementation for the 20-21 year.

4.10 The speed at which some agreed actions are implemented can still be improved. We will find a more consistent way to ensure these are covered through

Performance management in 21-22 and where appropriate escalated to Assistant Directors or Directors.

4.11 Skills and Resources

The service currently has 2.43 FTE's and a budget of £90K including IT and other non-staffing budgets heads. This equates to 300 days for CoIC and 145 days for BBC/ELDC (Assurance Lincolnshire).

4.12 Audit days have been reduced from 21-22, to help contribute to the Council's savings targets, reflecting a proportionate reduction in comparison to the reduction in total council services. Resources levels have been assessed over Lincolnshire and Notts (12 authorities) where the average is audit days is 245, we are 5th highest.

4.13 The annual planned days still represents a "good" level of audit resource for an authority of this size and allows the Head of Internal Audit sufficient resources to comply with standards and provide an appropriate annual opinion. This includes work across key financial systems, other governance and due diligence areas as well as critical systems, ICT and counter fraud.

Planned audit days in 21-22 are 275 as April is being used to complete some 20-21 work delayed due to Covid.

4.14 Assurance Lincolnshire

The Assurance Lincolnshire Partnership continues to add value, this includes access to a computerised audit system, shared audit practices and training. It also helps with access to specialists (Risk, Health & Safety, insurance, counter fraud, ICT) and resilience.

The Audit Committee Forum is provided through the partnership, usually annually.

We are providing more direct audit services through the partnership from 21-22 due to Boston's management integration with ELDC. From 21-22 LCC will be the contracting authority to BBC and CoIC audit staff will provide audit services through Assurance Lincolnshire to BBC and ELDC.

4.15 Training and membership of groups

We are members of the Midlands Internal audit group and part of the Assurance Lincs partnership (City of Lincoln, LCC and Notts County Council). We have access to the Midland Counties Internal audit group. We are members of the CIPFA better governance forum (BGF) which provides monthly updates on governance, risk, audit and finance. This includes training.

4.16 Training is covered through a range of events

- Through the Assurance Lincs partnership (training days/sessions)
- BGF training seminars
- BGF updates
- City of Lincoln Council training (such as safeguarding, recruitment, training)
- Cascaded training internally or via colleagues

4.17 Training is recorded in training logs / CPD and skills matrices are completed

A new audit skills matrix will be completed in 21-22 (this is being completed across Assurance Lincolnshire)

Some training requirements are captured in the QAIP (Appendix B)

4.18 Feedback

4.19. Generally, feedback is good to excellent and shows us that key areas for auditees are effective communication, explaining our process, not too time consuming, added value recommendations, flexible and working around commitments.

4.20 One off" views from managers / AD's have been sought and received which highlighted some areas for improvement, including:

- Communication can be improved around the planning/timing of audits; whilst these are communicated at the start of the year to agree the quarter in which they will take place, more regular reminders will be given to both Assistant Directors and Managers.
- Officers not always clear around Audit Committee reporting – for example which meeting the audit report goes to and if there was any feedback.
- Officers may not be clear on the role of the Audit Committee (or perhaps Internal Audit) and may only be asked to attend where there is a limited assurance report or other matters outstanding.
- Profile of audit recommendations could be improved – linked to corporate dashboard.
- Prioritisation of recommendations against other workload. The status of audit recommendations could mean they are prioritised over other work and there is insufficient resource to manage and complete all of the areas of work.

4.21 Other points:-

- Reviews undertaken are always undertaken professionally and that the audit team listen and reflect accurately to what officers have said.
- Responding to requests for advice – no issues, very professionally and quickly done
- In summary the service provided by the audit team is a good one, often in difficult circumstances.
- Audit are amenable to moving the timing audits if necessary (for operational reasons)
- Happy with the current arrangements.
- Does a good job, especially with low numbers of staff.
- Audit needs to retain its flexible approach to the work programme
- Audit's contribution to the AGS is valued
- Balanced and add value.
- I think the Internal Audit Service on the whole is good. It has a generally balanced view and is helpful to my service area. I think the staff are very approachable and easy to deal with.

4.22 Improvement

There are a range of improvement areas and these are captured within the attached QAIP as well as other improvement points contained within this report. The QAIP will be monitored and updated accordingly.

5. Internal Audit Summary and Conclusions

5.1 Audit standards and quality

- The team meet the requirements of standards and audit quality is satisfactory. There are some areas for improvement which are included within the QAIP. These include engagement supervision (review) and ensuring audit work system full sign off.
- There are areas of training staff would benefit from and again some of these are included within the QAIP.
- There are good audit processes, practice notes, templates and audit work system.
- Staff follow ethical standards, as well as those internally and professionally.
- Planned work includes a broad coverage to provide the annual opinion on governance, risk and control. Core governance areas including risk management, performance, ICT, finance, projects, contracts, service specific, due diligence, emerging risks, savings and transformation, counter fraud are covered.
- The Combined Assurance model (three lines of assurance) is seen as best practice and is key to the audit strategy and audit planning and provides assurance to senior management and the Audit Committee and feeds into the AGS.
- The internal audit plan/strategy is updated annually - there will be a separate strategy in 2021-22.

5.2 Audit performance

- 20-21 was affected by Covid which reduced the overall plan. The delivery of the revised plan however still enabled an audit opinion across governance risk and control.
- The span of audits was affected, and they took longer overall to complete.
- There were some audits on the revised plan that were affected, and these have been carried over to 2021/22.
- The timely implementation of some agreed actions/recommendations can still improve.

- Feedback overall was good.
- As the effects of Covid reduce, it is hoped that performance against plan and other indicators will improve for 21-22.

5.3 Resources

Resources overall (and costs) are still at a satisfactory level with an experienced team. The assurance Lincolnshire partnership continues to provide benefits (and an income) to the service. There are a range of training opportunities and these are managed within a limited budget. Key areas of training are outlined in the QAIP. IT skills are bought in as required and there is budget for this.

5.4 Feedback

General feedback both post audit and within management comments remains good. There are good client relationships. We have obtained some additional feedback for this review which has identified some further improvements but also mirrors the good feedback received after audit completion.

5.5 Improvement Plan

The QAIP outlines the main improvement areas and this will be updated to take account of this current review.

6. **Audit Committee Effectiveness review**

6.1 Terms of reference review (TOR)

The TOR were last reviewed against the CIPFA guidance in February 2021 and reported to this Committee. The work programme for the Committee is also reviewed against the TOR to ensure all areas are included within the programme.

6.2 Core CIPFA self-assessment

An assessment against the CIPFA Audit Committee self-assessment is attached at Appendix C.

The review group identified some changes/improvements linked to the assessment as follows:

- Further guidance to officers will be provided to ensure understanding of the committee role is clear. Communicate with managers on role of committee and encourage attendance
- New Chair and other new members of the Audit Committee in 2021. This will be reflected in further training to members around skills and knowledge. A training plan will be developed
- Promote work/benefits of the Committee.
- Any changes to the committee work programme will be clearly identified within the covering report.

- Review report recommendation wording - consider/comment and feedback rather than “note”.
- Teams/Zoom not quite as effective as in person meetings, however the circumstances of the pandemic could not have been avoided.
- To consider whether “providing oversight of other public reports, such as the annual report” is included within the TOR.

6.3 Knowledge and skills

The review group considered appendices D and E linked to CIPFA guidance on knowledge and skills. The group noted that audit committee training is not mandatory and whether this was something to pursue or ensure it is strongly advised to attend. Training is either given before meetings or a few days before to allow for members to consider further any issues (such as statement of accounts).

6.4 The review group commented on Core skills

- Comment that longer standing/experienced members had helped to coach new members which was helpful
- A general checklist of questions or question types would be useful
- Statement of accounts training (for example) provided prompts to members on areas / questions to focus on
- The Lincolnshire Audit Committee forum (Assurance Lincolnshire) had been useful in the past
- Would be useful to clarify, from the terms of reference, in terms of what the committee can /can’t do. The TOR could be attached to each agenda (could be attached to the work programme at each meeting)
- Training is best “little and often”
- One member mentioned that agendas were discussed at political group meetings and this was helpful
- Mazars webinar was useful
- University of Lincoln may be able to assist on some linked training (offered in the past)

6.5 Summary and conclusions

The Audit Committee was working well, with a new Chair and new members future training was key to ensuring the effectiveness of the committee was maintained.

A new training plan will be developed following this review and as a minimum will include:

- Existing training – Statement of accounts/Treasury
- Training on Core knowledge and skills
- Access to the Lincolnshire Audit Committee forum
- Better Governance Forum internal audit updates
- Counter fraud

6.6 An updated action plan, at Appendix F, to reflect the review comments has been drafted for comments.

7. Strategic Priorities

- 7.1 Ensuring that the Council has effective arrangements in place for its Internal Audit Services and Audit Committee is a key part of the Council's overall governance framework.

8. Organisational Impacts

- 8.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report.

- 8.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

The review of effectiveness ensures best practice is met and compliance with the Accounts and Audit regulations.

- 8.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Due to the nature of this report there are no direct equality, diversity or human rights implications.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 Members should consider the points raised from the review of effectiveness of internal audit and the audit committee.
- 9.2 Note and comment on actions for Internal audit including the QAIP (appendix B)
- 9.3 Note and comment on actions for the Audit Committee included within the action plan (Appendix F)

Is this a key decision?

