Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023

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Staffordshire County Council

Contents

Introduction

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

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

The Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 was available for inspection from 1 June to 14 July 2023. The formal audit of our accounts began on X, and we received an unqualified opinion on the accounts on X. This means that, in the auditors' opinion, our accounts presented a true and fair view of our financial position.

Our external auditors are Ernst and Young LLP. Their address is:
Ernst & Young LLP
No 1 Colmore Square
Birmingham
B4 6HQ.

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

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

Narrative Statement by the Director of Finance

This provides a brief background to the budget for 2022/2023, the final financial position and an assessment of our financial prospects in the future.

Statement of Accounting Policies

This specifies the accounting practices we have used to prepare the accounts. We provide other notes to explain the information we have given. We have prepared the accounts and statements in line with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom, which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). If we have not been able to do this fully, we say so in the accompanying notes. The Code of Practice is updated each year and the new Standards coming into effect in 2022/2023 have not had a material impact on the accounts.

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Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

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

The Movement in Reserves Statement

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

Balance Sheet

This sets out our financial position on 31 March 2023 and includes all our funds apart from the Staffordshire Pension Fund.

Cash Flow Statement

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

Staffordshire Pension Fund

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

Glossary

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

Narrative Statement by the Director of Finance

Introduction

I am pleased to introduce our statement of accounts for 2022/2023.

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

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

The County Council's Vision

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

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

- Be able to access more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth;
- Live in thriving and sustainable communities;
- Be healthier and independent for longer.

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

Political and Democratic Structures

At the end of March 2023, the County Council was made up of 62 councillors, controlled by the Conservatives. The current political composition is as follows:

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

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

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

Revenue Budget

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

The County Council approved a revenue budget of £567.8 million on providing services during 2022/2023. This money came from government grants of £57.3 million, council tax of £411.2 million (after adjusting for any surplus or deficit), £111.7 million of business rates and a £12.4m contribution to reserves. Staffordshire has a good track record of generating cost reductions and the five-year MTFS to 2026/2027 includes a total of £19.7 million identified reductions.

In 2016/2017, the government first allowed local authorities to raise additional money from council tax for the costs of adult social care. However, the government has set limits on how much this precept can be increased and in 2022/2023, the limit was 1% for the Adult Social Care precept, which was in addition to the general limit above which a referendum would be required. The County Council increased its council tax by 2.99% in 2022/2023 and this was split into 1% for the Adult Social Care precept and 1.99% for the general precept. Most other local authorities approved similar increases and Staffordshire's council tax rate remained among the lowest of any English County Council in 2022/2023.

The County Council again became part of a business rates pool in this year. The Pool includes all authorities in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, that is all District and Borough Councils, the City Council and the Office for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. This means that all income generated from business rates is kept within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and an agreed distribution methodology shares the additional income between all authorities involved.

When the budget for 2022/2023 was approved by the County Council on 10th February 2022, the country had emerged from the national Covid-related restrictions and people were returning to normal activities with the economy recovering. A return to normal activities also signified increases in demand for Adults' and Children's Services. As the markets returned to normal and the global economy began to recover, there were significant supply chain issues impacting around the world. As a result, inflation began to rise, driven by increasing fuel and energy prices and increasing costs of raw materials. In December 2021, the Bank of England raised interest rates for the first time in three years, bringing them to 0.25%. However, just two weeks after the budget was approved, Russia invaded Ukraine which then caused a sharp increase in fuel and energy prices driving inflation upwards.

Since the start of the 2022/2023 financial year, the country has been facing increasing inflationary pressures with interest rates rising to try and combat inflation. This has had an impact on the County Council as well as residents in Staffordshire. Rising inflation was felt across all services but particularly in Transport due to fuel prices, Highways due to construction materials and in Children's due to placement costs. The Contingency budget was set at £10 million at the start of the year and this has been fully spent with £6 million being allocated to Children's Services at Quarter One. Children's Services have seen an increase in demand alongside increases in placement costs which have led to an overspend being forecast in this service area since the start of the year.

Final Outturn

Services spent £11.3 million more than the budget for their day to day activities, this is 1.85% more than the revised budget of £609.8 million. The inflationary and demand-led pressures have been monitored carefully during the year and additional funding has been allocated from the Contingency budget and from reserves. This demonstrates the effective budgetary controls which are in place and exist to highlight areas where pressures are emerging. The underspend from 2021/2022 was contributed into an inflation reserve to fund the pressures in 2022/2023 which is an example of the County Council's excellent financial planning. The overall overspend will be funded from earmarked reserves and will not impact on general balances.

The Health and Care Directorate has seen an increase in the number of residential and nursing placements, however demand has been managed effectively and the rate of increase of placements has been maintained below the demand resulting from the growing older population. This has been offset to some degree by continuing price pressures, which have been exacerbated by the Government's Fair Cost of Care exercise. The service continues to manage its finances as part of the 5 year MTFS through careful use of reserves although there appears a very significant risk of unfunded costs of adult social care reform in future years. Overall the Directorate has achieved a small underspend of £0.03 million in 2022/2023.

The number of Children in Care (CiC) has increased from the start of the year, and, at the end of March stands at 1,387 (including 109 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), that has more than doubled in the last 6 months). This is significantly removed from the approved business case and underlying assumptions that make up the existing budget and MTFS. The service continues to deliver on the transformation programme and to embed the new structure across our services. However progress has been hindered by continuing recruitment and retention problems.

In addition there are significant transport costs in Education Services which has resulted in an overspend and this continues to be an area of pressure going forward. The service has faced increased demand due to the rise in Education and Health Care Plans. This has been exacerbated by unprecedented rises in inflation, in particular fuel.

Narrative Statement by the Director of Finance

In the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Directorate, the service achieved an overall small underspend of £0.252 million, despite experiencing inflationary pressures in the Transport and Highways services particularly. The outturn for the Directorate consists of small overspends and underspends across the services, demonstrating excellent financial management in keeping expenditure within budget.

Corporate Services have achieved small underspends by the end of the year as a result of savings from vacant posts and additional income for Registrars, as people booked weddings which had been cancelled during the pandemic. There was a small underspend for the Finance Directorate.

The centrally controlled budgets underspent by £0.2 million at the end of the year, most of this relates to additional income from investments due to the rise in interest rates. Much of the additional income has been retained in reserve to fund future investments in services in 2023/2024 and future years. This was offset by overspends on pooled buildings due to the increase in energy costs.

Schools

Spending on schools is paid for through a Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) from Central Government and both the expenditure and grant income are included in the financial statements. Separate reporting arrangements exist for schools, governing bodies and LEAs. We received £299.5 million in DSG during 2022/2023 and brought forward a deficit of £8.6 million from 2021/2022. We spent a total of £305.1 million meaning that the year end position is a deficit of £14.2 million on the DSG reserve (see note 31 on page 71). This deficit is forecast to increase and is being monitored carefully. After allowing for all spending from reserves including capital investment, overall school reserves have reduced by £4.6 million to £24.2 million at the end of the year.

Similar to many other authorities, the SEND High Needs block has overspent by £9.1 million and is the main reason why the balance on the DSG reserve is now a deficit of £14.2 million. Regulations have been issued by the government to ensure that council tax payers do not have to fund any deficit in this reserve for the short term.

Capital Programme

In 2022/2023, our final capital spend was £93.8 million, compared to £111.4 million in 2021/2022. This investment was funded from a variety of sources including grants from the Government totalling £44.2 million and borrowing of £18.4 million.

The County Council has continued to invest in schools and infrastructure, alongside other projects relating to economic regeneration, integrated transport and traffic signals. The achievements we have made during the year include the following.

- Completion of the refurbishment of Chetwynd Bridge and significant highways works to facilitate access to development at Redhill site;
- Total of £16.2m spent on Preventative Footway and Carriageway works countywide;
- Completion of two new schools at Parks Farm and Fradley Park Primary. Commencement of work at Deanslade and St Leonard's Primary relocation;

- Significant progress has been made on the Shire Hall regeneration scheme with the continuation of the Eastgate Street regeneration project;
- Work has commenced on the Chatterly Valley development and Newcastle Enterprise Centre extension;
- Wide ranging improvements made to various Household Waste Recycling Centres across the county;
- Further rollout of the Gigabit Broadband scheme;
- Significant progress made on Printer MFD and Data Centre Network refresh projects as well as PSN Core Switch replacement project;
- Continue the process of rationalising farm assets and initiate a programme of reinvestment in existing stock;
- In addition, continue the wider rationalisation of SCC property and its use in order to support MTFS decisions;

We use borrowing to fund our capital programme to supplement other sources of finance to deliver our ambitions and we monitor our borrowing to ensure it remains affordable. The County Council's Treasury Management Strategy sets out the limits around the borrowing and the indicators we will use to monitor it. Our capital financing requirement reflects the total amount that would need to be financed if the County Council was to cease operating. This requirement at the end of 2022/2023 is £670.4 million. To put this in context, the carrying value of all our long-term assets is £1,952.4 million therefore the capital financing requirement is 34.3% of this.

You can get more information on how our services have managed their finances in 2022/2023 in the report to Cabinet on 21 June 2023, 'Performance and Finance Final Outturn Report 2022/2023'.

Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 21st June 2023, 10:00am - Staffordshire County Council

The Financial Statements

There are four financial statements in the accounts; these are the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Balance Sheet and the Cashflow Statement. The format and content of the financial statements is prescribed by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/2023. The purpose of each statement is described below:

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

Narrative Statement by the Director of Finance

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

The accounting policies have been reviewed and updated where necessary. The Statement of Accounts for 2022/2023 includes the County Council and the Pension Fund. Although the Council owns shares in Entrust and has a subsidiary, Nexxus, the assessment of both these companies has not led to a requirement to include them in Group Accounts. The assessment is updated annually and may change.

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

This statement is showing a deficit on the provision of services of £9.1 million which is a decrease from the previous year’s surplus of £89.4 million. The net cost of services has increased to £587.5 million in 2022/2023 from £497.4 million in 2021/2022. This reflects the inflationary pressures being felt across all services and the increased budget in some service areas such as Health and Care. In 2022/2023, some services moved out of the Children and Families Directorate and into Economy, Infrastructure and Skills. The Culture, Rural and Communities service is now part of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills and for this reason, net expenditure has increased in that Directorate and reduced in Children and Families. Another structure change is that Finance is now a Directorate in its own right and has moved out of Corporate Services.

The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the final balances of the County Council’s general fund and other reserves and this statement shows the money available to support services in future years. The general fund balance is £52.3 million and other earmarked reserves are £358.4 million, of which £24.2 million relates to schools and cannot be spent on other services and £32.3 million is unspent revenue grants. This leaves an amount of £301.9 million which is earmarked for specific projects and risks. Overall, general balances have remained static during 2022/2023, which is in line with the MTFS and the intention to retain balances to mitigate the risks inherent in service budgets.

Our reserves are reviewed annually to ensure they are still required and are at the correct level; this occurs as part of our budget setting process in February. The reserves were last reviewed in February 2023 and were deemed to be sufficient with the additional contributions. The review formed part of a report to the County Council which can be viewed here:

County Council report v3.pdf (staffordshire.gov.uk)

Narrative Statement by the Director of Finance

The Balance Sheet shows the amount held in reserves, both usable and unusable, as well as the liabilities that will need to be paid in future years. The total of assets less liabilities in 2022/2023 is £1,181.4 million, an increase from 2021/2022 which was £878.2 million.

The difference is £303.2 million and can be explained by various changes but the largest movement is in relation to the pension scheme, at 31 March 2022 there was a net liability of £693.5m which has now moved by £168m to reduce the net liability to £525.6 million. Property, plant and equipment values have increased as a result of increasing inflation and the global economic recovery following the pandemic. The value of Assets Held for Sale has also increased and if these assets are successfully sold during 2023/2024, this will provide further cash to be used to invest in the capital programme and projects across the county.

In current assets, the amount of short term debtors has increased and so has the amount of short term investments, reducing the cash held. This reflects decisions taken to generate more income from investments by investing in slightly longer term investments than cash only ones. Cash is still held which provides the County Council with a diverse portfolio which is maximising the return generated.

Other smaller movements in liabilities include an increase in short term creditors and a reduction in long term borrowing. All the long term borrowing is fixed and repayment dates are known, therefore this amount will reduce over time. The PFI liabilities have reduced in line with expectations.

The Cashflow Statement shows how the County Council has managed its cash during the year and would highlight whether there was a problem with the amount of cash coming in or flowing out of the organisation. This statement reflects the reduction in the cash balance held as at 31st March 2023 as mentioned above.

Pension Fund

The value of the Pension Fund has reduced slightly at 31st March 2023 to £6,653.8 million, a reduction of 2.6%. This has been caused by a reduction in the market value of investments due to the volatility in the economy resulting from the continued high inflation and increase in world-wide bank interest rates. More detail on the Fund’s assets and liabilities can be seen in the Pension Fund Accounts and Net Assets Statement.

Outlook

In 2022/2023, the invasion of Ukraine sparked a rapid increase in prices across the world, in particular energy and fuel prices. This drove up prices of food and raw materials causing increased inflation nationally. As a result, the Bank of England increased interest rates in a bid to combat rising prices. Services felt the pressure of rising prices but in particular those services reliant on the purchase of energy, fuel and raw materials were hardest hit. Additional funding was approved by Cabinet for these services whilst the remaining service areas had to absorb the pressures within their existing budgets. In addition to inflationary pressures, there has been significant increased demand in Children’s Services and this has led to an overspend at the end of the year which has been funded from earmarked reserves.

The MTFS for 2023/2024 to 2027/2028 is dominated by the inflationary pressures and increasing demand for Children’s Services with additional money being allocated to cover both sets of pressures. A small amount of £2.108 million has been used from reserves to balance the 2023/2024 budget and another slightly larger amount is planned to be used in future years. The budget for 2023/2024 identified £10.4 million of cost reductions, over and above those already planned. The government allowed local authorities to increase the general part of the council tax by up to 3% in this financial year and the Adult Social Care precept could also be increased by 2% therefore we have increased council tax by 4.99% in total in 2023/2024.

There is continued financial uncertainty in future years as a Spending Review is expected later this year and the expectation is that local government will see reduced funding as the country needs to pay for the additional expenditure it incurred during the pandemic. As a result, the MTFS included many risks, some of which could be huge such as the costs associated with the Adult Social Care reforms. As a result of these potential significant risks, the Contingency budget has been increased to £15 million and the overspend has been funded from earmarked reserves in order to retain general balances at their current level.

The level of both general balances and earmarked reserves is reviewed annually to ensure they are fit for purpose. The review includes a risk assessment which takes into account the uncertainty of future funding levels. The level of both balances and reserves will be monitored carefully going forward in the light of the considerable risks facing the County Council.

In this period of rising prices and uncertain funding levels, our strong financial management continues to be required and we are monitoring expenditure against budgets carefully, reports will be presented to Cabinet each quarter, as usual. We have carried out a review of the impact of the pandemic on the Council's going concern position and this is summarised in Note 1 to the Accounts on page 32.

Looking ahead, the process of refreshing the MTFS for 2024/2025 will begin over the summer and autumn, with the theme of uncertainty dominating. The level of reserves and balances will be monitored and carefully forecast to ensure the County Council has enough funding to deal with the many risks it faces. Authorities can only use their reserves once and without an increase in the overall level of funding allocated for social care and SEND it will place local government in an unsustainable financial position. In addition, the Government has previously said there would be a far funding review of government funding, including the business rates scheme and changes are anticipated, especially as the latter has been in place since 2013. The timing of these reviews is uncertain and this, combined with one year finance settlements, reduces the effectiveness of medium term plans.

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

Financial Health Indicators

We use a variety of indicators to measure how we are performing against our priority outcomes. The outstanding sundry debt indicator has been a concern during the year in relation to adult social care client debt and this has been monitored carefully. It is flagged as red as the debt exceeds the target level and a working group is in place to monitor and review processes and make efforts to reduce this level. All the indicators, together with a summary of our performance in 2022/2023, can be viewed here:

Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday 21st June 2023, 10:00am - Staffordshire County Council

Format of the Statement of Accounts

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

Rachel Spain
Chief Accountant
1 Staffordshire Place
Tipping Street
Stafford
ST16 2DH.

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

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

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

Rob Salmon CPFA
Director of Finance
Date: 31st May 2023

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts

The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority is required to:

- Make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Director of Finance;

- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets, and

- Approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Director of Finance's Responsibilities

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

In preparing this statement of accounts, the Director of Finance has:

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

The Director of Finance has also:

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

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that the Statement of Accounts presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the County Council as at 31 March 2023 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Peter Shakespear CPFA
Director of Finance
Date: 29th November 2024

Chairman’s Certificate

I confirm that the 2022/2023 Statement of Accounts for Staffordshire County Council and Staffordshire Pension Fund were approved by the Audit and Standards Committee on X.

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

Carolyn Trowbridge, Vice Chair of Audit and Standards Committee
Date: 29th November 2024

Statement of Accounting Policies

1 General

The Statement of Accounts shows the Authority's transactions for the 2022/2023 financial year and its position at the year end of 31 March 2023. In preparing the accounts we have followed the accounting practices set out in the 'Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/2023' (the Code), supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and statutory guidance including the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

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

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared with reference to:

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

2 Accruals of Income and Expenditure

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

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

3 Property, plant and equipment

Recognition

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

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

Measurement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<u>Reduction in valuation</u>

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

<u>Increase in valuation</u>

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

Disposal of assets

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

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

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

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

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

Schools

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

4 Depreciation

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

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

5 Charges to revenue for non-current assets

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

6 Heritage assets

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

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

7 Highways infrastructure assets

The property, plant and equipment line of the balance sheet also includes infrastructure assets. Infrastructure includes Highways assets such as carriageways, footways and cycle tracks, structures (e.g. bridges), street lighting, street furniture (e.g. illuminated traffic signals, bollards), traffic management systems and land which together form a single integrated network.
Infrastructure assets are measured at a modified form of historic cost. Opening balances of infrastructure assets were originally recorded on the balance sheet at the outstanding loan balance as at 1 April 1994, which was deemed to be historical cost at the time. Subsequently, infrastructure assets are measured at depreciated historical cost.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for by the carrying amount of the asset being written down to the recoverable amount.

Depreciation is provided on the parts of the highways network infrastructure assets that are subject to deterioration or depletion and by the systematic allocation of their depreciable amounts over their useful lives. Depreciation is charged on a straight-line basis.

Annual depreciation is the depreciation amount allocated each year.

Useful lives of the various parts of the highways network are assessed by the Highways Engineers using industry standards.

For derecognition of infrastructure, where capital expenditure is replacing assets, the Council has determined in accordance with Regulation 30M of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England/Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2022, that the carrying amounts to be derecognised is nil.

8 Leases

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

<u>Council as lessee</u>

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

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

<u>Council as lessor</u>

Finance leases
The Authority is not the lessor of any finance leases.

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

9 Pensions

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

- Teachers'
  This is an unfunded scheme (that is, there is no fund set aside to pay future pensions) run by the Department for Education. The pension cost we charge to the accounts is the contribution rate set by the Department for Education.

- Other employees
  Other employees, depending on certain conditions, can join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which we run. The pension costs we charge to our accounts for these employees are equal to the contributions we pay to the pension scheme for these employees, including the effect of any actuarial changes. See Note 40 for further detail.

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

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

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

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

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

Service cost, which comprises:

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

Remeasurements, which comprise:

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

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

Discretionary benefits

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

10 Reserves

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

11 Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute

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

12 Provisions

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

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

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

Contingent liabilities

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

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

Contingent assets

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

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

13 Interest on balances

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

14 VAT

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

15 Government grants and contributions

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

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

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

16 Private finance initiative (PFI)

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

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

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

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

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

17 Endowment and trust funds

We run 25 of these funds. They mostly include small amounts received from private individuals, which we have invested to provide an income each year. They do not form part of our accounts.

18 Financial instruments

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

Financial liabilities

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

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

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

Lender option borrower option (LOBO)

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

Financial assets

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

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

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

- *Amortised cost*
  These are financial assets that we hold in order to collect contractual cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest. Financial assets at amortised cost are initially measured at fair value and subsequently measured at their amortised cost. The amount presented in our Balance Sheet includes the outstanding principal receivable plus accrued interest.

- *Fair value through profit or loss (FVPL)*
  When there are no contractual cash flows, we measure financial assets at FVPL. These assets are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arrive in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.
  We measure the fair value of these assets in accordance with the following three levels:
  Level 1 inputs – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets that the authority can access at the measurement date.
  Level 2 inputs – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset, either directly or indirectly.
  Level 3 inputs – unobservable inputs for the asset.

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

- *Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI)*
  If we hold a financial asset which is within a business model whose objective is achieved by both collecting contractual cash flows and selling financial assets plus the contractual

terms of this same financial asset mean that on specified dates there will be cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding. If these conditions are met then we can account for the financial asset through FVOCI instead of FVPL. Any gains and losses from changes in fair value are taken to the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve instead of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.

Expected credit losses

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

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

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

19 Cash and cash equivalents

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

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

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

20 Employee benefits

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

21 Pooled budgets

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

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

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

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

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

23 Accounting Standards issued but not yet adopted

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

- Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendments to IAS 8) issued in February 2021.
- Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS 1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2) issued in February 2021.
- Deferred Tax related to Assets and Liabilities arising from a Single Transaction (Amendments to IAS 12) issued in May 2021.
- Updating a Reference to the Conceptual Framework (Amendments to IFRS 3) issued in May 2020.

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

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

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

2021/2022 Gross expenditure £m	2021/2022 Gross income £m	2021/2022 Net expenditure £m		2022/2023 Gross expenditure £m	2022/2023 Gross income £m	2022/2023 Net expenditure £m
353.5	(227.6)	125.9	Health and Care	404.3	(209.7)	194.6
584.8	(365.3)	219.5	Children and Families	603.4	(396.8)	206.6
182.0	(81.1)	100.9	Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	198.8	(80.5)	118.3
65.2	(18.9)	46.3	Corporate Services	63.2	(13.6)	49.6
0.0	0.0	0.0	Finance	13.9	(1.6)	12.3
11.9	(3.1)	8.8	Centrally Controlled Costs	15.3	(2.8)	12.5
(4.0)	0.0	(4.0)	Non distributed costs	(6.4)	0.0	(6.4)
1,193.4	**(696.0)**	**497.4**	**Cost of services**	**1,292.5**	**(705.0)**	**587.5**
		19.7	Other operating expenditure (Note 6)			2.4
		67.4	Financing and investment (income)/expenditure (Note 7)			87.0
		(673.9)	Taxation and non-specific grant income (Note 8)			(667.8)
		(89.4)	**Deficit/(Surplus) on provision of services**			**9.1**
		(17.6)	Deficit/(Surplus) on revaluation of non current assets			(114.2)
		(373.7)	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset) (Note 40)			(198.1)
		(391.3)	**reclassified to the deficit/(surplus) on the provision of services**			**(312.3)**
		0.0	**Items that may be reclassified to the deficit/(surplus) on the**			**0.0**
		(391.3)	**Other comprehensive expenditure/(income)**			**(312.3)**
		(480.7)	**Total comprehensive expenditure/(income)**			**(303.2)**

Movement in Reserves Statement

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

	General Fund Balance £m	**Schools** (Note 5) **£m**	**Other Reserves Revenue** (Note 5) **£m**	**Amalgamated General Revenue Reserves £m**	**Capital Receipts Reserve £m**	**Capital Grants Unapplied £m**	**Amalgamated Capital Reserves £m**	**Total Usable Reserves £m**	**Unusable Reserves £m**	**Total Council Reserves £m**
Balance at 1 April 2021	**(47.4)**	**(27.3)**	**(186.8)**	**(214.1)**	**0.0**	**(62.8)**	**(62.8)**	**(324.3)**	**(73.2)**	**(397.5)**
Movement in reserves during 2021/2022										
(Surplus) or Deficit on the provision of services	**(89.4)**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**(89.4)**	0.0	**(89.4)**
Other comprehensive (income)/ expenditure	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	(391.3)	**(391.3)**
Total comprehensive income and expenditure	**(89.4)**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**(89.4)**	**(391.3)**	**(480.7)**
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 4)	**(25.1)**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.8	**0.8**	**(24.3)**	24.3	**0.0**
Net (increase)/decrease before transfers to earmarked reserves	**(114.5)**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**(113.7)**	**(367.0)**	**(480.7)**
Transfers (to)/from earmarked reserves	**114.6**	(1.5)	(113.1)	**(114.6)**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	0.0	**0.0**
(Increase)/decrease in year	**0.1**	**(1.5)**	**(113.1)**	**(114.6)**	**0.0**	**0.8**	**0.8**	**(113.7)**	**(367.0)**	**(480.7)**
Balance at 31 March 2022 carried forward	**(47.3)**	**(28.8)**	**(299.9)**	**(328.7)**	**0.0**	**(62.0)**	**(62.0)**	**(438.0)**	**(440.2)**	**(878.2)**
Movement in reserves during 2022/2023										
(Surplus) or Deficit on the provision of services	**9.1**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**9.1**	0.0	**9.1**
Other comprehensive (income)/ expenditure	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	(312.3)	**(312.3)**
Total comprehensive income and expenditure	**9.1**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**9.1**	**(312.3)**	**(303.2)**
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 4)	**(43.8)**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	(19.8)	**(19.8)**	**(63.6)**	63.6	**0.0**
Net (increase)/decrease before transfers to earmarked reserves	**(34.7)**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**(19.8)**	**(19.8)**	**(54.5)**	**(248.7)**	**(303.2)**
Transfers (to)/from earmarked reserves	**29.7**	4.6	(34.3)	**(29.7)**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	0.0	**0.0**
(Increase)/decrease in year	**(5.0)**	**4.6**	**(34.3)**	**(29.7)**	**0.0**	**(19.8)**	**(19.8)**	**(54.5)**	**(248.7)**	**(303.2)**
Balance at 31 March 2023 carried forward	**(52.3)**	**(24.2)**	**(334.2)**	**(358.4)**	**0.0**	**(81.8)**	**(81.8)**	**(492.5)**	**(688.9)**	**(1,181.4)**

The total General Fund of the Council is equal to the sum of the General Fund Balance and the Amalgamated General Revenue Reserves disclosed above. The total General Fund of the Council is therefore £412.3m as at 31 March 2023.

Balance Sheet

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

31 March 2021 £m	31 March 2022 £m		Notes	31 March 2023 £m
1,810.6	1,810.9	Property, plant and equipment	12	1,891.6
9.6	9.6	Heritage assets	13	8.9
22.8	22.2	Long term debtors	15	21.5
30.4	30.4	Long term investments	14	30.4
0.0	0.0	Pension Scheme Asset	40	0.0
1,873.4	**1,873.1**	**Long term assets**		**1,952.4**
20.3	9.7	Assets held for sale	18	14.9
0.0	42.0	Short term investments	14	156.2
1.0	1.0	Inventories		1.1
133.5	122.6	Short term debtors	16	140.7
241.6	305.6	Cash and cash equivalents	17	231.0
396.4	**480.9**	**Current assets**		**543.9**
(0.4)	(0.4)	Short term borrowing		(0.5)
(190.0)	(138.1)	Short term creditors	19	(150.7)
(40.0)	(44.0)	Long term borrowing repayable within one year	14	(45.9)
(7.6)	(7.7)	PFI and finance leases deferred liability	14	(8.2)
(8.3)	(7.2)	Accumulated absences creditor	21	(8.9)
(246.3)	**(197.4)**	**Current liabilities**		**(214.2)**
(0.3)	(0.1)	Long term creditors		0.0
(11.9)	(10.7)	Long term provisions	20	(11.5)
(412.2)	(404.4)	Long term borrowing	14	(397.6)
(1,025.8)	(693.5)	Pension scheme liability	40	(525.6)
(70.8)	(60.7)	PFI and finance lease liability	14	(56.0)
(59.3)	(55.8)	PFI third party financing liability	36	(52.3)
(45.7)	(53.2)	Capital grants receipts in advance	32	(57.7)
(1,626.0)	**(1,278.4)**	**Long term liabilities**		**(1,100.7)**
397.5	**878.2**	**Net assets**		**1,181.4**
(324.3)	(438.0)	Usable reserves (Movement in Reserves Statement)		(492.5)
(73.2)	(440.2)	Unusable reserves	21	(688.9)
(397.5)	**(878.2)**	**Total reserves**		**(1,181.4)**

These financial statements replace the unaudited financial statements approved by the Director of Finance on 31 May 2023

Peter Shakespear CPFA, Director of Finance

Date: 29th November 2024

Cash Flow Statement

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

2021/2022		2022/2023
£m		£m
(89.4)	Net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services	**9.1**
(105.3)	Adjustments to net deficit on the provision of services for non cash movements	(146.5)
89.1	Adjustments for items included in the net deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	82.9
(105.6)	Net cash flows from Operating activities (Note 22)	(54.5)
29.1	Investing Activities (Note 23)	115.5
12.5	Financing Activities (Note 24)	13.6
(64.0)	Net (increase)/decrease in cash and cash equivalents	74.6
241.6	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting year (Note 17)	305.6
305.6	**Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting year (Note 17)**	**231.0**

1. Basis of preparation

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

1) There is a high degree of uncertainty regarding future levels of funding for local government. The Council has undertaken a rigorous challenge of reviewing its spending and as a result has ensured appropriate savings are built into its medium term financial plans. The Council has determined that this uncertainty regarding future funding levels is not known in sufficient enough detail to provide an indication that its assets would be impaired or services reduced significantly. Any action to reduce spending would be taken in a planned and systematic way to reduce the impact on service delivery.

2) The Council has four PFI contracts to provide schools, children's homes, waste disposal and street lighting facilities. The accounting policies for PFI schemes have been applied to these arrangements and the assets are recognised as non-current assets in the Balance Sheet. These contracts have to be accounted for in this way as we have assessed that they meet the requirements of the applicable accounting standard IFRIC 12.

3) The Council acts as the accountable body for the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) and the Midlands Engine Partnership (ME). We do not account for the transactions of these bodies or hold balances on their behalf. Separate accounts are produced for both the SSLEP and the ME. We therefore account for the funds on an agent basis.

4) The Council holds interests in three companies, Entrust (49% holding), Penda (50% holding) and Nexxus (100% holding). We have judged that these holdings are immaterial to the Council both qualitatively and quantitively, and there is therefore no requirement to prepare group accounts.

5) Going Concern
During 2022/23, there was an increase in inflation nationally and accordingly the Bank of England increased interest rates in an attempt to curb inflation. This had an impact on residents and businesses within Staffordshire and the County Council was not immune from the impact of rising prices. The impact of inflation on the 2022/2023 outturn is reported in the Narrative Statement.

1. Basis of preparation (cont'd)

In setting the County Council's budget for 2023/24, it was important to reflect the impact of increasing inflation and rising demand on Children's Services. The refresh of our Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was approved by Council on 9th February 2023. This included a balanced budget for 2023/24 with the use of £2.108m from reserves.

As part of the MTFS, the risk assessment of general balances required £55m to meet all estimate high and medium risks. General balances were £52.3m as at 31st March 2023 and therefore the overspend in 2022/23 has been funded from earmarked reserves in order to protect the amount of general balances available to cover the County Council's risks.

The Council is also closely monitoring its cashflow position to ensure that there are sufficient funds available to meet its financial obligations. The recent rise in interest rates means it is possible to earn a larger return on the County Council's cash balances and investments are made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy 2023/24 which was approved at Council on 9th February 2023, alongside the MTFS. As at 11th May 2023, the Council holds a total of £433.5m in cash and short-term investments.

The Council has produced a detailed cashflow forecast to 31st March 2024, which is used to monitor actual trends in line with expectations. There is also a high-level 5 year forecast prepared as part of the MTFS planning. The Council does not currently anticipate that it will need to borrow for cashflow purposes over the life of the current MTFS.

We recognise that there is a high degree of inherent uncertainty relating to inflation, demand for services in particular Children's Services and the future uncertainty of government funding. However, we are satisfied that the Council has resilience in terms of budgetary planning, proven financial management arrangements, available reserves and cash flow to March 2024 and that it is appropriate to use the going concern basis in the preparation of the 2022/2023 financial statements.

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

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

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2023 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Property, plant and equipment valuation	Operational assets are revalued in accordance with the Council's accounting policy on Property, Plant and Equipment. Asset valuations are based on market prices and are periodically reviewed to ensure the Council does not materially misstate its non-current assets.	A reduction in the estimated valuation of assets would result in reductions to the Revaluation Reserve and/or a loss recorded as appropriate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). An increase in estimated valuations would result in increases to the Revaluation Reserve, and/or reversals of previous negative revaluations to the CIES, and/or gains being recorded as appropriate in the CIES. A change of + / - 1% in the value of property, plant and equipment would be a movement of around £19m in the balance sheet.
Property, plant and equipment depreciation	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to assets.	If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the asset falls. If funding streams were reduced, in so far as it results in the reduction of service delivery or closure of facilities, this could result in the impairment of assets due to obsolescence. The Council has determined that the level of uncertainty at this time is not sufficient to indicate this course of action. A change in the amount of depreciation charged of either + / - 1% would mean a movement of around £0.5m in the balance sheet.
Pensions Liability	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages and mortality rates. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied in producing the accounting entries necessary for the accounts.	The effects on the net pensions liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured, including the impact of the McCloud judgement. The accounts currently reflect the latest estimate of these additional costs. The actuary provides a sensitivity analysis which is shown in Note 40.

Impairment Allowance for Doubtful Debts	The Council has made an impairment allowance against debtor balances. It is not certain that this impairment allowance would be sufficient as we cannot assess with certainty which debts will be collected or not.The current economic economic climate has made the estimation of debt impairment more difficult as there is more uncertainty about the economic viability of debtors and hence their ability to settle their debts.	An understatement of doubtful debts would lead to a future adjustment and impairment to be reflected. A change in the amount of allowance made for doubtful debts of + / - 1% would result in a movement of around £870,000.

3. Events After the Balance Sheet Date

On 31st May 2023 the Director of Finance authorised the Statement of Accounts to be issued. When preparing the accounts we have considered events between the date we produced the balance sheet and 31st May 2023. No events have occurred which require disclosure in the accounts.

4. Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations

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

	Usable Reserves			
2022/2023 **Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:**	**General Fund Balance £m**	**Capital grants unapplied £m**	**Capital receipts reserve £m**	**Movement in unusable reserves £m**
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:				
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non current assets	(66.3)	0.0	0.0	66.3
Capital grants and contributions applied	66.1	0.0	0.0	(66.1)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(6.6)	0.0	0.0	6.6
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	(50.1)	0.0	0.0	50.1
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:				
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	29.0	0.0	0.0	(29.0)
Capital expenditure charged against the General fund balance	3.9	0.0	0.0	(3.9)
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	19.9	(19.9)	0.0	0.0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	0.0	0.1	0.0	(0.1)
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:				
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	2.8	0.0	(2.8)	0.0
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	0.0	0.0	2.8	(2.8)
Adjustments involving the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account:				
Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive income and expenditure statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	0.5	0.0	0.0	(0.5)
Adjustments involving the Pooled Investment Fund Adjustment Account:				
Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive income and expenditure statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(0.4)	0.0	0.0	0.4
Adjustments involving the Pensions Reserve:				
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (Note 21)	(93.9)	0.0	0.0	93.9
Employers pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	45.8	0.0	0.0	(45.8)
Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions	17.9	0.0	0.0	(17.9)
Adjustments involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:				
Amount by which council tax and business rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and business rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(5.1)	0.0	0.0	5.1
Adjustments involving the Accumulated Absences Account:				
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(1.7)	0.0	0.0	1.7
Adjustments involving the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment				
Transfer of Dedicated Schools Grant deficit to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Accounts	(5.6)	0.0	0.0	5.6
Total adjustments	**(43.8)**	**(19.8)**	**0.0**	**63.6**

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

2021/2022	Usable Reserves			
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:	**General Fund Balance £m**	**Capital grants unapplied £m**	**Capital receipts reserve £m**	**Movement in unusable reserves £m**
Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:				
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non current assets	(71.2)	0.0	0.0	71.2
Capital grants and contributions applied	70.1	0.0	0.0	(70.1)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(17.0)	0.0	0.0	17.0
Amounts of non current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(51.8)	0.0	0.0	51.8
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:				
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	35.4	0.0	0.0	(35.4)
Capital expenditure charged against the General fund balance	0.5	0.0	0.0	(0.5)
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	8.5	(8.5)	0.0	0.0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	0.0	9.3	0.0	(9.3)
Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:				
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	14.5	0.0	(14.5)	0.0
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	0.0	0.0	14.5	(14.5)
Adjustments involving the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account:				
Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	0.5	0.0	0.0	(0.5)
Adjustments involving the Pensions Reserve:				
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (see Note 21)	(100.7)	0.0	0.0	100.7
Employers pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	42.5	0.0	0.0	(42.5)
Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions	16.8	0.0	0.0	(16.8)
Adjustments involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:				
Amount by which council tax and business rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and business rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	32.2	0.0	0.0	(32.2)
Adjustments involving the Accumulated Absences Account:				
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	1.2	0.0	0.0	(1.2)
Adjustments involving the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account				
Transfer of Dedicated Schools Grant deficit to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Accounts	(6.6)	0.0	0.0	6.6
Total adjustments	**(25.1)**	**0.8**	**0.0**	**24.3**

5. Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

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

	Balance at 31 March 2021	Transfers out 2021/2022	Transfers in 2021/2022	Balance at 31 March 2022	Transfers out 2022/2023	Transfers in 2022/2023	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
General Fund:							
Information technology	(10.6)	0.7	(8.7)	(18.6)	11.6	(0.6)	(7.6)
PFI equalisation	(2.9)	0.8	(3.1)	(5.2)	1.5	(0.1)	(3.8)
Other service reserves	(0.4)	0.0	0.0	(0.4)	0.1	(0.1)	(0.4)
Trading services appropriation reserve	(3.5)	2.1	(2.2)	(3.6)	1.5	(0.9)	(3.0)
Other insurance reserves	(2.1)	0.1	(0.8)	(2.8)	1.1	(0.3)	(2.0)
Business rates pool	(19.5)	1.0	(18.5)	(37.0)	17.5	(20.9)	(40.4)
Capital reserves	(55.8)	7.0	(24.2)	(73.0)	4.4	(8.1)	(76.7)
Revenue carried forward	(92.0)	53.5	(120.8)	(159.3)	75.7	(116.7)	(200.3)
Total earmarked reserves	**(186.8)**	**65.2**	**(178.3)**	**(299.9)**	**113.4**	**(147.7)**	**(334.2)**

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

School Reserves

Under the Education Reform Act 1988, if we have given a budget to a school and they have not spent it, they can still use that money, even though, technically it is held in our reserves. In other words, these unspent balances represent a special form of reserve which is not available for us to use. The schools revenue balances we hold in this way currently total £19.4 million. Schools also hold balances of £4.9 million for specific purposes, most of which relate to the standards fund formula capital programme.