No

Do the exempt information categories apply?

No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

6

List of Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer:

John Scott, Internal Audit Manager
Telephone (01522) 873321

A) Standards review

PSIAS core principles

Demonstrates integrity.			Code of Ethics and regular reminders to staff.
Having regard to your review of conformance with the Code of Ethics (Integrity, Seven Principles of Public Life), do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by demonstrating integrity?			CoLC Code of Conduct (includes principles) Any potential conflicts of interest documented Professional codes
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	
Demonstrates competence and due professional care.			Experienced auditors
Having regard to your review of conformance with the Code of Ethics (Competence, Confidentiality, Seven Principles of Public Life) and any other evidence from the review of conformance with Standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by demonstrating competence and due professional care?			Various training options, including CIPFA and access to audit networks and Assurance Lincolnshire. Due professional care is applied to all work. Standard audit processes Audit review and supervision See QAIP for further actions
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	
Is objective and free from undue influence (independent).			The team is objective and free from undue influence – refer to Audit Charter
Having regard to your review of conformance with the Code of Ethics (Objectivity, Seven Principles of Public Life) and any other evidence from the review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by being objective and free from undue influence (independent)?			The service sits below the S151 officer but with direct access to CMT/Chair of Audit Committee There are no restrictions in terms of audit planning/selection of audit areas. Internal audit has no operational duties.
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	
Aligns with the strategies, objectives, and risks of the organisation.			Audit strategy and plan links to corporate strategy and risks
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by being aligned with the strategies, objectives, and risks of the organisation?			Alignment is assisted through Combined Assurance work which feeds into strategy/planning and covers the whole organisation so planned audit activity has the benefit of being aligned across the whole organisation with up to date information on risk and assurance.

CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	The QAIP includes an action to produce a separate audit strategy in 2021.
Is appropriately positioned and adequately resourced.			Charter/audit strategy/plan Direct access to CX/CMT; line managed via S151/CFO Resources are satisfactory having been recently benchmarked.
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by being appropriately positioned and adequately resourced?			
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	
Demonstrates quality and continuous improvement.			Internal audit work is of a high quality and findings are appropriately supported. There are some continuous improvement areas outlined in the 2021 QAIP
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by demonstrating quality and continuous improvement?			
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	
Communicates effectively.			This is through various mechanisms. Audit reports to management, progress reports to Audit Committee and CMT members; progress reports to the Portfolio holder. Annual report. The QAIP includes an action to report formally into CMT mid-year on the plan and any revisions.
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by communicating effectively?			
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	
Provides risk-based assurance.			Risk assessment is completed as part of the audit planning process; this continues to be refined. For individual assignments a risk-based approach is taken.
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by providing risk-based assurance, based on adequate risk assessment?			
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	

Is insightful, proactive, and future-focused.			Combined Assurance
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by being insightful, proactive, and future-focused?			Regular liaison meetings - current issues and emerging risks (121's with CFO/ Management/SMT meetings). We respond proactively and can adjust audit plans as required. A full review of the plan and emerging risks will take place around Sept.
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	We further demonstrate this principle through our advice/consultancy work which is often providing insight from a business, governance, risk and control perspective helping the organisations get these arrangements right as the project is delivered. ColC for example - Partnerships We participate on various professional networks and attend professional updates through CIPFA and the IIA. We subscribe to CIPFA Better Governance Forum and (through LCC) IIA Head of Internal Audit Network. We also horizon scan for emerging and current risks (committee reports/horizon scanning corporate document). See also QAIP actions in this area
Promotes organisational improvement.			This is achieved through planned audit work, combined assurance and advice/consultancy.
Based on your review of conformance with standards, do you consider that the internal audit activity fully conforms with the PSIAS and LGAN by promoting organisational improvement?			
CONFORMS ✓	PARTIAL	NOT CONFORMING	

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QAIP

The internal audit quality and improvement plan (QAIP) June 2021

AM Audit manager CoC / AL Assurance Lincs

Opportunities for Improvement	Date	Status	Resp
1.PSIAS – review and communicate standards/regular practice discussions with staff	April 21 onwards	Previous reviews completed Role of Head of Internal Audit assessment completed Further actions: Ongoing review with Assurance Lincolnshire then further communication.	AM/AL
2.PSIAS – Update Internal Audit Charter (covers BBC/CoC) Review IA Charters and A&G TOR'S to ensure compliance with PSIAS	September 2021	CoC Audit Committee February 2021 (Completed) – Charter and AC TOR Further actions: Revised Charter to BBC Sept 21	AM/AL
3.Improve in-year reporting to CMT (BBC/CoC)	October 2021	CMT receive copies of Audit committee reports ahead of the Committee. Further actions: Establish a (summary) six monthly CMT report.	AM
4.Review practice notes/processes Ensure data analytics is within Pentana STEPS Review use of audit de-brief record	April 21 onwards July 21 21-22	Part complete Further actions; Ongoing project with Assurance Lincs 21-22 Completed Further actions; Further project with AL on the use and application of data analytics within audits (See below) Review use again	AM/AL

5.Dynamic audit planning	September 2021	<p>Assurance Lincolnshire have completed a dynamic planning practice note and this is used in practice by Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Districts have retained a more standard annual risk-based plan, flexed during the year as required to address any new significant risks.</p> <p>Further action: Ensure a formal (documented) review at 6 months.</p> <p><i>We have started to layer on “Change Rating” and “Urgency of review” (1-5) on the higher scoring areas (8 and above)</i></p>	AM/AL
6.Internal Audit strategy	August 2021	<p>Further actions;</p> <p>Ensure that a separate audit strategy document is produced (best practice)</p> <p>This was previously linked the annual audit plan and strategy</p> <p>Ensure explicit in terms of assurance around shared services, partnerships, joint committees.</p>	AM/AL
7.Digital and data analytics Create a project to (further) embed Data Analytics into the audit process	September 2021	<p>Further project with AL on the use and application of data analytics within audits (See below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess teams digital maturity, identify gaps and produce action plan • Implement (where possible) data analytics across the service • Identify where and how digital can expand the products and services we offer • Improved awareness in the team. 	AM/AL
8.ICT Audit	September 2021	<p>We have developed a strategic ICT plan</p> <p>Further actions:</p>	AM/AL

		<p>Risk assessment requires revisiting (annually) and update the strategic ICT plan.</p> <p><i>Boston's ICT audit plan to align to ELDC/PSPS following move to PSPS.</i></p>	
9. ICT review (specialist) IT audit provision	September 2021	<p>Different providers have been engaged.</p> <p>Further action: Working with AL colleagues to use and assess different ICT providers.</p>	AM/AL
10. Audit scheduling / working across partnership clients	September 2021	<p>With Boston joining the Alliance with ELDC and some services moving across to PSPS, there was a need to ensure plans were co-ordinated. This was completed for the 2021-22 audit plan and progress will be monitored.</p> <p>Further actions: City of Lincoln Council will continue to engage with any shared or similar audits with other District Clients where appropriate under Assurance Lincolnshire.</p>	AM/AL
11. Client liaison	21/22 21/22	<p>Maintain client liaison/relationships with (all) District clients</p> <p>Work with AL colleagues to improve sharing risk intelligence with clients.</p>	AM/AL
12. Improve monitoring of audit recommendations (CoIC) Profile of audit recommendations could be improved – linked to corporate dashboard.	September 2021	<p>A new protocol introduced for audit committee (CoIC) and a more focussed report on audit recommendations is received.</p> <p>Further actions: Revisit / review protocol with DMT's Compare to arrangements at other AL sites Link to Corporate dashboard (summary of all O/S recs)</p>	AM
13. External Audit (Mazars) –IA/EA protocol	21-22	The new guidance for external audit may place more reliance on IA work moving forward.	AM/AL

		Further action Keep under review	
14. Data protection Review arrangements for DP compliance to include own data held electronically, hard copy and data sharing arrangements.	21-22	Review of data transfer completed. Further actions Continue to ensure audit processes minimise retention of personal/sensitive data where possible. Focus on asset register and ensure data only held for the correct periods. Review arrangements for DP compliance to include own data held electronically, hard copy and data sharing arrangements	AM/AL
15. Review of Internal audit and audit committee effectiveness	September 21	Reviews undertaken Further actions: Continue to undertake reviews of both and involve officers and members accordingly, as well as auditees. Keep terms of reference and charters under review	AM
16. CIPFA financial management code	September 21	Further actions: Take account of any actions arising in relation to the audit plan and assurance	AM
17. Training and development (Staff)	21/22	There is a range of internal and external training - audit specific and corporate Further actions Continue to offer a range of training options -internal policies/reports -PSIAS standards -CPD/training logs up to date Produce a staff training plan capturing all training needs, CPD, individual ambitions To include:- <i>False Assurance</i>	AM/AL

		<p><i>Report Writing</i> <i>Commercialisation</i> <i>Digital</i> <i>IDEA</i></p> <p>Identify areas of specialism within the wider AL team (Subsidy, Schools/Academies, IT, BW) and produce a plan for training/shadowing/knowledge sharing.</p> <p>Review all staff against the (new) skills matrices to identify strengths and areas for improvement.</p>	
18. Training and development (Members)	21/22	<p>Training sessions have been provided through audit cttee and at AL events</p> <p>Further action Update member training and provide new sessions in 21-22</p> <p>Mazars training June 2021</p>	AM/AL
19. QAIP (Quality and improvement plan)	21-22	Ensure QAIP reported regularly	AM
20. Respective priorities of audit work	21-22	<p>Covered under scheduling</p> <p>Ensure these are documented</p>	AM
21. Examine news ways of working, increase efficiency/impact/value	21-22	<p>Further actions</p> <p>Assess 'Future Assurance Provider'</p> <p>Agile, streamlined approach.</p> <p>Alternative ways of providing assurance</p> <p>Revisit Skills matrices (above)</p>	AM/AL
22. Pentana Audit Software	21-22	<p>Established proceses</p> <p>Further action:</p>	AM/AL

		<p>Review use of Pentana, ensure that it is consistent and optimal across the service</p> <p>Link to review of DPA compliance in ensuring good records management practice</p> <p>Ensure Pentana is up to date/signed off</p> <p>Pentana used wherever possible</p>	
23. Engagement supervision and sign off	21-22	Ensure that engagement supervision on all audits is at the appropriate level/detail	AM/AL
24. Create Project plan for preparation of the EQA in line with the IIA Ambition model:	21-22	<p>Review self-assessment of conformance with the PSIAS</p> <p>Review post-audit debriefs process</p> <p>Ensure service training on ethics.</p> <p>Quality review processes reviewed</p> <p>Prepare proposals and committee reports for the procurement of the EQA</p> <p>Ensure Practice Notes are in conformance with PSIAS</p>	AM/AL
<p>25. Communication - planning/timing of audits</p> <p>Officers not always clear around Audit Committee reporting – for example which meeting the audit report goes to and if there was any feedback.</p> <p>Officers may not be clear on the role of the Audit Committee (or perhaps Internal Audit) and may only be asked to attend where there is a limited assurance report or other matters outstanding.</p>	July /August 2021	<p>More regular reminders will be given to both Assistant Directors and Managers.</p> <p>We will improve the communication around audit committee reporting to AD's and managers. This includes which reports are going to which meeting and any feedback afterwards.</p> <p>Audit manager to develop a short paper explaining the role of the audit committee / Internal audit and when managers may need to attend and the reasons.</p>	AM
26. Stagger audit committee reports for consultation (often together)	July onwards		AM

This appendix provides a high-level review that incorporates the key principles set out in CIPFA's Position Statement and this publication. Where an audit committee has a high degree of performance against the good practice principles, then it is an indicator that the committee is soundly based and has in place a knowledgeable membership. These are the essential factors in developing an effective audit committee.

A regular self-assessment can be used to support the planning of the audit committee work programme and training plans. It can also inform an annual report.

This Appendix covers

- A) Key areas around purpose and governance
- B) Knowledge and skills matrices
- C) Effectiveness checklist

Audit committee purpose and governance	Y	N	P	Comments
1 Does the authority have a dedicated audit committee?	Y			
2 Does the audit committee report directly to full council? (applicable to local government only)	Y			Yes, within its remit/TOR
3 Do the terms of reference clearly set out the purpose of the committee in accordance with CIPFA's Position Statement?	Y			Updated annually and key areas reviewed Updated February 2021
4 Is the role and purpose of the audit committee understood and accepted across the authority?	Y			Part of Constitution Chair's annual report to Council Liaison between audit committee and other committees - policy, performance and executive mainly Further guidance to officers will be provided to ensure understanding of the committee role is clear.
5 Does the audit committee provide support to the authority in meeting the requirements of good governance?	Y			Set out within the terms of reference Reviews specifically the Local Code of Corporate Governance, the Annual Governance Statement, Statement of Accounts, as well as other linked work programme agenda items around Governance The Audit Committee reviews the work of Internal and external audit

				and associated reports and conclusions.
6 Are the arrangements to hold the committee to account for its performance operating satisfactorily?	Y			Work programme review each meeting Chair's annual report to Council
Functions of the committee				
7 Do the committee's terms of reference explicitly address all the core areas identified in CIPFA's Position Statement?	Y			
good governance	Y			
assurance framework, including partnerships and collaboration arrangements	Y			TOR - focus on partnerships/collaboration (2021 work programme)
internal audit	Y			
external audit	Y			
financial reporting	Y			
risk management	Y			
value for money or best value	Y			
counter fraud and corruption	Y			
supporting the ethical framework	Y			
8 Is an annual evaluation undertaken to assess whether the committee is fulfilling its terms of reference and that adequate consideration has been given to all core areas?	Y			Work programme Review of effectiveness (Not undertaken through Committee in 20-21 due to COVID) Chair's annual report
9 Has the audit committee considered the wider areas identified in CIPFA's Position Statement and whether it would be appropriate for the committee to undertake them?	Y			An audit committee can also support its authority by undertaking a wider role in other areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> considering governance, risk or control matters at the request of other committees or statutory officers <p><i>Covered under c) To review any issue referred to it by the Chief Executive, a Strategic Director, Monitoring Officer, Chief Financial</i></p>

			<p><i>Officer or any Council body as the Chair considers appropriate within the general Terms of Reference of the Committee;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with local standards and ethics committees to support ethical values <p>Covered</p> <p><i>(p) To engage with relevant committees to help support ethical values and reviewing arrangements to achieve those values as appropriate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing and monitoring treasury management arrangements in accordance with Treasury <p>Covered</p> <p><i>(j) To receive on an annual basis a report on the Treasury Management Strategy before approval by the Executive and Full Council.</i></p> <p><i>(k) To be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.</i></p> <p><i>NB performance is covered by the performance scrutiny committee</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (CIPFA, 2017) providing oversight of other public reports, such as the annual report. <p>The latter point is not currently included within the Audit Committee TOR</p>
10 Where coverage of core areas has been found to be	Y		No issues

limited, are plans in place to address this?				
11 Has the committee maintained its advisory role by not taking on any decision-making powers that are not in line with its core purpose?	Y			
Membership and support				
12 Has an effective audit committee structure and composition of the committee been selected? This should include:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> separation from the executive 	Y			No Executive members on the Audit Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an appropriate mix of knowledge and skills among the membership 	Y			Experienced Members on the Committee, including financial.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a size of committee that is not unwieldy 	Y			Size is appropriate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consideration has been given to the inclusion of at least one independent member (where it is not already a mandatory requirement) 	Y			One independent member has been appointed and part of the TOR
13 Have independent members appointed to the committee been recruited in an open and transparent way and approved by the full council or the PCC and chief constable as appropriate for the organisation?	Y			Open advertisement/approval Maximum 8 years appointment.
14 Does the chair of the committee have appropriate knowledge and skills?	Y			Experienced Member Supported by other members Qualified accountant (Independent member)

				<p>New Chair and other new members of the Audit Committee in 2021. This will be reflected in further training to members around skills and knowledge.</p> <p>Training plan will be developed</p>
15 Are arrangements in place to support the committee with briefings and training?	Y			<p>Audit Committee / IA / EA role (June 21)</p> <p>Financial statements</p> <p>Fraud</p> <p>Treasury</p> <p>Progress reports</p> <p>(Lincs) Audit Cttee forum</p>
16 Has the membership of the committee been assessed against the core knowledge and skills framework and found to be satisfactory?	Y			<p>Part of review</p> <p>Training will be given on core knowledge and skills – training plan</p>
17 Does the committee have good working relations with key people and organisations, including external audit, internal audit and the CFO?	Y			<p>Promote work/benefits of the Committee</p>
18 Is adequate secretariat and administrative support to the committee provided?	Y			<p>Changes to the committee work programme will be clearly identified within the covering report</p>
Effectiveness of the committee				
19 Has the committee obtained feedback on its performance from those interacting with the committee or relying on its work?	Y			<p>Informal</p> <p>Full Council – annual report</p>
20 Are meetings effective with a good level of discussion and engagement from all the members?	Y			<p>New members</p> <p>Skills / knowledge training will assist</p> <p>Review report recommendation wording - consider/comment and feedback rather than “note”</p> <p>Teams/Zoom not quite as effective as in person meetings</p>

21 Does the committee engage with a wide range of leaders and managers, including discussion of audit findings, risks and action plans with the responsible officers?	Y			Where appropriate Managers/AD's/Directors will attend Committee CX attended for Combined Assurance report Communicate with managers on role of committee and encourage attendance
22 Does the committee make recommendations for the improvement of governance, risk and control and are these acted on?	Y			Where appropriate within reports that are considered
23 Has the committee evaluated whether and how it is adding value to the organisation?	Y			Supporting the Governance framework Challenge/scrutiny Support to IA and officers where appropriate Chairs annual report to Council Other areas: Information governance Partnerships review
24 Does the committee have an action plan to improve any areas of weakness?	Y			An updated action plan will be developed and monitored through the work programme
25 Does the committee publish an annual report to account for its performance and explain its work?	Y			Annual report to Council

Appendix D. Audit committee members – knowledge and skills framework

CORE AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

General comments

Knowledge area	Details of core knowledge required	How the audit committee member is able to apply the knowledge	Comments
Organisational knowledge	<p>An overview of the governance structures of the authority and decision-making processes</p> <p>Knowledge of the organisational objectives and major functions of the authority</p>	<p>This knowledge will be core to most activities of the audit committee including review of the AGS, internal and external audit reports and risk registers</p>	<p>Constitution Committees/Portfolios Management structure</p> <p>Vision 2025 Projects/plans/partners</p>
Audit committee role and functions (Chapters 3 and 6)	<p>An understanding of the audit committee's role and place within the governance structures. Familiarity with the committee's terms of reference and accountability arrangements</p>	<p>This knowledge will enable the audit committee to prioritise its work in order to ensure it discharges its responsibilities under its terms of reference and to avoid overlapping the work of others</p>	<p>AC terms of reference AC effectiveness AC self-assessment CIPFA guidance</p> <p>AC Training in June 21</p>