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

	Balance 31 March 2021	**(Increase)/ reduction**	**Balance 31 March 2022**	**(Increase)/ reduction**	**Balance 31 March 2023**
Delegated revenue budgets	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Primary schools	(17.0)	0.2	(16.8)	3.6	(13.2)
Secondary schools	(2.9)	(1.0)	(3.9)	0.4	(3.5)
Special	(1.5)	(0.5)	(2.0)	0.2	(1.8)
Pupil Referral Unit	(0.7)	(0.3)	(1.0)	0.1	(0.9)
	(22.1)	**(1.6)**	**(23.7)**	**4.3**	**(19.4)**
Outstanding loans	0.3	(0.1)	0.2	(0.1)	0.1
Net school reserves as 31st March	(21.8)	(1.7)	(23.5)	4.2	(19.3)
Earmarked reserves	(5.5)	0.2	(5.3)	0.4	(4.9)
Total	**(27.3)**	**(1.5)**	**(28.8)**	**4.6**	**(24.2)**

6. Other Operating Expenditure

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
0.3	Levies	0.3
0.0	Impairment on assets held for sale	0.6
19.4	Losses on the disposal of non current assets*	1.5
19.7	**Total**	**2.4**

7. Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
32.5	Interest payable and similar charges	33.4
20.1	Pensions interest cost and expected returns on pension assets	18.6
(3.0)	Interest receivable and similar income	(10.7)
17.9	Derecognition of school assets on Academy and Foundation conversions - non current assets	45.8
(0.1)	Trading services (surplus) / deficit	(0.1)
67.4	**Total**	**87.0**

8. Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
(401.3)	Council tax income	(405.1)
(131.7)	NNDR	(121.1)
(62.3)	Non-ringfenced government grants (Note 32)	(55.6)
(78.6)	Capital grants and contributions	(86.0)
(673.9)	**Total**	**(667.8)**

9. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

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

2021/2022 Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £m	2021/2022 Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (Note 10) £m	2021/2022 Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £m		2022/2023 Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund £m	2022/2023 Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (Note 10) £m	2022/2023 Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £m
191.2	(65.3)	125.9	Health and Care	203.4	(8.8)	194.6
157.0	62.5	219.5	Children and Families	152.6	54.0	206.6
69.1	31.8	100.9	Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	87.7	30.6	118.3
69.6	(23.3)	46.3	Corporate Services	51.5	(1.9)	49.6
0.0	0.0	0.0	Finance	12.3	0.0	12.3
26.9	(18.1)	8.8	Centrally Controlled Costs	29.8	(17.3)	12.5
0.0	(4.0)	(4.0)	Non distributed costs	0.0	(6.4)	(6.4)
513.8	**(16.4)**	**497.4**	**Cost of services**	**537.3**	**50.2**	**587.5**
0.3	19.4	19.7	Other operating expenditure (Note 6)	0.3	2.1	2.4
49.0	18.4	67.4	Financing and investment (income)/expenditure (Note 7)	45.9	41.1	87.0
(563.2)	(110.7)	(673.9)	Taxation and non-specific grant income (Note 8)	(587.0)	(80.8)	(667.8)
(0.1)	**(89.3)**	**(89.4)**	**Deficit/(Surplus) on provision of services**	**(3.5)**	**12.6**	**9.1**
(47.4)			**Opening General Fund Balance**	(47.3)		
0.1			Surplus/Deficit on General Fund Balance in Year	(5.0)		
(47.3)			**Closing General Fund Balance at 31 March**	**(52.3)**		

10. Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2022/2023

Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (a)	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments (b)	Other Differences (c)	Total Adjustments
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care	0.3	7.7	(16.8)	**(8.8)**
Children and Families	23.3	25.2	5.5	**54.0**
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	29.2	1.5	(0.1)	**30.6**
Corporate Services	3.2	1.3	(6.4)	**(1.9)**
Finance	0.0	0.2	(0.2)	**0.0**
Centrally Controlled Costs	1.1	(17.9)	(0.5)	**(17.3)**
Non distributed costs	0.0	(6.4)	0.0	**(6.4)**
Net Cost of Services	**57.1**	**11.6**	**(18.5)**	**50.2**
Other income and expenditure for the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(55.8)	18.6	(0.4)	**(37.6)**
Difference between General Fund surplus/deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	**1.3**	**30.2**	**(18.9)**	**12.6**

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2021/2022 Comparative Figures

Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (a)	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments (b)	Other Differences (c)	Total Adjustments
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Health and Care	(5.0)	1.6	(61.9)	**(65.3)**
Children and Families	28.8	36.9	(3.2)	**62.5**
Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	43.0	1.6	(12.8)	**31.8**
Corporate Services	2.8	2.1	(28.2)	**(23.3)**
Finance	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Centrally Controlled Costs	0.5	(16.8)	(1.8)	**(18.1)**
Non distributed costs	0.0	(4.0)	0.0	**(4.0)**
Net Cost of Services	**70.1**	**21.4**	**(107.9)**	**(16.4)**
Other income and expenditure for the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(59.2)	20.1	(33.8)	**(72.9)**
Difference between General Fund surplus/deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	**10.9**	**41.5**	**(141.7)**	**(89.3)**

(a) Adjustments for Capital Purposes

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

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

(b) Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments

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

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

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

(c) Other Differences

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

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

11. Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

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

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
	Expenditure	
384.9	Employee benefits expenses	392.6
760.2	Other service expenses	852.3
71.3	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	69.8
32.5	Interest payments	33.4
0.3	Precepts and levies	0.3
37.3	Loss on disposal of assets	47.3
1,286.5	Total expenditure	1,395.7
	Income	
(232.8)	Fees, charges and other service income	(245.7)
(3.0)	Interest and investment income	(10.7)
(533.0)	Income from council tax and non-domestic rates	(526.2)
(607.1)	Government grants and contributions	(604.0)
(1,375.9)	Total income	(1,386.6)
(89.4)	**Deficit/(Surplus) on the Provision of Services**	9.1

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

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

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
(112.2)	Health and Care	(132.8)
(32.7)	Children and Families	(31.2)
(63.0)	Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	(61.6)
(22.0)	Corporate Services	(15.7)
0.0	Finance	(1.6)
(2.9)	Centrally Controlled Costs	(2.8)
0.0	Non distributed costs	0.0
(232.8)	**Net Cost of Services**	(245.7)

12. Property, Plant and Equipment

Movements on Balances in 2022/2023

	Land and Buildings £m	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m	Surplus Assets £m	Assets Under Construction £m	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m	PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m
Cost or Valuation						
At 1 April 2022	665.6	206.2	15.2	10.7	**897.7**	170.2
Additions	4.9	1.0	0.0	8.2	**14.1**	0.0
Revaluation increases recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	88.1	1.6	3.9	1.3	**94.9**	7.7
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Deficit on the Provision of Services	0.4	1.1	(0.5)	(1.2)	**(0.2)**	1.1
Derecognition - Disposals	(39.1)	(1.1)	(0.3)	(8.9)	**(49.4)**	0.0
Assets Reclassified (to) / from Held for Sale	(1.9)	0.0	(7.9)	1.7	**(8.1)**	0.0
At 31 March 2023	**718.0**	**208.8**	**10.4**	**11.8**	**949.0**	**179.0**

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

Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment

	Land and Buildings £m	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m	Surplus Assets £m	Assets Under Construction £m	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m	PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m
At 1 April 2022	(11.7)	(88.8)	(0.1)	0.0	**(100.6)**	(0.6)
Depreciation Charge	(17.5)	(6.8)	0.0	0.0	**(24.3)**	(6.5)
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	16.2	3.5	0.0	0.0	**19.7**	4.9
Depreciation written out to the Deficit on the Provision of Services	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	**1.2**	0.0
Derecognition - Disposals	1.6	1.1	0.0	0.0	**2.7**	0.0
At 31 March 2023	**(10.2)**	**(91.0)**	**(0.1)**	**0.0**	**(101.3)**	**(2.2)**
Net Book Value						
At 31 March 2023	**707.8**	**117.8**	**10.3**	**11.8**	**847.7**	**176.8**
At 31 March 2022	**653.9**	**117.4**	**15.1**	**10.7**	**797.1**	**169.6**

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

Comparative Movements in 2021/2022

Cost or Valuation	Land and Buildings £m	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m	Surplus Assets £m	Assets Under Construction £m	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m	PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m
At 1 April 2021	669.8	241.7	17.2	8.5	**937.2**	204.6
Additions	2.8	0.9	0.3	14.4	**18.4**	0.0
Revaluation increases recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	20.5	(35.7)	0.0	(0.4)	**(15.6)**	(34.4)
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Deficit on the Provision of Services	1.3	0.0	0.0	(0.3)	**1.0**	0.0
Derecognition - Disposals	(36.7)	(0.7)	(1.2)	(2.0)	**(40.6)**	0.0
Assets Reclassified (to)/ from Held for Sale	7.9	0.0	(1.1)	(9.5)	**(2.7)**	0.0
At 31 March 2022	**665.6**	**206.2**	**15.2**	**10.7**	**897.7**	**170.2**

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

Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment

	Land and Buildings £m	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m	Surplus Assets £m	Assets Under Construction £m	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m	PFI Assets Included in Property, Plant and Equipment £m
At 1 April 2021	(18.8)	(98.0)	(0.1)	0.0	**(116.9)**	(14.8)
Depreciation Charge	(15.8)	(7.1)	0.0	0.0	**(22.9)**	(5.9)
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	19.8	15.6	0.0	0.0	**35.4**	20.1
Depreciation written out to the Deficit on the Provision of Services	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	**1.8**	0.0
Derecognition - Disposals	1.3	0.7	0.0	0.0	**2.0**	0.0
At 31 March 2022	**(11.7)**	**(88.8)**	**(0.1)**	**0.0**	**(100.6)**	**(0.6)**
Net Book Value						
At 31 March 2022	**653.9**	**117.4**	**15.1**	**10.7**	**797.1**	**169.6**
At 31 March 2021	**651.0**	**143.7**	**17.1**	**8.5**	**820.3**	**189.8**

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

HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Movements on balances

In accordance with the temporary relief offered by the Update to the Code on
The Council has chosen not to disclose this information as the previously reported

	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Net book value (modified historical		
at 1 April	**990.3**	**1,013.8**
Additions	55.8	63.3
Depreciation	(34.2)	(36.2)
Other movements in cost	1.9	3.0
Net book value at 31 March	**1,013.8**	**1,043.9**

The table below shows the breakdown of the property, plant and equipment line of the

	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Infrastructure assets	1,013.8	1,043.9
Other PPE assets	797.1	847.7
Total PPE assets	**1,810.9**	**1,891.6**

The authority has determined in accordance with Regulation 30M England of the

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

Valuations

The Council revalues Property, Land and Buildings on a rolling five year programme on a current value basis as set out in Accounting Policy Note 2. All valuations were carried out externally by Catriona Banks MRICS, District Valuer Services. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out with an effective date of 31st March 2023 in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Instution of Chartered Surveyors. Summary values are shown in the following table:

	Land and Buildings £m	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £m	Surplus Assets £m	Assets Under Construction £m	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £m
2022/2023					
Carried at historical cost	0.0	6.5	0.0	11.8	18.3
Carried at valuation					
Revaluation in 2018/19	44.8	0.0	1.6	0.0	46.4
Revaluation in 2019/20	94.9	0.0	3.1	0.0	98.0
Revaluation in 2020/21	156.9	0.0	1.7	0.0	158.6
Revaluation in 2021/22	223.3	111.3	0.8	0.0	335.4
Revaluation in 2022/33	187.9	0.0	3.1	0.0	191.0
	707.8	117.8	10.3	11.8	847.7

13. Heritage Assets

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

	Archives £m	Museums £m	County Buildings & Judges House £m	Total Assets £m
Cost or Valuation				
1 April 2022	6.8	2.5	0.3	**9.6**
Additions	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Disposals	(0.7)	(0.2)	0.0	**(0.9)**
Revaluations	0.2	0.1	0.0	**0.3**
Impairment losses recognised in Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services	(0.1)	0.0	0.0	**(0.1)**
At 31 March 2023	**6.2**	**2.4**	**0.3**	**8.9**
Cost or Valuation				
1 April 2021	6.8	2.5	0.3	**9.6**
Additions	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Disposals	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Revaluations	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Impairment losses recognised in Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
At 31 March 2022	**6.8**	**2.5**	**0.3**	**9.6**

Archives

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

The archived collections include a number of significant documents such as The Sutherland Papers valued at £1.7 million and a printed book collection valued at £1 million.

Museums

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

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

County Buildings and Judges House

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

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

14. Financial Instruments

Categories of Financial Instruments

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

	Long - Term			**Current**		
	31 March 2021	**31 March 2022**	**31 March 2023**	**31 March 2021**	**31 March 2022**	**31 March 2023**
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Financial assets						
At amortised cost:						
Investments	30.4	30.4	30.4	0.0	42.0	156.2
Call accounts and short term deposits	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7
Bank Account (Overdraft)	0.0	0.0	0.0	(5.9)	0.7	(7.9)
At fair value through profit & loss						
Cash equivalents	0.0	0.0	0.0	247.5	304.9	238.2
Total investments and cash equivalents	**30.4**	**30.4**	**30.4**	**241.6**	**347.6**	**387.2**
At amortised cost						
Long Term Debtors	22.8	22.2	21.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Trade receivables	0.0	0.0	0.0	113.5	110.2	149.6
Total Financial Assets	**53.2**	**52.6**	**51.9**	**355.1**	**457.8**	**536.8**
Financial liabilities						
At amortised cost:						
Loans	(412.2)	(404.4)	(397.6)	(40.0)	(44.0)	(45.9)
Total borrowings	**(412.2)**	**(404.4)**	**(397.6)**	**(40.0)**	**(44.0)**	**(45.9)**
PFI and finance lease liabilities	(130.1)	(116.5)	(108.3)	(7.6)	(7.7)	(8.2)
Total other liabilities	**(130.1)**	**(116.5)**	**(108.3)**	**(7.6)**	**(7.7)**	**(8.2)**
Trade and other creditors	0.0	0.0	0.0	(144.0)	(106.4)	(131.4)
Total creditors	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**(144.0)**	**(106.4)**	**(131.4)**
Total Financial Liabilities	**(542.3)**	**(520.9)**	**(505.9)**	**(191.6)**	**(158.1)**	**(185.5)**

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

14. Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities

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

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

- Loans borrowed have been valued by discounting the contractual cash flows over the whole life of the instrument at the appropriate market rate for local authority loans.

- For non-PWLB loans fair value estimates have been calculated using both PWLB redemption and new PWLB Certainty Rate loan discount rates. The PWLB redemption rates provide a reasonable proxy for rates that a number of market participants appear to have used when asked about early redemption costs for market loans.
- No early repayment or impairment of loans is recognised for any financial instrument.
- The fair value of short-term instruments is assumed to approximate to the carrying value.

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

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

The fair values calculated are as follows:

		31 March 2021	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2022	31 March 2023	31 March 2023
	Fair value level	**Carrying amount**	**Fair Value**	**Carrying amount**	**Fair Value**	**Carrying amount**	**Fair Value**
		£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
PWLB - maturity	**2**	400.3	631.3	396.4	575.9	391.7	410.7
PWLB - equal instalments of principal	**2**	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0	0
Lender option borrower option	**2**	51.8	84.8	51.9	76.5	51.8	49.2
Total borrowings		**452.2**	**716.2**	**448.4**	**652.5**	**443.5**	**459.9**

The fair value of the liabilities held at amortised cost is higher than the carrying amount as at 31 March 2023. This is because the Council has a number of fixed rate loans where at the balance sheet date, the interest rates are higher than the current rates available from the market for similar loans.

14. Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities (Cont'd)

	Fair value level	31 March 2021 Carrying amount £m	31 March 2021 Fair Value £m	31 March 2022 Carrying amount £m	31 March 2022 Fair Value £m	31 March 2023 Carrying amount £m	31 March 2023 Fair Value £m
Deposits with banks and building societies	2	0.0	0.0	10.0	10.0	71.1	71.1
Local authority and DMO deposits	2	30.4	37.0	62.4	67.0	116.2	116.2
Financial assets held at amortised cost		**30.4**	**37.0**	**72.4**	**77.0**	**187.3**	**187.3**
Money market funds (*)	1	247.5	247.5	304.9	304.9	208.6	208.6
Bond Funds**		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	29.6	29.6
Financial assets held at fair value		**247.5**	**247.5**	**304.9**	**304.9**	**238.2**	**238.2**
Financial Assets		**277.9**	**284.5**	**377.3**	**381.9**	**425.5**	**425.5**

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

** The valuation for the bond funds held by the Council is the market value as at 31 March 2023

The fair value and carrying amount for money market funds and bank and building society deposits are broadly the same at 31 March 2023 as interest rates being received are similar to market rates. The fair value of the local authority deposits are also at virtual parity with the carrying value as interest rates are now very similar to those at which the investments are held.

14. Financial Instruments (Cont'd)

Gains and Losses

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

	2021/2022			2022/2023		
	Financial Liabilities at amortised cost £m	Financial Assets at amortised cost and at FVPL £m	Total £m	Financial Liabilities at amortised cost £m	Financial Assets at amortised cost and at FVPL £m	Total £m
Interest expense/reduction in fair value	(32.5)	0.0	**(32.5)**	(33.0)	(0.4)	**(33.4)**
Total expense in (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**(32.5)**	**0.0**	**(32.5)**	**(33.0)**	**(0.4)**	**(33.4)**
Interest income/increase in fair value	0.0	3.0	**3.0**	0.0	10.7	**10.7**
Total income in (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**0.0**	**3.0**	**3.0**	**0.0**	**10.7**	**10.7**
Net (loss) /gain for the year	**(32.5)**	**3.0**	**(29.5)**	**(33.0)**	**10.3**	**(22.7)**

15. Long Term Debtors

31 March 2021 £m	31 March 2022 £m		31 March 2023 £m
0.3	0.3	Deferred consideration (PFI)	0.2
22.5	21.9	Other long term debtors	21.3
22.8	**22.2**	**Total**	**21.5**

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

The other long term debtors shown above includes an amount that relates to Stoke on Trent City Council (£6.2m). This debt arose when this organisation was part of the County Council. The organisation makes payments to us to service the debt.

There is an amount of £15.2m relating to Section 106 developer contributions which are due to fund capital schemes, however the money has not yet been received.

16. Short Term Debtors

31 March 2021	31 March 2022		31 March 2023
£m	£m		£m
113.7	125.6	Trade debtors	162.6
38.1	20.2	Prepayments	2.1
4.0	4.1	VAT (due to us)	4.8
(22.3)	(27.3)	Allowance for doubtful debts (debts we think may not be paid)	(28.8)
133.5	**122.6**	**Total**	**140.7**

17. Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

31 March 2021 £m	31 March 2022 £m		31 March 2023 £m
(5.9)	0.7	Bank account (overdraft)	(7.9)
0.0	0.0	Call accounts and short-term deposits *	0.7
247.5	304.9	Money Market Funds *	238.2
241.6	**305.6**	**Total cash and cash equivalents**	**231.0**

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

18. Assets Held for Sale

31 March 2021	31 March 2022	Short term assets held for sale	31 March 2023
£m	£m		**£m**
15.5	20.3	**Balance outstanding at start of year**	9.7
10.2	2.7	Assets newly classified as held for sale	8.1
0.1	0.0	Additions	0.0
0.0	(0.1)	Assets reclassified as operational	0.0
0.3	0.0	Impairments/ Revaluations	(0.6)
(5.8)	(13.2)	Assets sold	(2.3)
20.3	**9.7**	**Balance outstanding at year-end**	**14.9**

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

19. Short-Term Creditors

31 March 2021	31 March 2022		31 March 2023
£m	**£m**		**£m**
(140.0)	(122.4)	Trade and other creditors	(134.6)
(5.7)	(6.5)	Tax and money owed to HM Revenues and Customs	(5.7)
(4.1)	(9.2)	Money received in advance	(10.4)
(149.8)	**(138.1)**	**Total**	**(150.7)**

20. Provisions

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

Long term provisions

	Business Rates Appeals	Insurance		Long Term Provisions Total
		Before LGR	After LGR	
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Balance at 1 April 2022	(3.5)	(1.0)	(6.2)	**(10.7)**
Amounts contributed to provision	(0.5)	(0.4)	(4.3)	**(5.2)**
Amounts used in 2022/2023	0.7	0.3	3.4	**4.4**
Balance at 31 March 2023	**(3.3)**	**(1.1)**	**(7.1)**	**(11.5)**

There is a significant provision of £3.3m (£3.5m in 2021/2022) for the repayment of any successful non-domestic rates appeals (business rates appeals) upheld by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). Prior to the introduction of the Retained Business Rates Scheme, these appeals were met from the national pool administered by central government, but now the Council is liable for 9% of the costs of the appeals. The timing of these appeals is uncertain and outside the control of the Council as they are dependent on the timing of reviews of cases by the VOA.

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

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

21. Unusable Reserves

31 March 2021	31 March 2022		31 March 2023
£m	£m		£m
(257.4)	(249.1)	Revaluation reserve	(334.4)
(889.1)	(904.8)	Capital adjustment account	(912.6)
0.0	0.0	Pooled investments adjustment account	0.4
16.5	16.0	Financial instruments adjustment account	15.5
1,026.0	693.5	Pensions reserve	525.6
20.5	(11.6)	Collection fund adjustment account	(6.5)
8.3	7.2	Accumulated absences account	8.9
2.0	8.6	Dedicated Schools Grant adjustment account	14.2
(73.2)	**(440.2)**	**Total Unusable Reserves**	**(688.9)**

Revaluation Reserve

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

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

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

2021/2022			2022/2023	
£m	£m		£m	£m
	(257.4)	**Balance at 1 April**		(249.1)
(59.9)		Upward revaluation of assets	(129.2)	
41.7		Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the deficit on the provision of services	14.7	
	(18.2)	Surplus on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the deficit on the provision of services		(114.5)
6.2		Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	6.9	
20.3		Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	22.3	
	26.5	Amounts written off to the Capital adjustment account		29.2
	(249.1)	**Balance at 31 March**		**(334.4)**

21. Unusable reserves (Cont'd)

Capital Adjustment Account

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

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

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

2021/2022		2022/2023
£m		£m
(889.1)	**Balance at 1 April**	**(904.8)**
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:	
71.2	Charges for depreciation and impairment of non current assets	66.3
16.9	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute (REFCUS)	6.6
51.8	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	50.1
(26.5)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(29.2)
113.4	Net written out amount of the cost of non current assets consumed in the year	**93.8**
	Capital financing applied in the year:	
(14.5)	Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure (including REFCUS)	(2.8)
(70.1)	Capital grants and contributions credited to the Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(66.1)
(9.3)	Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	(0.1)
(35.4)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balance	(29.0)
0.2	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund	(3.6)
(129.1)		**(101.6)**
(904.8)	**Balance at 31 March**	**(912.6)**

21. Unusable reserves (Cont'd)

Pensions Reserve

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

2021/2022		2022/2023
£m		**£m**
1,026.0	**Balance at 1 April**	693.5
(373.9)	Actuarial (gains)/losses on pension assets and liabilities	(198.1)
100.7	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the deficit/surplus on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	93.9
(42.5)	Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(45.8)
(16.8)	Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions	(17.9)
693.5	**Balance at 31 March**	**525.6**

22. Cash Flow Statement - Operating Activities

The cash flows from operating activities includes the following items:

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
(3.1)	Interest received	(11.3)
22.4	Interest paid	21.8

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

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
(56.2)	Depreciation	(59.6)
(14.1)	Impairment and downward valuations	(7.9)
(5.0)	Increase/(Decrease) in impairment of bad debts	(1.5)
49.3	(Increase)/Decrease in creditors	(10.8)
(26.0)	Increase/(Decrease) in debtors	21.3
0.1	Increase/(Decrease) in stock valuation	0.1
(38.2)	Pension benefits charged in excess of contributions	(48.1)
17.9	Prepayment of pension contributions*	0.0
(51.9)	Net carrying amount of non-current assets sold	(47.3)
18.8	Other non-cash items charges to the net Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	7.3
(105.3)		**(146.5)**

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

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

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
84.8	Capital grants credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services	90.5
14.5	Proceeds for the sale of PPE, investment property and intangible assets	2.8
(10.2)	Other items for which the cash effects are investing or financing cash flows	(10.4)
89.1		**82.9**

23. Cash Flow Statement - Investing Activities

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
106.4	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investments and intangible assets	93.0
(34.5)	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(1.2)
42.0	Purchases/(proceeds) of short-term and long-term investments	114.2
(84.8)	Other receipts from investing activities	(90.5)
29.1	**Net cash flows from investing activities**	**115.5**

24. Cash Flow Statement - Financing Activities

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
(1.9)	Receipts from financing activities	(1.8)
10.4	Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases and on balance sheet PFI contracts	10.4
4.0	Repayments of short and long-term borrowing	5.0
12.5	**Net cash flows from financing activities**	**13.6**

25. Reconciliation of Liabilities Arising from Financing Activities

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

	1 April 2022 £m	Financing Cash Flows £m	Non-Financing Cash Flows £m	31 March 2023 £m
Long-term borrowing repayable after more than one year	(404.4)	0.0	6.8	(397.6)
Long-term borrowing repayable within one year	(44.0)	5.0	(6.9)	(45.9)
PFI schemes	(124.2)	10.4	(2.7)	(116.5)
Finance leases	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total liabilities from financing activities	**(572.6)**	**15.4**	**(2.8)**	**(560.0)**

26. Pooled Budgets

Better Care Fund

In 2022/2023 Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board (formerly Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Groups) entered into a Section 75 Framework Agreement of the National Health Service Act 2006 pooled fund arrangement, known as the Better Care Fund. Staffordshire County Council is the Host Partner for the pool. The total value of the pool was £144.3m.

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

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

Section 75	**2021/2022**		**2022/2023**	
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Funding provided to the pooled budget:				
East Staffordshire CCG	(6.7)		0.0	
South East Staffordshire & Seisdon CCG	(11.9)		0.0	
Cannock Chase CCG	(7.1)		0.0	
North Staffordshire CCG	(11.0)		0.0	
Stafford & Surrounds CCG	(8.1)		0.0	
Stoke on Trent CCG	(0.3)		0.0	
Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent ICB	0.0		(39.7)	
		(45.1)		(39.7)
Expenditure met from the pooled budget		25.8		27.6
County Council share of net surplus/deficit arising on the pooled budget		**(19.3)**		**(12.1)**

The following memorandum account shows the gross income and expenditure of the scheme in 2022/2023.

	2021/2022		**2022/2023**	
Funding provided to the Pooled Budget:	£m	£m	£m	£m
CCGs / ICB	(100.7)		(98.6)	
Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities	(41.8)		(42.7)	
Department for Health & Social Care	0.0		(3.0)	
		(142.5)		(144.3)
Expenditure met from the Pooled Budget:				
CCGs / ICB	58.4		62.2	
Staffordshire County Council	54.8		60.0	
District & Borough Councils	10.0		10.0	
		123.2		132.2
Net position on the pooled budget		(19.3)		(12.1)

27. Members' Allowances

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

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Basic Allowance	0.6	0.6
Special Responsibility Allowance	0.4	0.4
Expenses	0.0	0.0
Total	**1.0**	**1.0**

28. Officers' Remuneration

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

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

Officer	Year	Salary, fees and allowances £	Performance related pay £	Taxable expenses and allowances £	Compensation for loss of office £	Employer's pension contributions £	Total including pension contributions £
Chief Executive - John Henderson	**2021/2022**	211,743	0	0	0	0	211,743
Chief Executive - John Henderson **Note 1**	**2022/2023**	243,313	0	0	0	0	243,313
Director of Health and Care - Richard Harling	**2021/2022**	195,694	11,262	0	0	0	206,956
Director of Health and Care - Richard Harling **Notes 2, 3**	**2022/2023**	173,027	-	0	0	0	173,027
Director of Families and Communities	**2021/2022**	156,942	0	13,193	0	43,369	213,504
Director of Families and Communities	**2022/2023**	39,439	0	13,260	0	10,885	63,584
Director of Children and Families **Note 5**	**2022/2023**	123,811	0	0	0	32,368	156,179
Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills	**2021/2022**	148,319	0	9,106	0	38,870	196,295
Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills **Note 3**	**2022/2023**	150,942	0	9,089	0	41,467	201,498
Director of Corporate Services	**2021/2022**	148,319	0	5,861	0	39,453	193,633
Director of Corporate Services	**2022/2023**	155,878	0	1,616	0	43,022	200,516

28. Officers' Remuneration (Cont'd)

Officer	Year	Salary, fees and allowances £	Performance related pay £	Taxable expenses and allowances £	Compensation for loss of office £	Employer's pension contributions £	Total including pension contributions £
County Treasurer (Section 151 Officer)	**2021/2022**	122,780	0	11,401	0	32,659	166,840
Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) **Note 4**	**2022/2023**	131,918	0	11,386	0	35,246	178,550

Notes for clarification

All senior officers have received a pay award of £1,925 (pro rata for starters and leavers) in the 2022/2023 financial year.

Note 1 The Chief Executive is not part of the Local Government Pensions Scheme.
Note 2 The Director of Health and Care is not part of the Local Government Pensions Scheme.
Note 3 The Director of Health and Care received a one-off compensation payment in 2021/2022 relating to changes in their contract terms.
Note 4 During 2022/2023 Finance became its own Directorate (previously part of Corporate Services) and the Section 151 Officer became the Director of Finance.

Note 5 During 2022/2023 the Director of Families and Communities left the County Council and a new Director was appointed. Following a minor restructure, the Directorate is now known as Children and Families.

28. Officers' Remuneration (Cont'd)

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

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

Number of employees 2021/2022			Remuneration band	Number of employees 2022/2023		
Teachers	Non-teachers	Leavers		Teachers	Non-teachers	Leavers
69	144	1	£ 50,000 to £ 54,999	61	164	0
45	52	1	£ 55,000 to £ 59,999	48	65	1
44	34	1	£ 60,000 to £ 64,999	36	28	1
23	19	4	£ 65,000 to £ 69,999	35	37	0
18	4	3	£ 70,000 to £ 74,999	20	8	3
14	5	0	£ 75,000 to £ 79,999	7	4	2
5	14	0	£ 80,000 to £ 84,999	8	6	0
2	5	3	£ 85,000 to £ 89,999	4	17	1
1	7	4	£ 90,000 to £ 94,999	2	3	2
3	13	2	£ 95,000 to £ 99,999	0	10	0
0	2	2	£100,000 to £104,999	2	2	1
1	2	1	£105,000 to £109,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£110,000 to £114,999	0	1	0
0	4	1	£115,000 to £119,999	1	4	0
0	3	1	£120,000 to £124,999	0	1	0
0	1	1	£125,000 to £129,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£130,000 to £134,999	0	1	0
0	2	2	£135,000 to £139,999	0	0	0
0	2	2	£140,000 to £144,999	0	1	0
0	0	0	£145,000 to £149,999	0	0	0
0	2	0	£150,000 to £154,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£155,000 to £159,999	0	1	0
0	0	0	£160,000 to £164,999	0	1	0
0	0	0	£165,000 to £169,999	0	0	0
0	1	0	£170,000 to £174,999	0	1	0
0	1	1	£175,000 to £179,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£180,000 to £184,999	0	0	0
0	1	0	£185,000 to £189,999	0	0	0
0	1	1	£190,000 to £194,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£195,000 to £199,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£205,000 to £209,999	0	0	0
0	1	0	£210,000 to £214,999	0	0	0
0	0	0	£240,000 to £244,999	0	1	0
225	**320**	**31**	**Total**	**224**	**356**	**11**

29. Exit Packages

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

(a) Exit package cost band (including special payments)	(b) Number of compulsory redundancies		(c) Number of other departures agreed		(d) Total number of exit packages by cost band [(b) + (c)]		(e) Total cost of exit packages in each band	
	2021/2022 No.	2022/2023 No.	2021/2022 No.	2022/2023 No.	2021/2022 No.	2022/2023 No.	2021/2022 £	2022/2023 £
£0 - £20,000	23	17	7	5	30	22	221,520.88	116,222.96
£20,001 -£40,000	18	14	1	1	19	15	499,576.05	520,321.38
£40,001 - £60,000	11	7	1	1	12	8	620,287.22	477,238.89
£60,001 - £80,000	4	5	0	1	4	6	278,576.25	397,902.60
£80,001 - £100,000	3	3	1	0	4	3	343,414.00	262,441.28
£100,001 - £150,000	6	7	1	0	7	7	869,934.60	852,135.60
£150,001 - £200,000	2	3	1	0	3	3	531,264.11	478,693.45
£200,000 - £250,000	2	2	0	0	2	2	417,010.70	425,020.30
£250,000 - £300,000	1	0	0	0	1	0	284,562.09	-
£300,000 - £350,000	1	0	0	0	1	0	330,375.29	-
Total cost included in bandings and in the CIES	71	58	12	8	83	66	4,396,521.19	3,529,976.46

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

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

30. External Audit Costs

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

	2021/2022	2022/2023
	£m	£m
Fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year *	0.085	0.110
Fees payable in respect of other services provided by the external auditor during the year.	0.000	0.000
Total	**0.085**	**0.110**

* this excludes any scale variation fee for additional work to complete the audit in both years as the estimates of these fees are not yet available.

31. Dedicated Schools Grant

In 2022/2023 we received a specific grant from Central Government called the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As a result, we have shown this on the schools service figures in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure statement.

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

Details of how we used the DSG for 2022/2023 are as follows:

	Schools budget funded by DSG		
	Central Expenditure £m	Individual Schools Budget (ISB) £m	Total £m
Final DSG for 2022/2023, before academy recoupment	146.0	602.6	**748.6**
Academy figure recouped for 2022/2023	0.0	(449.5)	**(449.5)**
Total DSG after academy recoupment for 2022/2023	**146.0**	**153.1**	**299.1**
Plus: brought forward from 2021/2022	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Less: carry-forward to 2023/2024 agreed in advance	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Agreed budgeted distribution in 2022/2023	**146.0**	**153.1**	**299.1**
In year adjustments	0.4	0.0	**0.4**
Final budget distribution for 2022/2023	**146.4**	**153.1**	**299.5**
Less: Actual central expenditure	152.0	0.0	**152.0**
Less: Actual ISB deployed to schools	0.0	153.1	**153.1**
Plus: Local Authority contribution for 2022/2023	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
In year carry-forward to 2023/2024	**(5.6)**	**0.0**	**(5.6)**
Plus: carry forward to 2023/2024 agreed in advance	0	0	0.0
Carry forward to 2023/2024	0	0	0.0
DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2021/2022			(8.6)
Addition to unusable reserve at the end of 2022/2023			(5.6)
Total of DSG unusable reserve at the end of 2022/2023			(14.2)
Net DSG position at the end of 2022/2023			**(14.2)**

32. Grant Income

The Council credited the following grants to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2022/2023.

	2021/2022	2022/2023
	£m	£m
Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income		
Revenue Support Grant	10.9	11.3
New Homes Bonus	2.0	2.0
Local Services Support Grant	0.6	0.7
Social Care Grant	25.3	34.6
Covid 19 Emergency Funding	23.5	0.0
Core Services Grant	0.0	7.0
Total	**62.3**	**55.6**
Credited to Services		
Department for Education	32.8	37.9
Department for Transport	4.2	3.6
Department of Health	71.2	40.4
Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities	39.4	53.4
DEFRA	9.5	9.8
Higher Education Funding Council for England	0.3	0.3
Home Office	3.5	5.5
Youth Justice Board	1.0	1.1
Department for Works and Pensions	8.9	9.2
Other	4.0	2.0
Total	**174.8**	**163.2**

32. Grant Income (Cont'd)

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

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m
Capital Grants Receipts in Advance		
Department for Education	4.2	13.8
Department for Transport	7.1	7.2
Other Contributions	41.9	36.7
Total	**53.2**	**57.7**

33. Related Parties

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

Central Government

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

Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2022/2023 is shown in Note 27.