	Knowledge of the purpose and role of the audit committee		
Governance (Chapter 4)	<p>Knowledge of the seven principles of the CIPFA/Solace Framework and the requirements of the AGS</p> <p>Knowledge of the local code of governance</p>	<p>The committee will review the local code of governance and consider how governance arrangements align to the principles in the framework</p> <p>The committee will plan the assurances it is to receive in order to adequately support the AGS</p> <p>The committee will review the AGS and consider how the authority is meeting the principles of good governance</p>	<p>Local Code of Governance</p> <p>AGS</p> <p>Audit Committee Work programme</p> <p>AGS significant issues monitoring</p>

<p>Internal audit (Chapter 4)</p>	<p>An awareness of the key principles of the PSIAS and the LGAN</p> <p>Knowledge of the arrangements for delivery of the internal audit service in the authority and how the role of the head of internal audit is fulfilled</p>	<p>The audit committee has oversight of the internal audit function and will monitor its adherence to professional internal audit standards</p> <p>The audit committee will review the assurances from internal audit work and will review the risk-based audit plan. The committee will also receive the annual report, including an opinion and information on conformance with professional standards</p> <p>In relying on the work of internal audit, the committee will need to be confident that professional standards are being followed</p>	<p>PSIAS and core areas</p> <p>Internal audit plan</p> <p>Annual IA report</p> <p>External assessment</p>
<p>Financial management and accounting (Chapter 4)</p>	<p>Awareness of the financial statements that a local authority must produce and the principles it must follow to produce them</p> <p>Understanding of good financial management principles</p> <p>Knowledge of how the organisation meets the requirements of the role of the CFO, as required by The Role of the Chief Financial</p>	<p>Reviewing the financial statements prior to publication, asking questions</p> <p>Receiving the external audit report and opinion on the financial audit</p> <p>Reviewing both external and internal audit recommendations relating to financial management and controls</p> <p>The audit committee should consider the role of the CFO</p>	<p>Financial statements</p> <p>Associated training</p> <p>Financial procedure rules</p> <p>Role of CFO – CIPFA</p> <p>Financial Management Code</p> <p>Financial management</p> <p>Financial resilience</p>

	Officer in Local Government (CIPFA, 2016) and the CIPFA Statement on the Role of Chief Financial Officers in Policing (2018)	and how this is met when reviewing the AGS	MTFS
External audit (Chapter 4)	<p>Knowledge of the role and functions of the external auditor and who currently undertakes this role</p> <p>Knowledge of the key reports and assurances that external audit will provide</p> <p>Knowledge about arrangements for the appointment of auditors and quality monitoring undertaken</p>	<p>The audit committee should meet with the external auditor regularly and receive their reports and opinions</p> <p>Monitoring external audit recommendations and maximising benefit from audit process</p> <p>The audit committee should monitor the relationship between the external auditor and the authority and support the delivery of an effective service</p>	<p>External auditor – Mazars</p> <p>External audit plan</p> <p>Progress reports</p> <p>AC Work programme</p> <p>PSAA</p> <p>Quality monitoring</p> <p>Monitoring external audit recommendations through the audit recommendations report</p>

Risk management (Chapter 4)	<p>Understanding of the principles of risk management, including linkage to good governance and decision making</p> <p>Knowledge of the risk management policy and strategy of the organisation</p> <p>Understanding of risk governance arrangements, including the role of members and of the audit committee</p>	<p>In reviewing the AGS, the committee will consider the robustness of the authority's risk management arrangements and should also have awareness of the major risks the authority faces</p> <p>Keeping up to date with the risk profile is necessary to support the review of a number of audit committee agenda items, including the risk-based internal audit plan, external audit plans and the explanatory foreword of the accounts. Typically, risk registers will be used to inform the committee</p> <p>The committee should also review reports and action plans to develop the application of risk management practice</p>	<p>Annual RM report / Risk strategy</p> <p>Strategic risk register</p> <p>Fraud risk register</p> <p>IA assurance</p> <p>Combined Assurance</p> <p>Role of members (TOR) / work programme</p> <p>Other Committee roles and reports (Executive review the strategic risk register; AC role is mainly one of the framework)</p>
Counter fraud (Chapter 4)	<p>An understanding of the main areas of fraud and corruption risk to which the organisation is exposed</p> <p>Knowledge of the principles of good fraud risk management practice in accordance with the Code of</p>	<p>Knowledge of fraud risks and good fraud risk management practice will be helpful when the committee reviews the organisation's fraud strategy and receives reports on the effectiveness of that strategy</p>	<p>Counter fraud strategy</p> <p>Fraud policies</p> <p>Fraud risk register</p> <p>Fraud reporting (6 monthly)</p>

	<p>Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014)</p> <p>Knowledge of the organisation's arrangements for tackling fraud</p>	<p>An assessment of arrangements should support the AGS and knowledge of good fraud risk management practice will support the audit committee member in reviewing that assessment</p>	<p>Fraud training</p> <p>Fraud partnerships</p>
<p>Values of good governance (Chapter 5)</p>	<p>Knowledge of the Seven Principles of Public Life</p> <p>Knowledge of the authority's key arrangements to uphold ethical standards for both members and staff</p> <p>Knowledge of the whistleblowing arrangements in the authority</p>	<p>The audit committee member will draw on this knowledge when reviewing governance issues and the AGS</p> <p>Oversight of the effectiveness of whistleblowing will be considered as part of the AGS.</p> <p>The audit committee member should know to whom concerns should be reported</p>	<p>Code of corporate governance</p> <p>AGS</p> <p>Member training</p> <p>Code of Conduct</p> <p>Whistleblowing arrangements (part of the counter fraud reports to Audit Committee)</p> <p>Ethics and engagement Committee</p> <p>Ethical governance</p>

<p>Treasury management (only if it is within the terms of reference of the committee to provide scrutiny) (Chapter 5)</p>	<p>Effective Scrutiny of Treasury Management is an assessment tool for reviewing the arrangements for undertaking scrutiny of treasury management. The key knowledge areas identified are: regulatory requirements treasury risks the organisation's treasury management strategy the organisation's policies and procedures in relation to treasury management</p> <p>See also Treasure Your Assets (CfPS, 2017)</p>	<p>Core knowledge on treasury management is essential for the committee undertaking the role of scrutiny</p>	<p>Treasury management strategy</p> <p>Treasury management training</p> <p>Role of Scrutiny</p>
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Appendix E Core Skills

This appendix provides a high-level review that incorporates the key principles set out in CIPFA's Position Statement and this publication. Where an audit committee has a high degree of performance against the good practice principles, then it is an indicator that the committee is soundly based and has in place a knowledgeable membership. These are the essential factors in developing an effective audit committee.

A regular self-assessment can be used to support the planning of the audit committee work programme and training plans. It can also inform an annual report.

This Appendix covers

- A) Key areas around purpose and governance
- B) Knowledge and skills matrices
- C) Effectiveness checklist

Audit committee members – knowledge and skills framework

CORE SKILLS

Skills	Key elements	How the audit committee member is able to apply the skill	Comments/any further training required?
Strategic thinking and understanding of materiality	Able to focus on material issues and overall position, rather than being side tracked by detail	When reviewing audit reports, findings will include areas of higher risk or materiality to the organisation, but may also	

		highlight more minor errors or control failures. The audit committee member will need to pitch their review at an appropriate level to avoid spending too much time on detail	
Questioning and constructive challenge	Able to frame questions that draw out relevant facts and explanations Challenging performance and seeking explanations while avoiding hostility or grandstanding	The audit committee will review reports and recommendations to address weaknesses in internal control. The audit committee member will seek to understand the reasons for weaknesses and ensure a solution is found	
Focus on improvement	Ensuring there is a clear plan of action and allocation of responsibility	The outcome of the audit committee will be to secure improvements to the governance, risk management or control of the organisation, including clearly defined actions and responsibilities Where errors or control failures have occurred, then the audit committee should seek assurances that appropriate action has been taken	

Able to balance practicality against theory	Able to understand the practical implications of recommendations to understand how they might work in practice	The audit committee should seek assurances that planned actions are practical and realistic	
Clear communication skills and focus on the needs of users	Support the use of plain English in communications, avoiding jargon, acronyms, etc	The audit committee will seek to ensure that external documents such as the AGS and the narrative report in the accounts are well written for a non-expert audience	
Objectivity	Evaluate information on the basis of evidence presented and avoiding bias or subjectivity	The audit committee will receive assurance reports and review risk registers. There may be differences of opinion about the significance of risk and the appropriate control responses and the committee member will need to weigh up differing views	
Meeting management skills	Chair the meetings effectively: summarise issues raised,	These skills are essential for the audit committee chair to	

	ensure all participants are able to contribute, focus on the outcome and actions from the meeting	help ensure that meetings stay on track and address the items on the agenda. The skills are desirable for all other members	
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Appendix F
Audit Committee Action Plan

	Potential area for improvement	Comment	Date
1	Assurance on value for money arrangements	Wait for the more detailed 21-22 review of governance and VFM by the external auditor Provide the updated CoIC value for money statement (February 2021)	September – December 2021 July 2021
2	Review of Governance arrangements for significant partnerships Including working with other audit committees/ committees and organisations	Key governance arrangements – annual report to Audit Committee	September 2021
3	Not in current TOR but consider oversight of other public reports – e.g. annual report	COLC reports EG Annual report Circulate to AC members Last report was Vision 2020 update - celebrating Vision 2020 (Feb 20) to Executive	To be reviewed to assess whether to change the TOR
4	Core knowledge and skills Develop and circulate briefing / training	Circulate Provide separate training on core knowledge and skills	By September 2021
5.	Further guidance to officers will be provided to ensure understanding of the committee role is clear.	Communicate with managers on role of committee and encourage attendance	By August 2021
6.	Promote work/benefits of the Committee		
7.	Any changes to the committee work programme will be clearly identified within the covering report		July 2021
8	Review report recommendation wording - consider/comment and feedback rather than “note		July 2021
9.	A general checklist of questions or question types would be useful		August 2021
10.	Lincolnshire Audit committee forum	Promote when this is re-instated	TBA
11	Would be useful to clarify, from the terms of reference, in terms of what the committee can /can't do.	Review TOR	July 2021

12	The TOR could be attached to each agenda	This will be attached to the work programme at each meeting	July 2021
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Draft Training plan

o	Existing training – Statement of accounts / Treasury / Work programme	As per Work programme
o	Training on Core knowledge and skills	By September 2021
o	Access to the Lincolnshire Audit Committee forum	TBA
o	Better Governance Forum Updates	July 2021 onwards
o	Counter fraud	By December 2021

SUBJECT: EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSESSMENT

REPORT BY: AUDIT MANAGER

LEAD OFFICER: JACLYN GIBSON, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report details the proposals for the 2022 External Quality Assessment (EQA).

2. Executive Summary

2.1 The External Quality Assessment (EQA) is a review of the processes and practices within the Internal Audit function, in line with auditing standards. The scope includes a technical and effectiveness review.

2.2 The EQA is undertaken every 5 years and must be completed by 31st March 2022.

3. Assessment

3.1 As the City Council works closely with Lincolnshire County Council as part of Assurance Lincolnshire it is proposed that we will jointly procure an external assessor. A final decision on the procurement route and companies/organisations to be invited has yet to be finalised. The last review was undertaken by CIPFA, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

3.2 The review involves a review of internal audit practice and audit work in line with standards as well as a wide range of meetings with members and officers.

The EQA can help:

- assess how well the organisation's internal audit function conforms to applicable standards, such as the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS)
- evaluate the performance of your internal audit in light of the established Charter and expectations of senior management; and
- identify areas of improvement, including how the value of the internal audit can be enhanced.

4. Delegation

4.1 As the final procurement options have yet to be finalised it is proposed that delegated authority is granted to the Chief Finance Officer and the Chair of the Audit Committee to agree the way forward. Any decision will be reported back to Committee.

4.2 The outcomes of the assessment and any proposed recommendations will also be reported back to this Committee following completion of the assessment.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 An effective internal audit service is one way to help the Council ensures that it discharges its functions in accordance with its expressed priorities, as set out in Vision 2025, and that it does so in accordance with statutory requirements.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance – the EQA fee is expected to be relatively low cost and by combining with the County Council should ensure better value for money. The cost of assessment will be funded from within existing cash limited budgets.

6.2. Legal Implications including Procurement Rules – The Council is required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 to undertake an adequate and effective internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control. These proper practices include conformance with audit standards which includes the EQA review requirement.

7. Recommendation

7.1 Members note the report and agree to the delegation arrangements outlined in para 4 above.

Key Decision	No
Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply?	No
Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?	No
How many appendices does the report contain?	None
List of Background Papers:	N/A
Lead Officer:	Jaclyn Gibson, Chief Finance Officer Telephone 873258

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

One

List of Background Papers:

None

Lead Officer:

Audit Manager, Telephone 873321

AUDIT COMMITTEE AUDIT WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2021/22

Meeting dates	Audit Items – Revised Agenda	Training (Suggested)
6 July 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Internal Audit Report • Annual Governance Statement (Draft) • Counter Fraud Policies – Counter Fraud Strategy • Annual Counter Fraud report • Code of Corporate Governance • External Audit - Audit Completion report (19/20) • External audit – annual audit letter (19-20) • Audit Committee Work Programme • Statement of Accounts 19/20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10th June Audit Committee • Training, Member Development
15 July 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant audit – approval 	(Additional meeting)
22 July 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External Audit Progress report • Internal Audit Progress report • Audit recommendations. • Risk Management Annual Update • Review of effectiveness (IA/Audit Committee) • Statement of Accounts (Draft)* • EQA report (approach) • Audit Committee Work Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government Financial Statements explained (in advance of the meeting) • Audit Committee effectiveness (general audit committee training and knowledge/skills) (Date to be confirmed)

<p>23 Sept 21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit progress report • Annual Complaints report • Information Governance Update • Counter Fraud policies • Audit Committee Work Programme • Internal Audit Plan 21-22 • Partnership Governance 	<p>Counter Fraud (e-learning)</p>
<p>TBC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Accounts (including Annual Governance Statement) (Final) – • External Audit – Audit Completion report (ISA 260 and Letter of Representation) • Assessment of Going Concern Status 	
<p>14 Dec 21</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six month Counter Fraud report • Code of Corporate Governance (update) • Audit Committee Work Programme • Internal Audit progress report • Annual Governance Statement - monitoring • Audit Committee Work Programme • Fraud risk register • Audit recommendations report 	
<p>1 Feb 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress report • Treasury management policy and strategy (consultation prior to approval by Council) • Counter fraud policies • Terms of Reference review - Internal Audit (Audit Charter) • Terms of Reference review – Audit Committee • Audit / Audit Committee effectiveness • Audit Committee Work Programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIPFA Financial Management Code Assessment 	
<p>22 Mar 22</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress report • Audit recommendations report • Combined Assurance report • Annual Governance Statement –update report • Internal Audit Strategy and Plan 22-23 • Risk Management Strategy / annual report • Statement on Accounting Policies • External Audit Inquiries – 20/21 Statement of Accounts (those charged with governance) • IAS19 – Assumptions used to calculate pension entries in the Statement of Accounts and Audit Regulations • External Audit plan update report • Information Governance update • Audit Committee Work Programme • EQA final report 	

A private meeting between the Audit Committee and internal and external audit managers can be arranged outside of the meeting agenda times.

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SUBJECT: RISK MANAGEMENT – ANNUAL UPDATE

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

LEAD OFFICER: JACLYN GIBSON, CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report details the risk management framework adopted by the Council and the risk management activity during 2020-21.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The Council's Risk Management Strategy is presented for Members information. The Strategy is based on a risk appetite methodology approach to the management of the Council's risks that reflect the environment in which it operates.
- 2.2 A key element of the Council's management of its risks is the development and monitoring of the key strategic risks, those which could affect the Council's ability to achieve its priorities during the year. The Council's Strategic Risk Register currently identifies sixteen strategic risks.
- 2.3 City of Lincoln Council, like all other local authorities, has had to make dramatic changes as a result of the three national lockdowns resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, not only to ensure that we kept our critical services functioning, but also to deliver a community leadership role for our city in a time of crisis. Throughout this period the Council has continued to actively manage the strategic, operational and project risks it faces.
- 2.4 As a result, the council was not in a position to produce an annual risk management report in April 2020 due to reprioritising workloads and managing risk management in alternative ways.

3. Background

- 3.1 Risk management is about controlling, transferring and living with risks so the focus is on becoming risk aware, not risk averse. This puts the Council in an informed position to make the right decisions and enable us to manage risk.
- 3.2 As a reminder to Members specific elements of Risk Management are outsourced to Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) Assurance Lincolnshire service in order to provide the level of expertise that we require. This includes support in the development of risk management strategies and approaches along with access to the County Council's resources i.e. training, provision of documentation, toolkits. The development and monitoring of the Council's strategic, operational and project risk registers however remains a role that is undertaken by the Council through the Corporate Management Team and Directorate Management Teams.

- 3.3 As part of the reporting protocol within the current Risk Management Strategy both the Executive Committee and Performance Scrutiny Committee receive reports on the Strategic Risk Register to consider the status and movement of all strategic risks at that particular point in time.

4. Risk Management Strategy

- 4.1 There have been no significant changes to the Strategy or the Council's approach to risk management, the Strategy is attached at Appendix A. The Strategy is required to be reviewed every three years with the next review during 2021.
- 4.2 "Risk appetite" can be defined as the amount of risk that an organisation is willing to take on in pursuit of value, or the total impact of risk an organisation is prepared to accept in its pursuit of its strategic objectives. Defining the Council's risk appetite provides the strategic guidance necessary for decision making.
- 4.3 All Members, senior officers and officers with risk management roles and responsibilities have been provided with training and guidance on the 'risk appetite' approach. For officers this is supplemented by a Risk Management Toolkit which sits alongside the Strategy as a practical guide for officers undertaking their risk management responsibilities.