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

During 2022/2023, works and services to the value of £0.8m were commissioned from a company in which one member had an interest. The contract was entered into in full compliance with the Council's standing orders for procurement.

Pension Fund

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

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

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

The Council acts as the accountable body for the Stoke and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP), which supports projects that benefit the local economy and supports growth through the creation of jobs, housing and skills (apprenticeships). At 31 March 2023 the SSLEP held cash of £11.4m (£11.8m in 2021/2022).

The Council acts as accountable body for the Midlands Engine Partnership (ME). At 31 March 2023 the ME held cash of £3.2m (£4.1m in 2021/2022).

33. Related Parties (Cont'd)

Payments to the Environment Agency

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
0.3	Environment Agency - Flood defence levy	0.3
0.3	**Total**	**0.3**

Entrust Support Services Ltd

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

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

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

During 2022/2023, the Council purchased services in the normal course of business from Entrust for £22.5 million (2021/2022 - £20 million); this includes services purchased by schools. Entrust bought services in the normal course of business from the Council for £2.5 million (2021/2022 - £2.4 million).

At the end of the year, Entrust owed the Council £0.4 million (2021/2022 - £0.7 million).

Penda Ltd

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

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

There were no material transactions between the Council and Penda Ltd in 2022/2023.

33. Related Parties (Cont'd)

Nexxus Trading Services Ltd

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

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

- Cllr Mark Deaville, Cabinet Member for Commercial
- Cllr Mark Winnington, Chairman of the Planning Committee
- Dr. Richard Harling - Director for Health and Care
- Helen Riley, Director for Families and Communities (Resigned 30th June 2022)
- Simon Ablewhite - Assistant County Treasurer (Resigned 31st March 2023)

During 2022/2023, the Council purchased services in the normal course of business from Nexxus for £7.6 million (2021/2022 £8.3 million). Nexxus bought services in the normal course of business from the Council for £0.7 million (2021/2022 £0.1m).

At the end of the year, Nexxus had no outstanding balances with the Council (2021/2022 £0m).

34. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing

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

2021/2022 Total £m		2022/2023 Total £m
696.8	**Opening Capital Financing Requirement**	**678.4**
	Capital Investment	
94.4	Property, plant and equipment	87.2
0.0	Investment properties	0.0
0.0	Intangible assets	0.0
17.0	Revenue Expenditure funded from Capital under Statute	6.6
111.4	**Total Capital Investment**	**93.8**
	Financed From	
35.4	Minimum Revenue Provision	29.0
51.1	Capital Grants	44.2
14.5	Capital Receipts	2.8
0.5	Revenue	3.9
1.2	Other Contributions	0.3
27.1	Section 106 Contributions	21.6
129.8	**Total**	**101.8**
678.4	**Closing Capital Financing Requirement**	**670.4**

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

2021/2022 £m		2022/2023 £m
696.8	**Opening Capital Financing Requirement (as above)**	**678.4**
(11.9)	Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (Supported by government financial assistance)	(11.4)
7.5	Increase/(decrease) in underlying need to borrow (Unsupported by government financial assistance)	11.2
(5.6)	Assets acquired under finance leases	0.0
(8.4)	Assets acquired under PFI/PPP contracts	(7.8)
678.4	**Closing Capital Financing Requirement**	**670.4**

35. Leases

Operating Leases

Council as Lessee

The Council has operating leases in place for various properties.

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

31 March 2022 £m		31 March 2023 £m
1.0	Not later than one year	0.8
3.0	Later than one year and not later than five years	1.8
5.7	Later than five years	2.2
9.7		**4.8**

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

31 March 2022 £m		31 March 2023 £m
1.0	Minimum lease payments	1.0
1.0		**1.0**

Finance Leases

Council as Lessee

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

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

31 March 2022 £m		31 March 2023 £m
7.3	Operational Land & Buildings	8.1
7.3		**8.1**

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

36. Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) and Similar Contracts

We have four PFI schemes as follows:

1. Two Schools PFI Scheme

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

The contract is for 25 years and is worth £49.6 million. It involves providing repairs and maintenance, energy, cleaning, caretaking and other services. The amount we paid in 2022/2023 was £1.8 million (2021/2022 £1.7 million), paid for from extra government grants and contributions from schools. Further payments we make under the contract are performance related. In other words, we take off amounts if the accommodation is not available on time or if the performance is below a given standard.

2. Streetlighting PFI Scheme

We have entered into a PFI contract under which street lighting and associated maintenance services are provided. The contract is for 25 years and is worth £174.9 million. The amount we paid in 2022/2023 was £17.9 million (2021/2022 £14.9 million), paid for by extra government grants and contributions from revenue.

3. Children's Homes PFI Scheme

We entered into a further PFI contract in 2005/2006 to design, pay for and maintain three children's homes. The contract is for 25 years and is worth £20.8 million. The amount we paid in 2022/2023 was £1.1 million (2021/2022 £1.0 million).

4. Waste to Energy PFI Scheme

We entered into a PFI contract for the construction of the Waste to Energy plant at Four Ashes. The contract is for 25 years and is worth £377.3 million. The amount we paid in 2022/2023 was £28.2 million (2021/2022 £26.5 million).

Valuation of PFI assets

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

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Two Schools Scheme	2.4	2.6
Streetlighting Scheme	53.2	56.2
Children's Homes Scheme	5.7	6.2
Waste to Energy	161.5	168.0
Total value of assets	**222.8**	**233.0**

Value of PFI liabilities

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

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Two Schools Scheme	(2.6)	(2.1)
Streetlighting Scheme	(3.7)	(3.3)
Children's Homes Scheme	(2.3)	(2.0)
Waste to Energy	(56.3)	(53.3)
PFI liabilities	**(64.9)**	**(60.7)**
Waste to Energy (Third Party financing)	(59.3)	(55.8)
Total value of liabilities	**(124.2)**	**(116.5)**

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

Details of payments due

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

Two Schools Scheme

	Payments to reduce liability	Interest	Service Charges	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Due within one year	0.5	0.3	1.0	1.8
Due within 2 to 5 years	1.6	0.4	3.3	5.3
Total due	**2.1**	**0.7**	**4.3**	**7.1**

Streetlighting Scheme

	Payments to reduce liability	Interest	Service Charges	Payments for assets	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Due within one year	0.7	0.2	5.0	0.2	6.1
Due within 2 to 5 years	2.5	0.5	21.4	0.6	25.0
Due within 6 to 10 years	0.1	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.8
Total due	**3.3**	**0.7**	**27.1**	**0.8**	**31.9**

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

Children's Homes Scheme

	Payments to reduce liability	Interest	Service Charges	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Due within one year	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.9
Due within 2 to 5 years	1.7	0.5	1.7	3.9
Due within 6 to 10 years	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total due	**2.0**	**0.7**	**2.1**	**4.8**

Waste to Energy

	Payments to reduce liability	Interest	Service Charges	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Due within one year	3.1	8.2	8.2	19.5
Due within 2 to 5 years	13.1	27.8	36.1	77.0
Due within 6 to 10 years	13.7	19.6	41.8	75.1
Due within 11 to 15 years	20.3	13.5	74.7	108.5
Due within 16 to 20 years	3.1	0.5	14.0	17.6
Total due	**53.3**	**69.6**	**174.8**	**297.7**

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

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

	Two Schools Scheme		Streetlighting Scheme		Children's Homes Scheme		Waste to Energy	
	2021/2022	2022/2023	2021/2022	2022/2023	2021/2022	2022/2023	2021/2022	2022/2023
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Balance outstanding at start of year	(3.4)	(2.6)	(4.0)	(3.7)	(2.5)	(2.3)	(59.3)	(56.3)
Payments during the year	0.8	0.5	2.9	2.9	0.2	0.3	3.0	3.0
Capital expenditure incurred in the year	0.0	0.0	(2.6)	(2.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Balance outstanding at year end	**(2.6)**	**(2.1)**	**(3.7)**	**(3.3)**	**(2.3)**	**(2.0)**	**(56.3)**	**(53.3)**

37. Impairment Losses

During 2022/2023 the Council recognised impairment losses to a number of properties totalling £23.5 million (£55.5 million in 2021/2022). The main reasons for the impairment losses were changes in market value of the properties and the transfer of school assets to newly created academies. The loss has initially been charged to any balances within the revaluation reserve (£11.1 million through the Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement) related to the asset that has been impaired. Any impairment value in excess of this (£12.0 million) has been charged across a range of service areas in the net cost of services line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement depending on the occupation of the relevant property during 2022/2023.

38. Termination Benefits

The Council terminated the contracts of a number of employees in 2022/2023, incurring liabilities of £1.9 million, of which £0.2 million relates to Teachers (£2.7 million in 2021/2022, £0.3 million of which related to Teachers).

39. Pension Schemes Accounted for as Defined Contribution Schemes

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

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

In 2022/2023, the Council paid £25.017 million to the Teachers' Pension Scheme in respect of teachers retirement benefits, representing 33% of pensionable pay. The figures for 2021/2022 were £25.946 million and 33%.

The Council is also responsible for all pension payments relating to added years benefits awarded, together with related increases. In 2022/2023 these amounted to £4.870 million (£4.942 million in 2021/2022) representing 6.4% of pensionable pay.

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Participation in Pension Schemes

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

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

In 2022/2023, the Council paid an employer's contribution of £29.0 million (£24.1 million in 2021/2022) into the Staffordshire Pension Fund. The fund's actuary decides how much we should contribute, based on the actuarial valuation carried out every three years.

The Council is responsible for all pension payments relating to added years benefits we have awarded, together with related increases. In 2022/2023 these payments amounted to £4.79 million (£4.85 million in 2021/2022), representing 2.7% of pensionable pay.

Transactions relating to post-employment benefits

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

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		
Cost of Services:		
Service cost compromising:		
Current service costs	84.5	81.7
Past service costs	2.0	1.1
(Gains) from settlements	(6.0)	(7.5)
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure		
Net interest expense	20.1	18.6
Total Post-employment Benefits charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**100.6**	**93.9**

40 Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Other Post-employment Benefits charges to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		
Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising;		
Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense).	(240.3)	113.4
Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(9.5)	(18.7)
Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	(185.4)	(1,073.9)
Other experience	61.5	171.0
Asset ceiling adjustment		610.1
Total Post-employment Benefits charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	**(373.7)**	**(198.1)**
Movement in Reserves Statement		
Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the code	**(100.7)**	**(93.9)**
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in year:		
Employers' contributions payable to scheme	33.2	36.5
Contributions in respect of unfunded benefits	9.3	9.3
Effect of Business combinations and Disposals	0.0	0.0
	42.5	**45.8**
Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions	16.8	17.9
	59.3	**63.7**

Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(3,192.4)	(2,348.7)
Fair value of plan assets	2,516.8	2,433.2
Prepayment of Employer's pension contributions	(17.9)	0.0
Asset ceiling adjustment	0.0	(610.1)
Net (liability)/asset arising from defined benefit obligation	**(693.5)**	**(525.6)**

Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme assets:

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
1 April	2,391.3	2,516.8
Interest income	47.3	67.3
Actuarial gains and (losses)	121.4	(113.4)
Assets distributed on settlements	(9.3)	(6.5)
Employer's contributions	33.1	36.5
Contributions from scheme members	10.5	11.5
Benefits paid	(77.5)	(79.0)
31 March	**2,516.8**	**2,433.2**

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities:		
1 April	3,382.4	3,192.4
Current service cost	84.6	81.7
Interest cost	67.5	85.9
Contribution by scheme members	10.5	11.5
Actuarial losses	(252.3)	(921.6)
Benefits paid	(86.9)	(88.3)
Past service costs (including curtailments)	1.9	1.1
Liabilities extinguished on settlements	(15.3)	(14.0)
31 March	**3,192.4**	**2,348.7**

Local Government Pension Scheme assets

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Cash and Cash Equivalents	98.6	95.4
Equity Instruments		
By industry type;		
Consumer	84.7	81.9
Manufacturing	69.2	66.8
Energy and utilities	19.0	18.4
Financial institutions	90.2	87.2
Health and care	95.2	92.0
Information technology	109.5	105.9
Other	0.0	0.0
Sub-total equity	467.8	452.2
Bonds:		
Corporate Bonds (investment grade)	147.9	142.9
Property:		
UK Property	201.6	194.9
Private Equity:		
All	124.7	120.6
Other Investment Funds:		
Equities	1,195.5	1,155.9
Bonds	157.5	152.3
Hedge Funds	1.0	0.9
Other	122.2	118.1
Sub-total Other Investment Funds	1,476.2	1,427.2
Total Assets	**2,516.8**	**2,433.2**

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Discretionary benefits have been estimated by Hymans Robertson, an independent firm of actuaries, based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2022. The main assumptions they have for working out these costs are shown below:

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
Mortality assumptions:		
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:		
Men	21.4 years	21.3 years
Women	24.3 years	24.3 years
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners		
Men	22.2 years	22.1 years
Women	25.7 years	25.7 years
Rate of increase in salaries	3.7%	3.5%
Rate of increase in pensions	3.2%	3.0%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.7%	4.75%

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

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

Change in assumptions at 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to employer liability	Approximate monetary amount (£m)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	2.0%	37.2
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4.0%	94.0
0.1% increase in salaries	0.0%	3.3
0.1% increase in pensions	1.0%	34.5

The Staffordshire Pension Fund pays a compulsory lump-sum retirement benefit of three times the yearly pension. From 6 April 2006, new tax rules allowed a member of a pension scheme to take up to 25% of a pension as lump sum. Members of the Staffordshire Pension Fund can convert their remaining pension into a lump sum. The actuary has assumed that people retiring in the future will elect to take 65% of the maximum tax-free lump sum up to HMRC limits. We will review the assumption regularly.

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

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

40. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes (Cont'd)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Projected defined benefit cost for the period to 31 March 2024

The contributions paid by the Council are set by the Fund Actuary at each triennial actuarial valuation (the most recent being as at 31 March 2022). The contributions payable over the period to 31 March 2024 are set out in the Rate and Adjustments certificate. Hymans Robertson estimate the Employer's contribution for the period to 31 March 2024 will be approximately £59.556m

Asset Ceiling

The IAS 19 asset ceiling is a specified estimate of the present value of the economic benefit which the employer organisation can realise.

To calculate a present value of a future set of cash flows, we calculate an annuity based on the above 31 March 2023 discount rate and salary increase assumptions.

The economic benefit available as a reduction in future contributions is calculated as present value of future service cost less present value of future service contributions.

Economic benefit available as a reduction in future contributions is floored at £18.326m due to the present value of future service contributions being less than the present value of future service contributions.

Under IAS 19, an additional liability is to be recognised where agreed past service contributions would give rise to a future surplus and not be available after they are paid.

The agreed past service contributions of £417.315m have been committed to be paid to the fund and are added to the net asset position. This position is then compared against the economic benefit available as a reduction in future contributions to determine if there is an additional liability to recognise.

As the economic benefit available as a reduction in future contributions is lower, there is an additional liability to recognise and an adjustment of £610.045m is required to the net asset/liability for the effect of the asset ceiling.

41. Contingent Liabilities

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

Entrust

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

Goodwin Case

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

Outcome

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

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

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

Adult Social Care Reform

The publication of the Adults Social Care White Paper in December 2021 gives the Authority possible financial obligation at 31 March 2023. The nature of the obligation depends on how many self-funders approach the council to commission their care, how often self-funders approach the council for financial assessment and the cost impacts of paying providers a “fair cost of care”, factors which are not wholly within the control of the authority.

Whilst funding has recently been announced to fund Adults Social Care reform, early research and analysis suggests that the Government allocation will be insufficient to meet the total costs of reform. To mitigate this we have set up a Health and Care risk reserve.

42. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

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

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

The main risks covered are listed below:

1. **Security (credit) risk** - the possibility that counterparties fail to pay amounts due to the Council and a loss is made.

2. **Liquidity risk** - the possibility that the Council might not have cash available to make payments on time, or the Council might need to renew financial instruments on maturity at disadvantageous interest rates or terms.

3. **Market risk**, comprising:

   Interest rate risk - the possibility of a financial loss for the Council because short-term interest rates rise or fall.

   Price risk - the possibility of a financial loss for the Council as a result of changes in the value of market instruments.

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

1. Security (credit) risk

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

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

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

Investments are made subject to financial limits on both an investment category and individual basis. In the case of investment category limits, investments are not limited for the total amount invested in Money Market Funds or directly with banks. On an individual basis in 2022/23, for Money Market Funds the limit is the lower of 0.50% of Money Market Fund size or 25% of total Council investments and for banks, the lower of 5% of total Council investments or £30m per counterparty. The Council also holds two non standard investments in bond funds totalling £30m. Investments are limited to £100m in this category so this is within approved limits.

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

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

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

Credit Rating	Long-Term			Short-Term		
	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
AAA	0.0	0.0	0.0	247.5	304.9	208.6
AA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	32.0	85.8
A	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	71.1
Unrated	30.4	30.4	30.4	0.0	0.0	29.6
Total investments	**30.4**	**30.4**	**30.4**	**247.5**	**346.9**	**395.1**

Since April 2010, the Council's strategy of using cash in lieu of long-term borrowing has reduced this risk, as it holds considerably less short-term investments as a result (around £102 million of cash was used in lieu of borrowing as at 31 March 2023).

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies is difficult to assess generally; the risk of any failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual entity. Historical and recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of irrecoverability applies to all of the Council's deposits, but having considered all the evidence available at 31 March 2023, it is deemed unlikely that any losses would occur, hence no provision has been made in the accounts.

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

	Estimated maximum exposure to default at 31 March 2022	Amounts at 31 March 2023	Historical experience of default	Historical experience adjusted for market conditions at 31 March 2023	Estimated maximum exposure to default at 31 March 2023
		A	B	C	(A x C)
	£m	£m	%	%	£m
Customers	27.3	87.2	33.0	33.0	28.8
Total	**27.3**				**28.8**

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

£53.2 million of the £87.2 million balance owed to the Council by its customers is past its due date for payment. The remaining balance of £34 million is less than 28 days' old. The amount past its due date for payment can be analysed by age as follows:

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m
Less than three months	4.8	7.5
Three to six months	2.4	5.1
Six months to one year	7.4	9.4
More than one year	31.7	31.2
Total	**46.3**	**53.2**

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

2. Liquidity Risk

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

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

The Council has £51m of “Lender’s option, borrower’s option” (LOBO) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the rate payable; the Council will then have the option to accept the new rate or repay the loan without penalty. Should the lender exercise the option to increase the interest rates payable, it is highly likely that the Council will repay these loans. The maturity date on these loans is therefore uncertain.

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

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

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

3. Market Risk

Interest Rate Risk

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

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

Investments measured at amortised cost and loans borrowed are not carried at fair value, so changes in their fair value will have no impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. The Council has investment bond funds measured and held at market value; a notional charge will be placed into the Profit and Loss account to reflect changes in carrying amount.