5. Formulation of the Strategic Risk Register

- 5.1 The Council's Strategic Risk Register is developed under the risk appetite methodology.
- 5.2 The Strategic Risk Register for 2020-21 was initially formulated by the Corporate Leadership Team and has subsequently been reviewed by Corporate Management Team and risk owners throughout 2020-21 during the pandemic. This registered contained ten strategic risk as follows:
- 1) Failure to engage & influence effectively the Council's strategic partners, council staff and all stakeholders to deliver against e.g. Council's Vision 2025.
 - 2) Failure to deliver a sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy (that supports delivery of Vision 2025).
 - 3) Failure to deliver the Towards Financial Sustainability Programme whilst ensuring the resilience of the Council.
 - 4) Failure to ensure compliance with statutory duties/functions and appropriate governance arrangements are in place.
 - 5) Failure to protect the local authority's vision 2025 due to changing structures and relationships in local government and impact on size, scale and scope of the Council.
 - 6) Unable to meet the emerging changes required in the Council's culture, behaviour and skills to support the delivery of the council's Vision 2020/2025 and the transformational journey to one Council approach.

- 7) Insufficient levels of resilience and capacity exist in order to deliver key strategic projects & services within the Council.
- 8) Decline in the economic prosperity within the City Centre.
- 9) Failure to mitigate against the implications for the Council following the outcome of Brexit.
- 10) Failure to deliver key strategic projects.

5.3 Six new strategic risks emerged during 2020-21:

- 11) Failure of the Council's key contractors and partners to remain sustainable and continue to deliver value for money
- 12) Failure to work in partnership to sustain support to vulnerable residents post COVID19
- 13) Failure to put in place safe working practices and social distancing measures to protect officers and service users
- 14) Failure to comply with current safeguarding legislation and procedures
- 15) Failure to Meet the councils PREVENT duties
- 16) Failure to mitigate against the risk of a successful cyber-attack against the council with significant / critical impact

A copy of the latest Strategic Risk Register is attached at Appendix B (Part B item only).

5.4 Each risk is scored based on likelihood and impact to allow prioritisation of the risks as High (Red), Medium (Amber), or Low (Green) with their ownership.

5.5 The status of the sixteen strategic risks currently identified is as follows:

No:	Risk Rating	Likelihood	Impact
1	Amber/Medium	Possible	Major
2	Red/High	Probable	Critical
3	Amber/Medium	Probable	Major
4	Amber/Medium	Possible	Major
5	Amber/Medium	Possible	Major
6	Amber/Medium	Probable	Major
7	Red/High	Almost Certain	Major
8	Amber/Medium	Probable	Major
9	Green/Low	Hardly Ever	Minor
10	Amber/Medium	Probable	Major
11	Red/High	Probable	Critical
12	Amber/Medium	Possible	Major
13	Amber/Medium	Possible	Major
14	Red/High	Probable	Critical
15	Amber/High	Possible	Critical
16	Red/High	Probable	Critical

- 5.6 The application of risk appetite to each of the sixteen risks has also been undertaken, this determines the level and nature of controls that are either in place or need to be implemented. This ensures that the controls in place are proportionate to the risk itself and the Council's appetite for risk within that area.
- 5.7 As the Strategic Risk Register is a live document it is subject to continuous review and any risks identified i.e. from Directorates may receive consideration for inclusion accordingly. This is demonstrated by the escalation of new risks incorporated into the register during 2020-21.

6. Formulation of the Directorate (Operational) Risk Registers

- 6.1 Each Directorate identify the key risks within their service areas resulting in the formulation of a Directorate Risk Register. These registers contain those risks that are mainly of an operational nature and may only concern one particular directorate or department.
- 6.2 Review of the Register and respective mitigation/action plans are then undertaken at the Directorate Management Team meetings (DMT's) usually on a quarterly basis. Any major risks identified by Directorates can also be elevated for consideration to be added to the Strategic Risk Register as required.
- 6.3 During the pandemic a slightly different approach was undertaken, as well as monitoring at DMT's, a Corporate Leadership Team meeting was undertaken weekly which consisted of Chief Executive, Directors, Assistant Directors and key business continuity officers, alongside a Lincs Emergency Planning colleague who went through key risks to the organisation, ensuring that the council were compiling with government guidelines, safety to our communities by reviewing services regularly and keeping our staff safe whilst working either at home or out in our communities.
- 6.4 Assurance has been given by Directorates that the Risk Registers and mitigation/actions plans have been reviewed at their Directorate Management Team meetings and are up to date or in the process of undergoing a whole scale review in preparation for post pandemic Lincoln.
- 6.5 In addition to the Directorate Risk Registers individual projects and new policies, either of a service or strategic nature are required to develop and monitor a project risk register. These registers are overseen by the relevant operational boards, e.g., Towards Financial Sustainability Programme Team, Western Growth Programme Board and Dewint Court Project Board.

7. Training

- 7.1 Risk Management training is made available to the City of Lincoln Council via Lincolnshire County Council.
- 7.2 A comprehensive training programme for all officers who have roles and responsibility for risk management is delivered every 2 years. A series of training is being identified for the following groups as this is now due:
- Officers including CLT and project managers.

- Members

In addition, individual training and support is provided to project officers as and when requested.

An e-learning package for managers/project officers is available on City People for the purpose of refresher training and for new staff as part of their induction process.

8. Risk Management Benchmarking

8.1 Although the Council has historically benefited from participating in the benchmarking exercise undertaken by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) 2015 was the final year that it participated.

8.2 During the pandemic the Greater Lincolnshire Risk Management Group (GLRMG) has not met due to work priorities but they would usually conduct their own benchmarking exercise between the districts within Lincolnshire, every 2 years. This has been a much simpler way of benchmarking and enables us to share best practice without being too onerous.

The membership includes Lincolnshire district Councils and the assessment is based on a maturity level on a scale of 1-5, where level 5 is the highest level of maturity. The assessment is based upon the principals of best practice in risk management as recognised by;

- The International Standard ISO31000
- The British Standard BS31100:2008
- HM Treasury
- The institute of Risk management, and
- ALARM, the Public Risk Management Association

8.3 The benchmarking is measured in the following areas and our last outcome 2 years ago was as follows:

- Leadership and Management – level 4
- Strategy and Policy – level 4
- People – level 4
- Partnership , Shared Risk and Resources – level 3
- Processes – level 4
- Risk Handling and Assurance – level 3
- Outcomes and Delivery – level 4

The next benchmarking exercise is due to be conducted in 2021-22.

8.4 The Council through the support from Lincolnshire County Council have numerous other avenues to provide assurance on our risk management practices through:

- The Forum for Risk Management in the Public Sector (ALARM) and have been updating their Partnership guidance in gaining assurances on risk management through partnerships and this work will continue into 2020-21 which we will input into and review throughout the year.

- East Midlands Risk Management Group distribute surveys regularly and should we wish we can participate again through our support from Lincolnshire County Council.

9. Greater Lincolnshire Risk Management Group (GLRMG)

- 9.1 The Principal Risk Officer from Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) represents the City of Lincoln Council at GLRMG and updates the Risk Advisory Group of GLRMG activity. Reflecting the reduction of dedicated risk management resources with the local authorities and a move to joint support through LCC and embedment of working practices into the day to day work of all officers. Meetings did not take place during the pandemic but the Group has recently met and have undertaken a review of the past year sharing knowledge and learning. Work is ongoing to share risks and commence a programme of work, coordinating approaches and maximising the use of resources.

The main focus of the meetings during 2021-22:

- Comparison exercise of each Authorities Strategic Risk Registers, identifying common themes/risks and responses.
- Confirmation of governance for each authority, sharing learning and use of risk management champions in each authority
- Review of risk management software sharing good practice
- Division of benchmarking survey for Greater Lincs
- Revision of Partnership Risk Registers

10. Internal Audit

- 10.1 An internal Audit was undertaken in 2020-21 and the overall level assurance opinion was substantial. Internal Audits are usually conducted every two years.
- 10.2 There was one improvement required in relation to how some aspects of operational risk management currently operate, being;
- Report Directorate risk registers to CMT as part of the quarterly SRR review

This recommendation has been actioned. A copy of the audit report is set out at Appendix C.

11. Strategic Priorities

- 11.1 Sound risk management is one way in which the Council ensures that it discharges its functions in accordance with its expressed priorities, as set out in the draft Strategic Plan/Vision 2025, and that it does so in accordance with statutory requirements.

12. Organisational Impacts

- 12.1 Finance – There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of this report. The Council's Strategic Risk Register contains two specific risks in relation to the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Towards Financial Sustainability Programme.

12.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules – The Council is required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 to have a sound system of Internal Control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council’s functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk. The maintenance and considerations about risk, such as provided in this report, is part of the way in which the Council fulfils this duty.

13. Risk Implications

13.1 This report relates to overall risk management, the Audit Committee should know about the most significant risks facing the Council and be assured that the risk management framework is operating effectively.

14. Recommendation

14.1 Members consider and comment upon the Risk Management framework adopted by the Council and also the Risk Management activity undertaken during the year.

Key Decision No

Do the Exempt Information Categories Apply? No

Call in and Urgency: Is the decision one to which Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply? No

How many appendices does the report contain? Three
Appendix B is Part B only

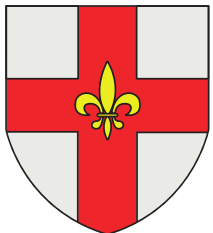
List of Background Papers: N/A

Lead Officer: Jaclyn Gibson, Chief Finance Officer
Telephone 873258

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Our Strategy

RISK MANAGEMENT



CITY OF
Lincoln
COUNCIL²⁸³



Introduction

1.

The Risk Management Strategy recognises that the next few years will continue to present challenges for the Council in delivering its services and its Vision 2020 priorities, with the need to identify and manage risks being even more crucial. As the nature of the Council's funding continues to fundamentally change and become more uncertain, and as a result of the need to identify new sources of income the Council will inevitably be forced to have more of an appetite for risk. Effective management of risk is therefore essential in ensuring that the Council is prepared for the challenges ahead and taking a 'well measured' risk approach.

Effective risk management is also a key element of corporate governance and is recognised as such in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (through the Annual Governance Statement).

Aim

2..

The aim of this strategy is to provide a framework and process that enables the Council to manage uncertainty in a systematic, effective, consistent and efficient way. This supports informed decision making thereby enabling opportunities to be exploited or action to be taken to mitigate or manage, to an acceptable level, the key risks facing services and the successful delivery of the Vision 2020.

It supports the Council's Vision 2020 of 'Together, let's deliver Lincoln's ambitious future and the strategic priorities of:

- Let's reduce inequality
- Let's deliver quality housing
- Let's drive economic growth
- Let's enhance our remarkable place

It seeks to encourage well measured risk taking where it is likely to support the Council in delivering transformed services required within the dynamically changing environment of local government.

OBJECTIVES

3. Objectives

This Risk Management Strategy seeks to achieve a number of specific objectives:

- To ensure that there is a strategic approach to risk management to make better informed decisions which is vital to successful transformational change.
- To set a 'tone from the top' on the level of risk we are prepared to accept on our different service delivery activities and priorities. Understanding our 'Risk Appetite' and acknowledging that how we 'think about risk' will be different depending on the context of corporate impact and sensitivity.
- To acknowledge that even with good risk management and our best endeavours – things will go wrong. Where this happens we use the lessons learnt to try and prevent it from happening again.
- To develop leadership capacity and skills in having a clear understanding of the risks facing the Council in delivering our services and transformational change and how we manage these risks. Risk management should be integral to how we run Council business/services.
- To support a culture of well measured risk taking throughout the Councils business, including strategic, change and operational.
- To ensure that our approach to risk management is proportionate to the decision being made.
- To ensure that we have effective monitoring and Corporate Management/Executive intelligence on the key risks facing the Council.
- To ensure that we have good practice tools to support management of risks in place, which are applied consistently throughout the Council

Policy

Framework

4.

In order to achieve the strategy objectives the following policy and principles underpin the Council's risk management arrangements;

- Risk management will be embedded into business critical processes ensuring that risks are considered as part of the formulation of Council plans (service / strategic / financial), projects, policies and performance.
- A simple risk management process will be in place which;
 - identifies, understands, and manages key risks affecting the Council, at both corporate/strategic and operational levels
 - sets risk ownership and accountabilities
 - considers risks for likelihood and impact
 - identifies mitigating controls with clear allocation of responsibility - thinking about the level of risk, appetite for risk, reward, impact and cost of control measures (responding in a balanced way).
 - includes risks relating to strategic partnerships
 - ensures that processes include risk monitoring
- Key responsibilities, for officers, members, and committee including reporting structures will be clearly set out.
- A senior officer (**Jaclyn Gibson, Chief Finance Officer**) and member champion (**Councillor Ric Metcalfe, Leader**) have been identified who will take overall responsibility for risk management.
- Processes are cascaded effectively to officers and members, using adequate mentoring facilitation and training.
- Processes will be in place to consider and disseminate risk management best practice.



Strategy

5.

The Council's Risk Appetite statement is **Creative & Aware**:

*"The Council wishes to be **creative** and open to considering all potential delivery options with well measured risk taking whilst being **aware** of the impacts of its key decisions. The Council is prepared to 'take leaps of faith' on this basis, with an acceptance that it might not always work out as planned. As an authority it is prepared to take calculated risks to achieve its vision and strategic priorities".*

This means that the Council's risk and assurance systems need to be working well so to create an environment of 'no surprises'.

Whilst working within this overall context – 'tone from the top' – it is acknowledged that the risk appetite will vary depending on the nature of the service. For example the Council's appetite for risk taking on Health & Safety is more cautious.

The Council's approach to risk management is proportionate to the decision being made or the impact of changes to service delivery/strategies. Risk management arrangements enable the Council to manage uncertainty in a systematic way at all levels of the Council's business – as shown below:

Strategic

Future direction of the business

Change

Turning strategy into action including Programme, Project and Management of Change

Operational

Day-to-day operations including people, customers, processes, information security, finance, business continuity etc.

A formal risk assessment, producing a risk register, is not required for everything the Council does. Risk Registers are only required for:

- Strategic Risks
- Significant Directorate Operational Risks
- Key projects and programmes determined by the Vision 2020 and Project Management guidance.
- New service strategies that have a greater impact on people, finance and the Council.

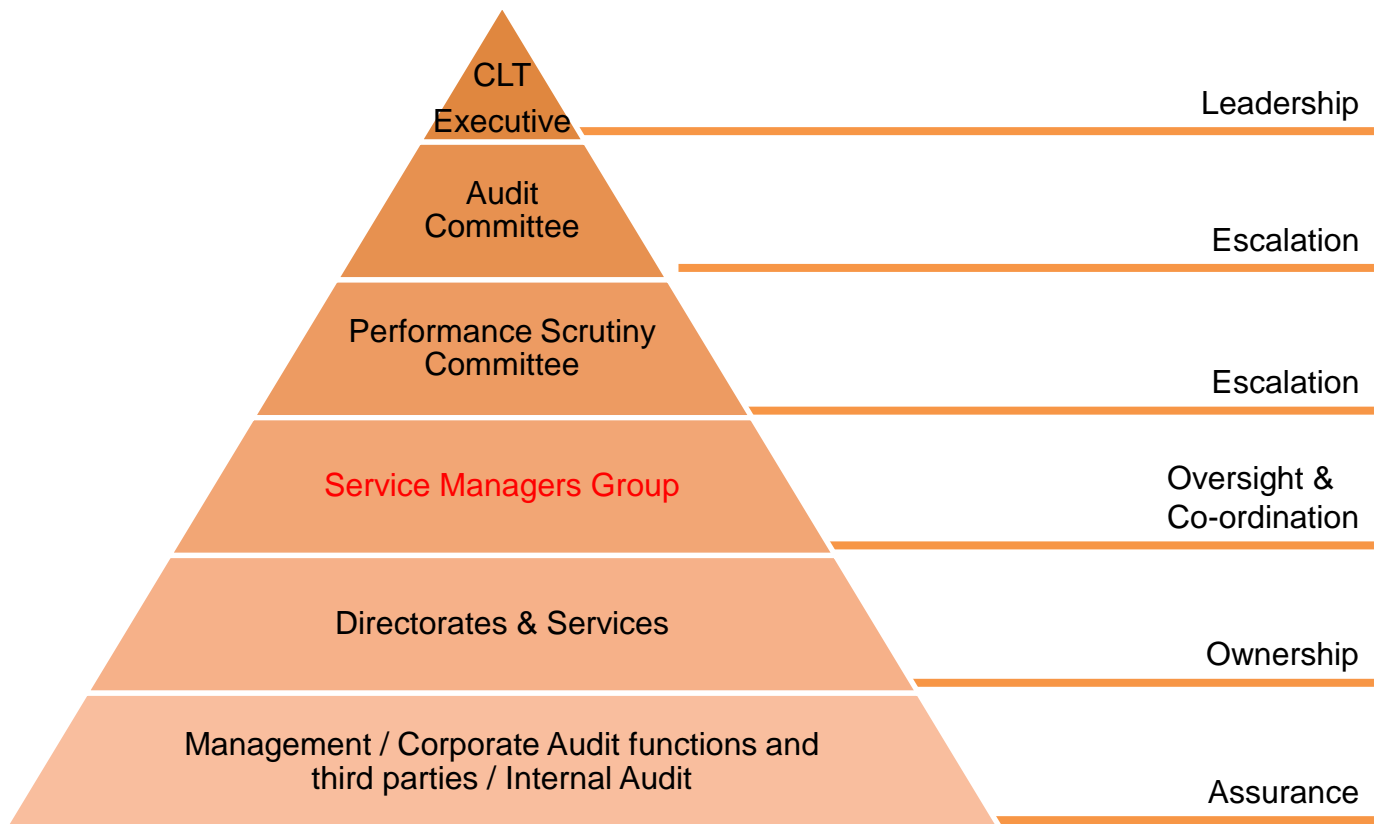
All key decisions presented to the Executive must clearly show the key risks associated with the decision (recommendations), the potential impact and how these will be managed. This helps promote informed decision making, particularly in an environment of uncertainty and change.

Officer and Member awareness is a key component of successfully embedding risk management arrangements; specific training **has been provided** to officers and members with risk management responsibilities with general awareness training provided for other officers and members. Specific Risk Management Guidance which sets out the Council's requirements and processes and gives people the tools to help them identify and manage risks effectively is also available for officers.

Roles and Responsibilities

6.

The Roles and Responsibilities for risk management are as follows:



Within this structure, each party has the following key roles:

The Executive and Corporate Leadership Team, on the top of the pyramid, has the ultimate accountability for the risk and related control environment and is responsible for approving and reviewing risk policies and setting the level of risk the council is prepared to accept – the ‘risk appetite’.