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

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

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

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

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

At 31 March 2023, if interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be as follows:

	£m
Increase in interest payable on variable rate borrowings	1.0
Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	(4.2)
Impact on Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	**(3.2)**
Decrease in fair value of fixed-rate investment assets *	(2.2)
Decrease in fair value of fixed rate borrowings liabilities*	(59.5)

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

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

Price Risk

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

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

The repayment structure of financial liabilities is as follows:

On 31 March 2022			Financial Liabilities	On 31 March 2023		
Principal	Future Interest	Total		Principal	Future Interest	Total
£m	£m	£m		£m	£m	£m
124.2	81.3	205.5	**PFI Schemes	116.5	71.9	188.4
396.5	538.7	935.2	PWLB	391.7	519.2	910.9
41.8	1.5	43.3	* LOBO - Depfa Bank	41.7	1.7	43.4
10.1	0.3	10.4	* LOBO - Dexia Bank	10.1	0.3	10.4
0.0	0.0	0.0	Finance leases	0.0	0.0	0.0
572.6	**621.8**	**1,194.4**	**Total**	**560.0**	**593.1**	**1,153.1**
51.7	30.6	82.3	within one year	54.1	29.3	83.4
38.1	28.1	66.2	over 1 under 2	36.1	27.2	63.3
60.5	76.6	137.1	over 2 under 5	55.1	73.4	128.5
35.6	110.0	145.6	over 5 under 10	39.8	106.9	146.7
63.5	93.4	156.9	over 10 under 15	58.2	89.4	147.6
13.2	78.0	91.2	over 15 under 20	6.6	77.0	83.6
85.1	149.1	234.2	over 20 under 30	111.5	147.6	259.1
224.8	56.0	280.8	over 30 under 40	198.6	42.3	240.9
0.0	0.0	0.0	over 40	0.0	0.0	0.0
572.6	**621.8**	**1,194.4**	**Total**	**560.0**	**593.1**	**1,153.1**

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

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

** See Note 36 for individual scheme details

Using Cash in Lieu of Borrowing

As at the 31 March 2023, around £102 million of cash had been used in lieu of borrowing.
The impact of this strategy has been outlined in each of the specific risks above.

IFRS 9 Financial Instruments (Pooled Investments)

The impairment requirements of IFRS 9 do not apply to financial assets classified as ‘fair value through profit or loss’, as current market prices are considered to be an appropriate reflection of credit risk; this is the case with the bond funds that the Council holds. Movements in fair value (including those relating to credit risk) impacting on the carrying amount are posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services as they arise.
The Council has adopted the provisions of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2023 (SI 2023, No 241) regarding fair value gains and losses on pooled investments. This provides that a local authority must not charge an amount to its revenue account to reflect any fluctuation in the fair value of a pooled investment fund. Instead such amounts must be recorded in a separate account established and used for this purpose (see Note 21 Pooled Investments Adjustment Account).
The bond funds that the Council holds are classified as pooled investments.

43. Education Endowments

We are responsible for managing 13 (13 in 2021/2022) individual trust funds which we have set up as a result of donations or money left to us from various sources. The purpose of most of the funds is to provide educational prizes, scholarships and special benefits of a kind we would not normally provide as a local education authority. We invest most funds in stocks and shares and, as they do not represent our assets, we do not include them in the Balance Sheet.

The funds are shown below.

	2021/2022			2022/2023		
	Total income	Gross spending	Market value of fund	Total income	Gross spending	Market value of fund
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Rugeley Educational	85	85	3,100	89	61	1,761
Brewood Educational	74	52	2,738	77	103	2,635
Stafford Educational	18	19	668	19	18	643
Stafford Education Centre Charity	156	169	5,670	163	149	5,455
Alleynes – Stone	2	11	66	2	1	63
Alleynes – Uttoxeter	2	0	41	2	0	39
Brewood Middle School Charity	18	16	640	18	29	615
Tamworth High	9	0	335	10	0	323
Tamworth Youth Centre	2	0	79	3	0	76
Others	0	0	12	1	0	12
Total	**366**	**352**	**13,349**	**384**	**361**	**11,622**

44. Trust Funds

We manage a number of small funds on behalf of other organisations. These are 9 mainly social services comforts funds which are available to people in residential homes and day centres, and 3 other funds. The funds do not represent our assets and we do not include them in the Balance Sheet.

	Balance 31 March 2022	Income	Spending	Balance 31 March 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Trust funds				
Social services comforts funds	27	8	(4)	31
Homestead and Lea House	7	0	0	7
Glebelands	1	0	0	1
Chairman's charity	5	2	0	7
Total	**40**	**10**	**(4)**	**46**

STAFFORDSHIRE PENSION FUND

Financial Statements

1 April 2022
to
31 March 2023

Pension Scheme registration number: 10011745

Pension Fund account

Staffordshire Pension Fund account for the year ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Dealing with members, employers and others directly involved in the Fund			
Contributions receivable	7	180.1	186.8
Transfers in	8	11.7	13.6
		191.8	**200.4**
Benefits payable	9	(195.7)	(208.0)
Leavers	10	(10.3)	(11.3)
		(206.0)	**(219.3)**
Net additions/(withdrawals) from dealings with fund members		**(14.2)**	**(18.9)**
Management expenses	11	(25.7)	(23.5)
Net additions/(withdrawals) including fund management expenses		**(39.9)**	**(42.4)**
Returns on investments			
Investment income	12	68.6	81.5
Taxes on income	12	(0.3)	(0.3)
Profit and losses on disposal of investments and changes in the value of investments	13a	652.3	(211.2)
Net returns on investments		**720.6**	**(130.0)**
Net increase in the net assets available for benefits during the year		680.7	(172.4)
Opening net assets of the Fund		6,152.4	6,833.1
Closing net assets of the Fund		**6,833.1**	**6,660.7**

Net assets statement

Net assets statement at 31 March 2023

	Notes	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Long term investments	13/13c	**1.3**	**1.3**
Investment assets			
Equities	13/13c	1,269.5	1,303.1
Pooled investment vehicles	13/13c	4,072.0	3,815.8
Pooled Property Investment	13/13c	72.9	96.6
Derivatives	13/13c	0	0
Property	13/13c	472.7	417.2
Other investment balances	13c	674.1	893.9
Cash deposits	13/13c	264.4	125.6
		6,825.6	**6,652.2**
Investment liabilities			
Derivatives	13/13c	0	0
Other investment balances	13/13c	(3.3)	0
		(3.3)	**0**
Net investment assets	13/13c	**6,823.6**	**6,653.5**
Long term assets	19	**0.0**	**0.0**
Current assets	19a	**21.8**	**25.6**
Long term Liabilities	20	**(0.1)**	**(0.0)**
Current liabilities	20a	**(12.2)**	**(18.4)**
Net assets of the Fund available to fund benefits at the end of the reporting period		**6,833.1**	**6,660.7**

The financial statements summarise the transactions of the Fund and deal with the net assets available to us. They do not take account of obligations to pay pensions and benefits which fall due after the end of the financial year. The actuarial position on the scheme, which does take account of these obligations, is set out in the actuary's report on page 100.

The notes on pages 104 to 139 also form part of the Pension Fund financial statements.

Staffordshire Pension Fund (the Fund)

Actuarial Statement for 2022/23

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

Description of Funding Policy

The funding policy is set out in the Administering Authority's Funding Strategy Statement (FSS), dated March 2023. In summary, the key funding principles are as follows:

- take a prudent long-term view to secure the regulatory requirement for long-term solvency, with sufficient funds to pay benefits to members and their dependants
- use a balanced investment strategy to meet the regulatory requirement for long-term cost efficiency (where efficiency in this context means to minimise cash contributions from employers in the long term)
- where appropriate, ensure stable employer contribution rates
- reflect different employers' characteristics to set their contribution rates, using a transparent funding strategy
- use reasonable measures to reduce the risk of an employer defaulting on its pension obligations
- manage the fund in line with the stated ESG policies.

The FSS sets out how the Administering Authority seeks to balance the conflicting aims of securing the solvency of the Fund and keeping employer contributions stable. For employers whose covenant was considered by the Administering Authority to be sufficiently strong, contributions have been stabilised to have a sufficiently high likelihood of achieving the funding target over 20 years. Asset-liability modelling has been carried out which demonstrate that if these contribution rates are paid and future contribution changes are constrained as set out in the FSS, there is at least a 72% likelihood that the Fund will achieve the funding target over 20 years.

Funding Position as at the last formal funding valuation

The most recent actuarial valuation carried out under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 was as at 31 March 2022. This valuation revealed that the Fund's assets, which at 31 March 2022 were valued at £6,833 million, were sufficient to meet 120% of the liabilities (i.e. the present value of promised retirement benefits) accrued up to that date. The resulting surplus at the 2022 valuation was £1,137 million.

Each employer had contribution requirements set at the valuation, with the aim of achieving their funding target within a time horizon and likelihood measure as per the FSS. Individual employers' contributions for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026 were set in accordance with the Fund's funding policy as set out in its FSS.

Principal Actuarial Assumptions and Method used to value the liabilities

Full details of the methods and assumptions used are described in the 2022 valuation report and FSS.

Method

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

Assumptions

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

The key financial assumptions adopted for the 2022 valuation were as follows:

Financial assumptions	31 March 2022
Discount rate	4.4% pa
Salary increase assumption	3.2% pa
Benefit increase assumption (CPI)	2.7% pa

The key demographic assumption was the allowance made for longevity. The life expectancy assumptions are based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2021 model, with a 0% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long-term rate of 1.50% p.a. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are as follows:

	Males	Females
Current Pensioners	21.4 years	24.3 years
Future Pensioners*	22.2 years	25.7 years

*Aged 45 at the 2022 Valuation.

Copies of the 2022 valuation report and Funding Strategy Statement are available on request from the Administering Authority to the Fund and on the Fund's website.

Experience over the period since 31 March 2022

Markets continued to be disrupted by the ongoing war in Ukraine and inflationary pressures, impacting on investment returns achieved by the Fund's assets. High levels of inflation in the UK (compared to recent experience), have resulted in a higher than expected LGPS benefit increase of 10.1% in April 2023. Despite this, the funding level of the Fund is likely to be higher than reported at the 31 March 2022 funding valuation due to the significant rise in interest rates which reduces the value placed on the Fund's liabilities.

The next actuarial valuation will be carried out as at 31 March 2025. The Funding Strategy Statement will also be reviewed at that time.

Robert Bilton FFA

30 May 2023

For and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

Pension Fund Accounts Reporting Requirement

Introduction

CIPFA's Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2022/23 requires Administering Authorities of LGPS funds that prepare pension fund accounts to disclose what IAS26 refers to as the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits. I have been instructed by the Administering Authority to provide the necessary information for the Staffordshire Pension Fund ("the Fund").

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

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

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

Present value of promised retirement benefits

Year ended	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
Active members (£m)	1,986	3,858
Deferred members (£m)	1,354	2,088
Pensioners (£m)	2,688	2,577
Total (£m)	**6,028**	**8,523**

The promised retirement benefits at 31 March 2023 have been projected using a roll forward approximation from the latest formal funding valuation as at 31 March 2022. The approximation involved in the roll forward model means that the split of benefits between the three classes of member may not be reliable. However, I am satisfied that the total figure is a reasonable estimate of the actuarial present value of benefit promises.

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

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

Assumptions

The assumptions used are those adopted for the Administering Authority's IAS19 report and are different as at 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2022. I estimate that the impact of the change in financial assumptions to 31 March 2023 is to decrease the actuarial present value by £3,286m. I estimate that the impact of the change in demographic assumptions is to decrease the actuarial present value by £140m.

Financial assumptions

Year ended	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	% p.a.	% p.a.
Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2.95%	3.20%
Salary Increase Rate	3.45%	3.60%
Discount Rate	4.75%	2.70%

Demographic assumptions

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

Life expectancy is based on the Fund's VitaCurves with improvements in line with the CMI 2021 model, with a 10% weighting of 2021 (and 2020) data, standard smoothing (Sk7), initial adjustment of 0.25% and a long term rate of improvement of 1.5% p.a. Based on these assumptions, the average future life expectancies at age 65 are summarised below:

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

All other demographic assumptions have been updated since last year and are as per the latest funding valuation of the Fund.

Sensitivity Analysis

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

Change in assumption at 31 March 2023	Approximate % increase to promised retirement benefits	Approximate monetary amount (£m)
0.1% p.a. decrease in the Discount Rate	2%	109
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4%	241
0.1% p.a. increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0%	11
0.1% p.a. increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2%	99

Professional notes

This paper accompanies the 'Accounting Covering Report – 31 March 2023' which identifies the appropriate reliances and limitations for the use of the figures in this paper, together with further details regarding the professional requirements and assumptions.

Prepared by:-

Robert Bilton FFA

30 May 2023

For and on behalf of Hymans Robertson LLP

Notes to the accounts

1. Description of the Fund

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

The following description of the Fund is a summary only. For more detail, reference should be made to the Staffordshire Pension Fund Annual Report 2022/2023 and the underlying statutory powers underpinning the scheme.

a) General

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

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

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

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

b) Membership

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

Organisations participating in the Fund include the following:

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

There are over 450 employer organisations within the Fund (including the County Council itself), and over 117,000 individual members, as detailed in the following table.

Membership of the Fund

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
Pensionable employees		
Staffordshire County Council	8,020	8,149
Other employers	24,803	25,625
Total	**32,823**	**33,774**
Pensioners		
Staffordshire County Council	18,502	18,872
Other employers	20,616	24,104
Total	**39,118**	**42,976**
Deferred pensioners (people who no longer pay into the scheme)		
Staffordshire County Council	19,114	18,861
Other employers	23,590	21,736
Total	**42,704**	**40,597**
Total number of members in the pension scheme	**114,645**	**117,347**

c) Funding

Benefits are funded by contributions and investment earnings. Contributions are made by active members of the Fund in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. Employee contributions are matched by employers' contributions which are set based on triennial actuarial funding valuations. The last such valuation was at 31 March 2022.

d) Benefits

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

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

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

2. Basis of preparation

The statement of accounts summarises the Fund's transactions for the 2022/2023 financial year and its position at year-end as at 31 March 2023. The financial statements follow the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/2023 (the Code) which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as amended for the UK public sector and issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

The accounts summarise the transactions of the Fund and report on the net assets available to pay pension benefits. The accounts do not take account of obligations to pay pensions and benefits which fall due after the end of the financial year nor do they take into account the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits.

The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

Due to the maturity of the scheme, the Fund has been operating a cash flow shortfall from its dealings with members for a few years. The Fund does have investment income in excess of this paid into the Fund.

The table below identifies the information from the period ended 31 March 2023 to the end of the Going Concern period of 31 March 2026.

In the event that the Fund needs to raise cash to fund commitments, it held in excess of £5bn in liquid investments as at 31 March 2023. These are generally realisable within 7 days of trade execution. Considering all of the above the Fund considers it appropriate to prepare financial statements on a going concern basis for the period to 31 March 2026.

	Period to	(Shortfall)/Surplus from dealings with members (£m)	Investment Income (£m)	Year end cash position (£m)
Actual	31/03/2022	(14.27)	68.33	247.50
Actual	31/03/2023	(18.88)	81.25	92.90
Actual	31/03/2024	49.72	89.55	97.39
Forecast	31/03/2025	15.48	80.00	33.36
Forecast	31/03/2026	8.28	80.00	84.88

You can get more information on the Pension Fund, including the Fund Governance Statement, the Investment Strategy Statement and the Funding Strategy Statement on the Staffordshire Pension Fund website at **www.staffspf.org.uk.**

3. Accounting policies

When preparing the Pension Fund financial statements we have adopted the following significant accounting policies, which we have applied consistently.

Contributions

Normal contributions are accounted for on an accruals basis as follows:

- Employee contribution rates are set in accordance with LGPS regulations, using common percentage rates for all schemes which rise according to pensionable pay.
- Employer contributions are set at the percentage rate recommended by the fund actuary for the period to which they relate.

Employer deficit funding contributions are accounted for on the basis advised by the fund actuary in the rates and adjustment certificate issued to the relevant employing body. Additional employers' contributions in respect of ill-health and early retirements are accounted for in the year the event arose. Any amount due in the year but unpaid will be classed as a current financial asset. Amounts not due until future years are classed as long-term financial assets.

Transfer values

Transfers in and out relate to members who have either joined or left the fund. These are included on the basis of payments made or receipts received in the case of individual transfers and on an accrual basis for bulk transfers, which are considered material to the account.

Investment income

Investment income is recognised as follows:

- Interest income as it accrues.
- Dividend income on the date the shares are quoted ex-dividend.
- Property related income, which primarily consists of rental income, is received in advance and is accrued into the correct year.
- Changes in the net market value of investments (including investment properties) are recognised as income and comprise all realised and unrealised profits/losses during the year.
- Distributions from pooled funds are recognised at the date of issue.

Benefits payable

Pensions and lump-sum benefits payable include all amounts known to be due as at the end of the financial year. Any amounts due but unpaid are disclosed in the net assets statement as current liabilities, providing that payment has been approved.

Under pension fund rules, members may receive a lump-sum retirement grant on top of their annual pension. Lump-sum retirement grants are accounted for from the date of retirement.

Other benefits are accounted for on the date the member leaves the Fund or dies.

Taxation

The Fund is a registered public service scheme and as such is exempt from paying tax in the UK on interest received and on the proceeds of investments sold. The Fund may suffer withholding tax on overseas investments in the country of origin, where this is not recoverable it is accounted for as an expense when it arises.

Management expenses

All costs related to managing investments, administration, oversight and governance are reported in one line in the Fund Account called 'Management expenses'.

Investment management expenses, including performance-related fees, are accounted for on an accruals basis and are recognised before any VAT the Fund can recover.

Investment management expenses are charged directly to the fund as part of management expenses and are not included in, or netted off from, the reported return on investments (see note 11a).

The fees of external investment managers and the custodian are agreed in their respective mandates governing their appointments. They are broadly based on the market value of investments and can increase or decrease as the value of these investments change.

All administrative expenses and oversight and governance costs are accounted for on an accruals basis. All staff costs of the Pensions Administration team are charged to the Fund. Management, accommodation and other support service costs are charged to the Fund based on Staffordshire County Council policy.

Investments

All other investment assets are included in the financial statements on a fair value basis as at the reporting date. A financial asset is recognised in the net assets statement on the date the fund becomes party to the contractual acquisition of the asset. From this date any gains or losses arising from changes in the fair value of the asset are recognised in the fund account. The values of investments as shown in the net assets statement have been determined at fair value in accordance with the requirements of the Code and IFRS 13 (see

Note 16). For the purposes of disclosing levels of fair value hierarchy, the fund has adopted the classification guidelines recommended in Practical Guidance on Investment Disclosures (PRAG/Investment Association, 2016)'

Equities traded through the Stock Exchange Electronic Trading Service (SETS), are valued on the basis of the latest bid (buying) price.