The Audit Committee is responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of the Council’s risk management arrangements, escalating issues to the Corporate Management Team/Executive.

The Performance Scrutiny Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Council’s Strategic Risks are effectively managed, escalating issues to the Executive.

The Service Managers forum is responsible for the facilitation and co-ordination of risk management activity across the Council.

Directorates and Services are the ‘risk takers’ and are responsible for identifying, assessing, measuring, monitoring and reporting significant risks associated with their functions and activities.

6. Continued

As part of the Council's combined assurance model, management, third parties and Internal Audit give assurance on the management of risks and the operational/performance controls.

Whilst effective risk management is integral to how services are run, the Council in conjunction with the Strategic Risk Management Team at Lincolnshire County Council helps support management and promote good practice. The key roles being:

- To co-ordinate and maintain the Council's Strategic Risk Register.
- To develop and co-ordinate the implementation of the Risk Management Strategy.
- Provide guidance on risk management.
- To support Members and Officers to help them identify and manage risks facing the Council.
- Promote good risk management through training and awareness events/publications.
- Measuring/monitoring the successful implementation of the Risk Management Strategy.

Review

7.

This Strategy will be reviewed at least every three years and any significant amendments reported to the Council's Executive for approval.

Revised:

February 2017 (no significant amendments).

July 2018 (no significant amendments).



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For All Your Assurance Needs



Internal Audit Report

Risk Management

Final

27th May 2021

What we do best...

Innovative assurance services

Specialists at internal audit

Comprehensive risk management

Experts in countering fraud

...and what sets us apart

Unrivalled best value to our customers

Existing strong regional public sector partnership

Auditors with the knowledge and expertise to get the job done

Already working extensively with the not-for-profit and third sector

Contents

The contacts at Assurance Lincolnshire with this review are:

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Background and Context

Each year Internal Audit must produce an Annual Report, part of which is to give an opinion on the Council's risk management arrangements.

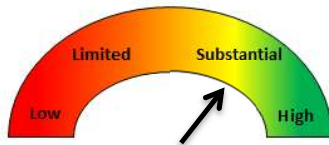
A risk management audit has not been undertaken in 2020/21 so it has been necessary to do a high level review to inform the Annual Report.

Risk management was given a Green assurance rating by management in the 2020/21 Combined Assurance review.

Scope

The purpose of the audit was to determine how all aspects of the risk management framework is operating (implementation of the corporate Strategy and Framework at strategic and operational levels, and in other areas of the business – programmes, projects, financial planning, etc).

Executive Summary



Substantial Assurance

Risk	Rating (R-A-G)	Recommendations	
		High	Medium
Risk 1 – The Risk Management Framework is not embedded, and risk management actions are not being monitored.	Green	1	0

Key Messages



There is a current Risk Management Strategy, which states that the Council’s risk appetite is ‘Creative and Aware’. The Strategy sets out the responsibilities for risk management at strategic and operational levels.

The Strategic risk register is being actively reviewed each quarter by CMT and presented to the Executive. Strategic risks have an owner and any actions have a target date. In the past year five new risks have been added (mostly connected to Covid) and three risks have been re-scored. The SRR does not currently include a specific Cyber Security or associated ICT risk, but this already due to be included in the next update.

Directorate risk registers are, on the whole, being updated on a quarterly basis. However, the Major Developments risk register was last updated in May 2020. Whilst it is appreciated that the work of this directorate is largely project based and there were significant other pressures during 2020/21 the same issue of infrequent reviews has been found for the last three years and a high priority recommendation has been made to introduce a robust process to ensure that regular reviews are undertaken in all directorates.

The Fraud risk register was refreshed in December 2020 and presented to the Audit committee in February 2021

Key Messages



Risk management is operating in other areas such as ICT, programme and project management, Medium Term Financial Planning, Brexit preparation and committee reporting.

Due to Covid and the need to prioritise resources some actions due in 2020/21 were postponed to 2021/22;

- A review of the Risk Management Strategy and Framework
- Communication and training on the RM Framework

We would like to thank Lara Trickett for her help in undertaking this review.

Managing your risks



Good risk management, including maintaining risk registers, helps you to identify, understand and reduce the chance of risks having a negative impact on achievement of your objectives.

The Strategic and Directorate risk registers should continue to be regularly updated to reflect the change in the risk environment caused by the Covid-19 virus.

Management Response

Management Response



We welcome the findings of this audit and assurance that risk management arrangements are operating well. The impact of Covid19 on the Council's resources has meant that some areas of risk management have had to be postponed during 2020/21 but these are due to be progressed during 2021/22.

Provided by the Chief Finance Officer.

Action Plan

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1	Risk Description	Current Rating	Target Rating
	The Risk Management Framework is not embedded, and risk management actions are not being monitored.	GREEN	GREEN
Findings			
<p><u>Review of Directorate Risk Registers</u> Directorate risk registers are, on the whole, being updated on a quarterly basis. However, the Major Developments risk register was last updated in May 2020. Whilst it is appreciated that there were significant other pressures during 2020/21 the same issue of infrequent reviews has been found in RM audits for the last three years.</p> <p>In a previous review Directorate risk registers were going to be reported to CMT alongside the SRR to help highlight any out of date registers, and to allow any red Directorate risks to be considered for inclusion on the SRR. For this to work it is important that Directorate risk registers are kept up to date.</p>			
Implications			
<p>Risks and any related risk actions may be out of date. Key Directorate risks may not be considered for inclusion in the SRR.</p>			
Recommendation			Priority level
<p>Introduce a robust process to ensure that Directorate risk register reviews are undertaken. Report Directorate risk registers to CMT as part of the quarterly SRR review.</p>			High
Agreed Action		Responsibility	Implementation date
<p>Directorate risk registers will continue to be chased. Rather than attaching each of the directorate risk registers on the report to CMT information will be included as to when they were last updated and what the red risks are.</p>		<p>Chief Finance Officer & Business Management Team Leader</p>	<p>June 21</p>

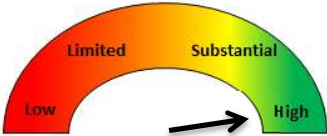
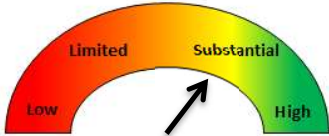
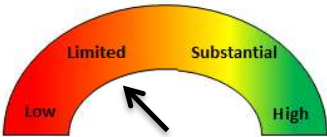
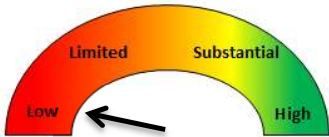
Advisory Points - Adding Value through Efficiencies

The following items are advisory recommendations / comments arising from the audit, which management may wish to consider implementing to improve efficiency of the system or performance.

Ref	Finding	Advice
AP1	There are none.	

Appendix 1 - Assurance Definitions

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High	Substantial
<p>Our critical review or assessment on the activity gives us a high level of confidence on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and the operation of controls and / or performance.</p>  <p>The risk of the activity not achieving its objectives or outcomes is low. Controls have been evaluated as adequate, appropriate and are operating effectively.</p>	<p>Our critical review or assessment on the activity gives us a substantial level of confidence (assurance) on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and operation of controls and / or performance.</p>  <p>There are some improvements needed in the application of controls to manage risks. However, the controls have been evaluated as adequate, appropriate and operating sufficiently so that the risk of the activity not achieving its objectives is medium to low.</p>
Limited	Low
<p>Our critical review or assessment on the activity gives us a limited level of confidence on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and operation of controls and / or performance.</p>  <p>The controls to manage the key risks were found not always to be operating or are inadequate. Therefore, the controls evaluated are unlikely to give a reasonable level of confidence (assurance) that the risks are being managed effectively. It is unlikely that the activity will achieve its objectives.</p>	<p>Our critical review or assessment on the activity identified significant concerns on service delivery arrangements, management of risks, and operation of controls and / or performance.</p>  <p>There are either gaps in the control framework managing the key risks or the controls have been evaluated as not adequate, appropriate or are not being effectively operated. Therefore the risk of the activity not achieving its objectives is high.</p>

Appendix 1 - Assurance Definitions

Action Priority	
High	Immediate management attention is required - an internal control or risk issue where there is a high certainty of: substantial loss / non-compliance with corporate strategies, policies or values / serious reputational damage / adverse regulatory impact and / or material fines (action taken usually within 3 months).
Medium	Timely management action is warranted - an internal control or risk issue that could lead to financial loss / reputational damage / adverse regulatory impact, public sanction and / or immaterial fines (action taken usually within 6 to 12 months).

Appendix 2 – Distribution List

Distribution List



Chief Executive

Directors

Chief Finance Officer

Business Management Team Leader

Disclaimer

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during our internal audit work. Our quality assurance processes ensure that our work is conducted in conformance with the UK Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and that the information contained in this report is as accurate as possible – we do not provide absolute assurance that material errors, fraud or loss do not exist.

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SUBJECT:	EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC
DIRECTORATE:	CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TOWN CLERK
REPORT AUTHOR:	CAROLYN WHEATER, MONITORING OFFICER

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise members that any agenda items following this report are considered to contain exempt or confidential information for the reasons specified on the front page of the agenda for this meeting.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the press and public be excluded from the meeting at this point as it is likely that if members of the press or public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt or confidential information.

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