Pooled investment vehicles are valued at the bid market price provided by the relevant fund managers, which reflects the market value of the underlying investments.

The value of bonds are recorded at the net market value based on their current market yields. The value does not include interest earned but not paid at the year end, which is included separately within accrued investment income.

UK directly held property investments are stated at their value on the open-market based on an annual independent valuation by Savills, as at 31 March 2023. This report has been prepared in accordance with Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors' ("RICS") Valuation – Global Standards (incorporating the IVSC International Valuation Standards) effective from 31 January 2020 together with the UK National Supplement effective 14 January 2019, together the "Red Book".

The private equity, private debt and hedge fund valuations are valued based on the Fund's share of the net assets of the underlying funds using the latest financial statements provided by the respective fund managers. (see Note 15 for further details)

Foreign currency transactions

Dividends, interest and the purchase and sale of investments in foreign currencies have been accounted for at the spot rates at the date of transaction. Where forward foreign exchange contracts are in place for assets and liabilities in foreign currencies, the exchange rate set out in the contract is used. Other assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are given in Sterling (£) at the rates of exchange that apply at the end of the financial year.

Surpluses and deficits arising when converting currency are dealt with as part of the change in market value of investments.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash comprises cash in hand and demand deposits. Cash equivalents are short term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and are subject to minimal risk of changes in value.

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities

A contingent liability arises where an event has taken place prior to the year-end giving rise to a possible financial obligation whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by the occurrence of future events. Contingent liabilities can also arise in circumstances where a provision would be made, except that it is not possible at the balance sheet date to measure the value of the financial obligation reliably.

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place giving rise to a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed or otherwise by the occurrence of future events.

Contingent assets and liabilities are not recognised in the net assets statement but are disclosed by way of narrative in the notes.

Actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits

The actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits is assessed on a triennial basis by the scheme actuary in accordance with the requirements of IAS 19 and relevant actuarial standards.

As permitted under the Code, the Fund has opted to disclose the actuarial present value of promised retirement benefits by way of an accompanying actuarial report.

4. Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

Pension Fund liability

The pension fund liability is calculated every three years by the appointed actuary, Hymans Robertson. The methodology used is in line with accepted guidelines and in accordance with IAS 19, the assumptions underpinning the valuation are given in the Actuarial Statement. The estimate is subject to significant variances based on change to the underlying assumptions (See Note 18).

Property

Savills have made no allowance for any Capital Gains Tax or other taxation liability that might arise upon a sale of the property, nor have they allowed for any adjustment to any of the properties' income streams to take into account any tax liabilities that may arise. Their valuation is exclusive of VAT (if applicable). They have excluded from their valuation any additional value attributable to goodwill, or to fixtures and fittings which are only of value in situ to the present occupiers.

No allowance has been made for rights, obligations or liabilities arising in relation to fixed plant and machinery, and it has been assumed that all fixed plant and machinery and the installation thereof complies with the relevant EEC legislation.

Investment in LGPS Central Limited

The Cost approach and considering Fair Value at Initial Recognition provide viable approaches to valuing this shareholding, and they both generate consistent valuations at historic cost less any adjustment for impairment. Consequently this will be the approach for valuing this holding until any change in circumstances creates an alternative approach. This is consistent with the approach of other Pension Funds to their valuation of pool company holdings.

The valuation of the shareholding in LGPS Central is £1,315,000

5. Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for assets and liabilities as at the balance sheet date and the amounts reported for the revenues and expenses during the year. However, the nature of estimation means that actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

The items in the net assets statement at 31 March 2023 for which there is a significant risk of adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are shown in the following table.

Item	Uncertainty	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Private equity	Private equity funds are valued in accordance with each investment managers valuation policy. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation.	The total private equity investments in the financial statements are £344.5m. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts.
Private debt	Private debt funds are valued in accordance with each investment managers valuation policy. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation.	The total value of private debt funds in the financial statements is £356.0m. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts.
Hedge funds	Hedge funds are valued at the sum of the fair values provided by the administrators of the underlying funds plus adjustments that the Funds directors or independent administrators judge necessary. These investments are not publicly listed and as such there is a degree of estimation involved in the valuation.	The total value of Hedge funds in the financial statements is £1.8m.
Freehold/leasehold property and pooled property funds	Valuation techniques are used to determine the carrying amount of pooled property funds and directly held freehold and leasehold property. Where possible these valuation techniques are based on observable data, but where this is not possible management uses the best available data. Changes in the valuation assumptions used, together with significant changes in rental growth, vacancy levels or the discount rate could affect the fair value of property. UK directly held property investments are stated at their value on the open-market based on an annual independent valuation by Savills, as at 31 March 2021. This report has been prepared in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards (incorporating the IVSC International Valuation Standards) effective from 31 January 2020 together with the UK National Supplement effective 14 January 2019, together the “Red Book”.	The total value of all property in the financial statements is £513.7m. There is a risk that this investment may be under or overstated in the accounts.

See table at Note 17 for a full list of possible market movements.

6. Events after the reporting period

The Fund is not aware of any post reporting period events impacting on the statement of accounts.

7. Contributions receivable

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Employers		
Normal	140.2	142.1
Actuarial strain	2.2	3.7
Deficit recovery contributions	0.0	0.0
Scheme members		
Normal	37.7	41.0
Total	**180.1**	**186.8**

Contributions receivable can be analysed by type of member body as follows:

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Staffordshire County Council	38.8	41.7
Scheduled bodies	115.0	136.8
Admitted bodies	26.3	8.3
Total	**180.1**	**186.8**

8. Transfers in

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Individual transfers in from other schemes	11.7	13.6
Group transfers in from other schemes	0	0
Total	**11.7**	**13.6**

9. Benefits payable

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Pensions	161.6	169.7
Commutations and lump-sum retirement benefits	30.5	34.0
Lump-sum death benefits	3.6	4.3
Total	**195.7**	**208.0**

Benefits payable can be analysed by type of member body as follows:

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Staffordshire County Council	74.5	79.3
Scheduled bodies	100.8	108.7
Admitted bodies	20.4	20.0
Total	**195.7**	**208.0**

10. Payments to and on account of leavers

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m

Individual transfers to other schemes	9.8	10.6
Group transfers to other schemes	0.0	0.0
Payments for members joining / (leaving) state scheme	0.0	0.0
Refunds to members leaving service	0.5	0.7
Total	**10.3**	**11.3**

11. Management expenses

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Administration expenses	3.0	2.9
Investment management expenses (see note 11a)	20.9	18.6
Oversight and governance costs	1.8	2.0
Total	**25.7**	**23.5**

Included within oversight and governance costs are the Fund's external audit costs of £0.05m for 2022/2023 (£0.04m for 2021/2022).

11a. Investment management expenses

A breakdown of the costs we had to pay in connection with the investment of the Fund is set out below:

2022/2023	Total £m	Management Fees £m	Performance Related Fees £m	Transaction Costs £m
Equities	4.2	3.3		0.9
Pooled Investments	2.9	2.9		
Property	4.3	4.3		
Private Equity	1.9	1.9		
Other	5.2	5.2		
	18.5			
Custody Fees	0.1			
	18.6			

2021/2022	Total £m	Management Fees £m	Performance Related Fees £m	Transaction Costs £m
Equities	4.1	3.2		0.9
Pooled Investments	3.0	3.0		
Property	4.8	4.8		
Private Equity	4.1	4.1		
Other	4.8	4.8		
	20.8			
Custody Fees	0.1			
	20.9			

The Fund was also charged indirectly through the bid-offer spread (the difference between bid prices and offer prices) on investments.

12. Investment income

	2021/2022 £m	2022/2023 £m
Bonds	0.0	0.0
Dividends from equities	20.9	24.1

Infrastructure	0.3	0.5
Income from pooled investment vehicles	0.5	6.5
Rents from property	20.5	21.6
Interest on cash deposits	0.5	3.4
Stock lending	0.1	0.1
Private Debt	25.5	25.0
Other	0.3	0.4
	68.6	**81.5**
Withholding tax we cannot recover	(0.3)	(0.3)
Total	**68.3**	**81.2**

12a. Directly held property fund account

A summary of the income and expenses associated with the Fund's directly held property is provided below:

	2021/2022	**2022/2023**
	£m	**£m**
Rental income	20.3	21.6
Direct operating expenses	(3.9)	(3.5)
Net income	**16.7**	**18.1**

No contingent rents have been recognised as income during the period.

13. Pension Fund investments 2021/2022

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Long term investments		
Equities	**1.3**	**1.3**
Investment assets		
Bonds	0	0
Equities	1,269.5	1,303.1
Pooled investment vehicles	4,072.0	3,815.8
Pooled Property Investments	72.9	96.6
Derivatives	0.0	0.0
Property (see Note 13e)	472.7	417.2
Private equity	339.8	344.5
Private debt	299.7	356.0
Hedge funds	2.5	1.8
Infrastructure	25.4	188.9
Cash	264.4	125.6
Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax	1.9	2.4
Amount receivable for sales of investments	4.8	0.3
Total Investment assets	**6,825.6**	**6,652.2**
Investment liabilities		
Derivatives	(0.0)	(0.0)
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	(3.3)	(0.0)
Total Investment liabilities	**(3.3)**	**(0.0)**
Net Investment assets	**6,823.6**	**6,653.5**

All companies operating unit trusts or managed funds are registered in the United Kingdom.

13a. Investment reconciliation

Period 2022/2023	Value at 1 April 2022 £m	Purchases at cost £m	Sales proceeds £m	Change in market value £m	Value at 31 March 2023 £m
Equities	1,270.8	407.4	(390.6)	16.8	1,304.4
Pooled investment vehicles	4,072.0	1,059.4	(1,122.1)	(193.5)	3,815.8
Pooled Property Investments	72.9	26.7	0.0	(3.1)	96.6
Derivatives	0.0	409.1	(409.0)	(0.1)	0.0
Infrastructure	25.4	156.2	(3.7)	11.0	188.9
Property	472.7	3.4	0.0	(58.9)	417.2
Other	642.0	117.8	(67.4)	10.0	702.3
	6,555.8	**2,180.1**	**(1,992.8)**	**(217.9)**	**6,525.2**
External cash deposits (central cash)	245.4				93.7
Investment manager cash	19.0			6.7	31.9
	6,820.2			**(211.2)**	**6,650.8**
Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax	1.9				2.4
Amount receivable for sales of investments	4.8				0.3
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	(3.3)				0.0
Net Investment assets	**6,823.6**				**6,653.5**

The previous years data is provided below:

Period 2021/2022	Value at 1 April 2021 £m	Purchases at cost £m	Sales proceeds £m	Change in market value £m	Value at 31 March 2022 £m
Equities	1,195.1	1,357.1	(1,416.6)	135.2	1,270.8
Pooled investment vehicles	3,778.6	93.6	(169.0)	368.8	4,072.0
Pooled Property Investments	49.9	21.2	0.0	1.9	72.9
Derivatives	0.0	925.2	(924.8)	(0.4)	0.0
Infrastructure	2.0	26.9	(3.9)	0.4	25.4
Property	418.5	27.3	(19.5)	46.4	472.7
Other	601.9	112.1	(163.6)	91.6	642.0
	6,046.0	**2,563.4**	**(2,697.4)**	**643.9**	**6,555.8**
External cash deposits (central cash)	62.7				245.4
Investment manager cash	34.2			8.4	19.0
	6,142.9			**652.3**	**6,820.2**
Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax	1.4				1.9
Amount receivable for sales of investments	4.9				4.8
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	(2.9)				(3.3)
Net Investment assets	**6,146.3**				**6,823.6**

The Fund holds the following pooled investments that exceed 5% of the total value of net assets at 31 March 2023 (also at 31 March 2022):

Fund	Market Value 31 March 22 (£m)	% of total fund	Market Value 31 March 23 (£m)	% of total fund
LGIM Passive UK Equity	414.8	6.1		
LGIM Passive Global Equity	1,819.4	26.6	1,159.0	17.4
LGIM Passive index-linked gilts	427.5	6.3	432.5	6.5
LGPS Central Active Global Equity	763.2	11.2	645.3	9.7
LGPS Central Active corporate Bonds	401.3	5.9	496.2	7.5
LGIM Low Carbon			639.1	9.6
Total Value of Investments	**3,826.2**		**3,372.0**	

As at 31 March 2023 (also at 31 March 2022) the Fund was committed to the following contractual commitments:

- £221.4m of contractual commitments for private equity investments (£98.1m)
- Investment in a UK pooled property fund of £5.7m (£19.8m)
- £169.2m of private debt investments (£172.6m)

13b. Investments analysed by Manager

The market value and percentage of assets held by each of the investment managers at the end of the financial year is shown below:

	31 March 2022 £m	%	31 March 2023 £m	%
Investments managed by LGPS Central Limited				
LGPS Central Limited Global Equity Active Multi Manager Fund	763.2	11%	645.3	10%
LGPS Central Limited Global Active Inv Grade Corp Bond Multi Manager Fund	401.3	6%	496.2	7%
LGPS Central Global Multi Factor Equity Index Fund	245.8	4%	248.2	4%
LGPS Central Sustainable Equities Fund	0.0	0%	129.6	2%
LGPS Central Limited	1.3	0%	1.3	0%
	1,411.6	**21%**	**1,520.6**	**23%**
Investments managed outside of LGPS Central Limited				
Standard Life Investments (UK equity)	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
JP Morgan Asset Management (global equity)	657.8	10%	660.1	10%
Longview Partners (global equity)	359.4	5%	381.8	6%
Impax Asset Management (Equity)	266.3	4%	283.7	4%
Legal & General Investment Management (passive UK index-linked gilts)	427.5	6%	432.5	7%
Legal & General Investment Management (passive all world equity)	2,234.2	33%	1,864.1	28%
Blackrock Infrastructure Fund (Infrastructure)	5.1	0%	14.0	0%
Equitix Fund VI (Infrastructure)	19.7	0%	22.4	0%
Pantheon Global Fund IV (Infrastructure)	0.6	0%	5.9	0%
IFM Global Fund (Infrastructure)	0.0	0%	57.4	1%
Brookfield Super Core Fund (Infrastructure)	0.0	0%	1.9	0%
LGPS Central Infra Sub Fund (Infrastructure)	0.0	0%	27.3	0%
LGPS Central Single Asset (JPM) (Infrastructure)	0.0	0%	60.0	1%
Colliers International UK Plc (property)	546.2	8%	513.7	8%
HarbourVest Partners (private equity)	227.1	3%	231.9	3%
Knightsbridge Advisors (private equity)	38.6	1%	34.0	1%
Partners Group (private equity)	37.3	1%	36.7	1%
Lazard Technology Partners (private equity)	0.6	0%	0.5	0%
Capital Dynamics (private equity)	29.5	1%	32.6	0%
LGPS Central (private equity)	6.7	0%	8.7	0%
Hayfin Capital Management (private debt)	104.6	2%	98.8	1%
Highbridge Capital Management (private debt)	90.7	1%	91.0	1%
LGPS Central (private debt)	6.7	0%	56.4	1%
Barings (private debt)	14.2	0%	29.6	0%
Alcentra Limited (private debt)	83.4	1%	80.2	1%
Goldman Sachs Asset Management (hedge funds)	2.5	0%	1.8	0%
Director of Finance and Resources (central cash)	249.9	4%	103.2	4%
	5,408.6	**79%**	**5,130.3**	**77%**
	6,820.2	**100%**	**6,650.9**	**100%**

13c. Analysis of Investments

	31 March 2022 £m	%	31 March 2023 £m	%
Long term investments				
UK equities unquoted	**1.3**	**0%**	**1.3**	**0%**

Investment assets				
Equities				
UK quoted	79.2	1%	84.9	1%
Global quoted	1,190.3	18%	1,218.2	18%
	1,269.5	**19%**	**1,303.1**	**19%**
Pooled investment vehicles				
Unit Trusts				
Standard Life UK Equity	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Unitised Insurance Policies				
LGIM UK Equity	414.8	6%	66.1	1%
LGIM UK Index Linked Gilts	427.5	6%	432.5	7%
LGIM Low Carbon	0.0	0%	639.1	10%
LGIM Global Equity	1,819.4	27%	1,159.0	17%
Other Managed Funds				
LGPSC Global Equity Fund	763.2	11%	645.2	10%
LGPSC Global Sustainable Equities Fund	0.0	0%	129.5	2%
LGPSC Corporate Bond Fund	401.3	6%	496.2	8%
LGPSC Factor Based Investment	245.8	4%	248.2	4%
	4,072.0	**60%**	**3,815.8**	**59%**
Derivatives (see note 14)				
Forward foreign currency	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
Futures	0.0	0%	0.0	0%
	0.0	**0%**	**0.0**	**0%**
Property				
UK directly held property	472.7	7%	417.2	6%
UK pooled property funds	72.9	1%	96.6	2%
	545.6	**8%**	**513.8**	**8%**
Other				
Private equity	339.7	5%	344.5	5%
Private debt	299.7	4%	356.0	5%
Hedge funds	2.5	0%	1.8	0%
Infrastructure Fund	25.5	0%	188.9	3%
	667.4	**9%**	**891.2**	**13%**
Cash				
External deposits	245.4	4%	93.7	1%
Investment manager cash (Sterling £)	3.2	0%	14.9	0%
Investment manager cash (non Sterling £)	15.8	0%	17.0	0%
	264.4	**4%**	**125.6**	**1%**
	6,820.2	**100%**	**6,650.8**	**100%**
Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax	1.9		2.4	
Amount receivable for sales of investments	4.8		0.3	
Total Investment assets	**6,826.9**		**6,653.5**	
Investment liabilities				
Derivatives (see note 14)				
Forward foreign currency	0		0	
Futures	0		0	
	0		**0**	
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	(3.3)		(0.0)	
Total Investment liabilities	**(3.3)**		**(0.0**	
Net Investment assets	**6,823.6**		**6,653.5**	

13d. Stock lending

The Fund lends stock in return for payment. The table below summarises the value of the stock lent out by the Fund at the end of the last two years.

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m
Equities - UK	2.2	0.1
Equities – Global	78.1	67.7
	80.3	**67.8**

Securities released to a third party under the stock-lending agreement with Northern Trust are included in the net assets statement to reflect the Fund's continuing economic interest in those securities.

Collateral holdings, supporting the loans, are not identified as individual loans but are kept in a pooled structure. As security for the stocks on loan, as at 31 March 2023 the Fund held £72.3 million (£86.3 million at 31 March 2022) of collateral in the form of government obligations (such as Gilts) and equities.

Income received from stock-lending activities was £0.1 million for the year ending 31 March 2023, (£0.1 million for year ending 31 March 2022). This is included within the investment income figure shown on the Pension Fund account.

13e. Directly held property net asset account

The Fund had investments in property of £513.7m at 31 March 2023 (£545.6m at 31 March 2022), of which £417.2m was in directly held property (£472.7m at 31 March 2022). The account below reconciles the movement in the Fund's investments in directly held property.

The Fund is required to classify its directly held property into a hierarchy by reference to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values (See note 15 for more information on the hierarchy). The Fund has classified its directly held property as Level 3, as fair values are based on significant unobservable inputs and estimated using valuation techniques.

Directly held property investments are valued independently for the Fund as at 31 March 2023. The valuations are prepared in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards incorporating the IVSC International Valuation Standards, the UK National Supplement, together with the 'Red Book'.

Transaction costs for directly held property in 2022/2023 were £3.5m (£3.9m in 2021/2022).

	2021/2022	2022/2023
	£m	£m
Balance at start of year	418.5	472.7
Purchases at cost	26.8	0.2
New construction	0.3	2.1
Subsequent expenditure	0.2	1.1
Sale proceeds	(19.5)	(0.0)
Change in market value	46.4	(58.9)

Balance at 31 March	**472.7**	**417.2**

14. Derivative contracts

The holding of derivative contracts is to hedge exposures and reduce risk for the Fund. The use of derivative contracts is managed in line with the investment management agreement between the Fund and the various investment managers who use them.

Forward foreign currency contracts

To maintain appropriate diversification a significant proportion of the Fund's quoted equity holdings is in overseas stock markets. To reduce the volatility associated with fluctuating currency rates, the Fund hedges a proportion of the US and Australian Dollar within the portfolios managed by Longview and JP Morgan. The open contracts at 31 March are analysed in Sterling (£) below against other major currencies.

	01 April 2022	Cost Purchase Settled only	Proceed Sales Settled only	Change in Market Value	31 March 2023
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total	**0**	**(409.0)**	**409.1**	**(0.1)**	**0**

	31 March 2022		31 March 2023	
	Assets	**Liabilities**	**Assets**	**Liabilities**
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Euro	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
United States Dollar	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	0.0	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**

15. Fair value - basis of valuation

The basis of the valuation of each asset class of investment is set out below. All assets have been valued using fair value techniques which represent the highest and best price available at the reporting date. There have been no changes in the valuation techniques used during the year.

Description of asset	Valuation hierarchy	Basis of valuation	Observable and unobservable inputs	Key sensitivities affecting the valuations provided
Market quoted investments (equities and bonds)	Level 1	Published bid market price ruling on the final day of the accounting period	Not required	Not required
Quoted bonds	Level 1	Bonds are valued at a market value based on current yields	Not required	Not required
Futures	Level 1	Published exchange prices at the year-end	Not required	Not Required
Pooled investment vehicles	Level 2	Fair value based on the weekly market quoted prices of the respective underlying securities	Not required	Not required
Forward foreign currency contracts	Level 2	Market forward exchange rates at the year end	Exchange rate risk	Not Required
Unquoted Equities	Level 3	Comparable valuation of similar companies in accordance with International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines 2012	- (EBITDA) multiple - Revenue multiple - Discount for lack of Marketability - Control premium	Valuations could be affected by post balance sheet events, changes to expected cashflows, or by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts
Freehold and leasehold properties	Level 3	Valued at fair value by Savills in accordance with International Valuation Standards and RICS Valuation Standards	- Existing lease terms rentals - Independent market research - Covenant strength for existing tenants - Assumed vacancy levels - Estimated rental growth - Discount rate	Significant changes in rental growth, vacancy levels or the discount rate could affect valuations as could more general changes to market prices
Pooled property funds	Level 3	The Funds ownership share in property limited partnerships is applied to the partnership net assets. The net assets are based on the fair value of the underlying investment properties in accordance with International Valuation Standards and RICS Valuation Standards	- Existing lease terms rentals - Independent market research - Covenant strength for existing tenants - Assumed vacancy levels - Estimated rental growth - Discount rate	Significant changes in rental growth, vacancy levels or the discount rate could affect valuations as could more general changes to market prices

Infrastructure	Level 3	At the price or net asset value advised by the manager using the latest financial information available from the respective manager, adjusted for drawdowns and distributions to the final date of the accounting period, if the latest financial information is not produced at that date	- EBITDA multiple - Revenue multiple - Discount for lack of marketability - Discounted cash flows	Valuations could be impacted by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the year end, by changes to expected cash flows, and any differences between the audited and unaudited accounts
Private equity	Level 3	Comparable valuation of similar companies in accordance with International Private Equity and Venture Capital Valuation Guidelines 2012	- EBITDA multiple - Revenue multiple - Discount for lack of marketability - Control Premium	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the Pension Fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cash flows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts (see Note 4)
Private debt	Level 3	Valued at fair value in accordance with International Valuation Standards and investment managers valuation policy	- Comparable valuation of similar assets - EBITDA multiple - Revenue multiple - Discounted cash flows - Enterprise value estimation	Valuations could be affected by material events occurring between the date of the financial statements provided and the Pension Fund's own reporting date, by changes to expected cash flows, and by any differences between audited and unaudited accounts
Hedge funds	Level 3	Closing bid price and offer prices are published	NAV-based pricing set on a forward pricing basis	Valuations are effected by any changes to the value of the financial instrument being hedged.

Sensitivity of assets valued at Level 3

In consultation with the Fund's investment advisor, the Fund has determined that the valuation methods described above are likely to be accurate to within the following ranges and has set out below the consequent potential impact on the closing value of investments held at 31 March 2023.

Asset type	Assessed valuation range %	31 March 2023 £m	Value on increase £m	Value on decrease £m
UK equities unquoted	18%	1.3	1.6	1.1
Freehold and leasehold properties	15%	417.2	479.8	354.6
Pooled property funds	15%	96.5	111.0	82.1

Private equity	31%	344.5	451.3	237.7
Private debt	10%	356.0	391.7	320.5
Infrastructure	16%	188.9	219.1	158.7
Hedge funds	9%	1.8	2.0	1.6
		1,406.3	**1,656.4**	**1,156.2**

15a. Fair value hierarchy

Asset and liability valuations have been classified into three levels, according to the quality and reliability of information used to determine fair values. The three levels are detailed below:

Level 1 - Quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities. Products classified as Level 1 are quoted equities and bonds.

Level 2 - Inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e. as prices) or indirectly (i.e. derived from prices). Level 2 products include pooled investment vehicles, as they are not traded in a market that is considered to be active and where the asset value can be determined by observed values for the underlying assets.

Level 3 - Inputs for assets or liabilities that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs). Examples include private equity, private debt and hedge funds, which are valued using valuation techniques that require significant judgement.

The following table provides an analysis by the three levels based on the level at which the fair value is observable.

31 March 2023	**Level 1 £m**	**Level 2 £m**	**Level 3 £m**	**Total £m**
Financial assets				
Designated as fair value through profit and loss	1,303.1	3,815.8	989.1	6,108.0
Non-financial assets at fair value through profit and loss (See note 13e)	0.0	0.0	417.2	417.2
Financial liabilities				
Designated as fair value through profit and loss	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	1,303.1	**3,815.8**	**1,406.3**	**6,525.2**

The previous years data is provided below:

31 March 2022	**Level 1 £m**	**Level 2 £m**	**Level 3 £m**	**Total £m**
Financial assets				
Designated as fair value through profit and loss	1,269.5	4,072.0	741.7	6,083.2

Non-financial assets at fair value through profit and loss (See note 13e)	0.0	0.0	472.7	472.7
Financial liabilities				
Designated as fair value through profit and loss	0	0	0	0
	1,269.5	**4,072.0**	**1,214.4**	**6,555.9**

15b. Reconciliation of fair value measurements within level 3

Period 2022/2023	**Market Value 1 April 2022**	**Purchases during the year and derivative payments**	**Sales during the year and derivative receipts**	**Unrealised gains / (Losses)**	**Realised gains / (Losses)**	**Market Value 31 March 2023**
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
UK equities unquoted	**1.3**	0.0	(0.0)	0.0	0.0	**1.3**
Freehold and leasehold properties	**472.7**	3.4	(0.0)	(57.8)	(1.1)	**417.2**
Pooled property funds	**72.9**	26.7	(0.0)	(3.1)	0.0	**96.5**
Private equity	**339.8**	44.5	(40.0)	(23.4)	23.6	**344.5**
Private debt	**299.7**	73.2	(26.6)	9.7	0.0	**356.0**
Infrastructure	**25.4**	156.2	(3.7)	11.0	0.0	**188.9**
Hedge funds	**2.5**	0.0	(0.8)	(0.7)	0.8	**1.8**
	1,214.4	**304.2**	**(71.2)**	**(64.4)**	**23.3**	**1,406.3**

The previous years data is provided below:

Period 2021/2022	**Market Value 1 April 2021**	**Purchases during the year and derivative payments**	**Sales during the year and derivative receipts**	**Unrealised gains / (Losses)**	**Realised gains / (Losses)**	**Market Value 31 March 2022**
	£m	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
UK equities unquoted	**1.3**	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	**1.3**
Freehold and leasehold properties	**418.5**	27.3	(19.5)	45.4	1.0	**472.7**
Pooled property funds	**49.9**	21.2	0.0	1.9	0.0	**72.9**
Private equity	**290.0**	39.4	(75.2)	35.9	49.7	**339.7**
Private debt	**288.7**	72.7	(66.8)	5.1	0.0	**299.7**
Infrastructure	**2.0**	26.9	(3.8)	0.3	0.0	**25.4**
Hedge funds	**23.2**	0.0	(21.6)	(14.2)	15.1	**2.5**
	1,073.6	**187.5**	**(187.0)**	**74.4**	**65.8**	**1,214.3**

16. Classification of financial instruments

The net assets of the Fund disclosed in the Net assets statement and in notes 13a to 13e, 19, 19a, 20 and 20a are made up of the following categories of financial instruments. No financial instruments were reclassified during 2022/2023.

The analysis within notes 16, 16b and 17 on financial instruments does not include the Pension Fund's directly held property. This is treated under a different accounting standard (IAS 40 Investment Property) and is disclosed in note 13e - Directly held property net asset account and note 12a - Directly held property fund account.

	Designated as fair value through profit and loss	Financial Assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Total
31 March 2023	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**	**£m**
Financial assets				
Equities	1,304.4	0.0	0.0	1,304.4
Pooled investment vehicles	3,815.8	0.0	0.0	3,815.8
UK pooled property funds	96.6	0.0	0.0	96.6
Cash	0.0	125.3	0.0	125.3
Other investment balances	887.7	6.3	0.0	894.0
Derivatives	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Long term assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Current assets	0.0	25.6	0.0	25.6
	6,104.5	**157.2**	**0.0**	**6,261.6**
Financial liabilities				
Derivatives	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other investment balances	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Long term Liabilities	0.0	0.0	(0.0)	(0.0)
Current liabilities	0.0	0.0	(18.0)	(18.0)
	0.0	**0.0**	**(18.0)**	**(18.0)**
	6,104.5	**157.2**	**(18.0)**	**6,243.5**

16. Classification of financial instruments (continued)

The previous years data is provided below:

31 March 2022	Designated as fair value through profit and loss £m	Financial Assets at amortised cost £m	Financial liabilities at amortised cost £m	Total £m
Financial assets				
Equities	1,270.8	0.0	0.0	1,270.8
Pooled investment vehicles	4,072.0	0.0	0.0	4,072.0
UK pooled property funds	72.9	0.0	0.0	72.9
Cash	0.0	266.5	0.0	266.5
Other investment balances	667.8	6.3	0.0	674.1
Derivatives	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Long term assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Current assets	0.0	19.6	0.0	19.6
	6,083.6	**292.4**	**0.0**	**6,376.1**
Financial liabilities				
Derivatives	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other investment balances	0.0	0.0	(3.4)	(3.4)
Long term Liabilities	0.0	0.0	(0.0)	(0.0)
Current liabilities	0.0	0.0	(12.2)	(12.2)
	0.0	**0.0**	**(15.6)**	**(15.6)**
	6,083.6	**292.4**	**(15.6)**	**6,360.4**

16b. Net gains on financial instruments

The gains recognised in the accounts in relation to financial instruments are made up as follows:

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Financial assets		
Designated as fair value through profit and loss	597.5	(158.9)
Amortised cost	8.4	6.6
	605.9	**(152.3)**

17. Nature and extent of risks arising from financial instruments

The primary objective of the Fund is to ensure that sufficient funds are available to meet all Pension liabilities as they fall due for payment. The Fund aims to do this by adopting an investment strategy that balances risk and return.

The majority of the Fund is invested through external investment managers. Each has an investment management agreement in place which sets out the relevant benchmark, performance target, asset allocation ranges and any restrictions.

Risks are managed through diversification; by investing across asset classes, across managers and styles and ensuring managers maintain a diversified portfolio of investments within their mandate. The majority of the Fund is invested in liquid investments.

Market risk

Market risk is the risk of loss from fluctuations in market prices, interest rates or currencies. The Fund is exposed through its investment portfolio to all these market risks.

Market risk also represents the risk that the value of a financial instrument will fluctuate caused by factors other than those mentioned above. These changes can be caused by factors specific to the individual instrument or those affecting the market in general and will affect each asset class the Fund holds in different ways.

A high proportion of the Fund is invested in equities and therefore fluctuation in equity prices is the largest risk the Fund faces. The Fund relies on the fact that it has positive cash flows and a strong employer covenant to underpin its investment in equities and maintains its high exposure to equities over the long-term as they are expected to deliver higher returns.

The Fund manages market risk through a diversified investment portfolio and instructing individual investment managers to diversify investments within their own individual portfolios in line with their investment strategies and mandate guidelines. The Pensions Panel and Pensions Committee regularly receive reports which monitor such risks.

Market risk – sensitivity analysis

In consultation with the Fund's investment advisor the following movements in market prices have been judged as possible for the 2023/2024 financial year. The potential market movement figures also allow for interest rate and currency rate fluctuations.

Asset type	Possible market movements
UK equity	+/- 18%
Global equity	+/- 19%
Private equity	+/- 31%
Private debt	+/- 10%
UK fixed interest bonds	+/- 6%
UK index-linked bonds	+/- 7%
Corporate bonds	+/- 8%
Cash	+/- 0%
UK Commercial property	+/- 15%
Hedge funds	+/- 9%
Infrastructure	+/- 16%

This movement in the market prices would increase or decrease the net assets at 31 March 2023 to the amounts shown below:

Asset type	**31 March 2023 £m**	**Percentage change (+/-) %**	**Value on increase £m**	**Value on decrease £m**
UK equities unquoted	1.3	18%	1.6	1.1
UK corporate bonds	0.0	8%	0.0	0.0
Global corporate bonds	0.0	8%	0.0	0.0
UK equities	84.9	18%	100.1	69.6
Global equities	1,218.2	19%	1,449.7	986.8
UK pooled investments	705.2	18%	832.1	578.2
UK index-linked pooled investments	432.5	7%	462.7	402.2
Overseas pooled investments	2,678.2	19%	3,187.1	2,169.4
Derivatives	0.0	0%	0.0	0.0
UK pooled property funds	96.6	15%	111.0	82.1
Private equity	344.5	31%	451.3	237.7
Private debt	356.0	10%	391.7	320.5
Infrastructure	188.9	16%	219.1	158.7
Hedge funds	1.8	9%	2.0	1.6
Cash	125.6	0%	125.6	125.6
Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax	2.4	0%	2.4	2.4
Amount receivable for sales of	0.3	0%	0.3	0.3
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	0.0	0%	0.0	0.0
Long term assets	0.0		0.0	0.0
Current assets	25.6	0%	25.6	25.6
Long term Liabilities	(0.0)		(0.0)	(0.0)
Current liabilities	(18.4)	0%	(18.4)	(18.4)
	6,243.5		**7,343.8**	**5,143.2**

The previous years data is provided below:

Asset type	31 March 2022 £m	Percentage change (+/-) %	Value on increase £m	Value on decrease £m
UK equities unquoted	1.3	20%	1.6	1.1
UK corporate bonds	0.0	8%	0.0	0.0
Global corporate bonds	0.0	8%	0.0	0.0
UK equities	79.2	20%	95.0	63.3
Global equities	1,190.3	20%	1,428.4	952.3
UK pooled investments	414.8	20%	497.7	331.8
UK index-linked pooled investments	427.5	7%	457.4	397.6
Overseas pooled investments	3,229.7	20%	3,875.7	2,583.8
Derivatives	0.0	0%	0.0	0.0
UK pooled property funds	72.9	15%	83.9	62.0
Private equity	339.7	31%	445.1	234.4
Private debt	299.7	9%	326.7	272.7
Infrastructure	25.5	15%	29.3	21.6
Hedge funds	2.5	8%	2.7	2.3
Cash	264.4	0%	264.4	264.4
Outstanding dividend entitlements and recoverable withholding tax	1.9	0%	1.9	1.9
Amount receivable for sales of	4.8	0%	4.8	4.8
Amounts payable for purchases of investments	(3.4)	0%	(3.4)	(3.4)
Long term assets	0.0		0.0	0.0
Current assets	21.8	0%	21.8	21.8
Long term Liabilities	(0.0)		(0.0)	(0.0)
Current liabilities	(12.2)	0%	(12.2)	(12.2)
	6,360.4		**7,520.7**	**5.200.2**

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates.

Changes in market interest rates would affect the value of the Fund's bonds. The amount of income the Fund generates from its cash holdings would also be affected.

The Fund's direct exposure to interest rate movements as at 31 March 2023 is set out below. These disclosures present interest rate risk based on the underlying financial assets at fair value.

Interest rate risk - sensitivity analysis

The Fund recognises that interest rates can vary and can affect both income to the Fund and the value of the net assets available to pay benefits. Medium to long-term average rates are expected to move less than 100 basis points from one year to the next and experience suggests that such movements are likely.

The analysis that follows assumes that all other variables, in particular exchange rates, remain constant, and shows the effect in the year on the net assets available to pay benefits of a +/- 100 basis points (i.e.1%) change in interest rates:

Asset type	31 March 2023 £m	Percentage change (+/-) %	Value on increase £m	Value on decrease £m
Cash and cash equivalents	93.7	0%	93.7	93.7
Cash balances	(0.4)	0%	(0.4)	(0.4)
Bonds	0.0	1%	0.0	0.0
	93.3		**93.3**	**93.3**

Asset type	31 March 2022 £m	Percentage change (+/-) %	Value on increase £m	Value on decrease £m
Cash and cash equivalents	245.4	0%	245.4	245.4
Cash balances	2.2	0%	2.2	2.2
Bonds	0.0	1%	0.0	0.0
	247.6		**247.6**	**247.6**

Foreign currency risk

Foreign currency risk represents the risk that the fair value of financial instruments when expressed in Sterling (£) will fluctuate because of changes in foreign exchange rates.

A high proportion of the Fund's equity portfolio is held in global stock markets. Any short term volatility associated with fluctuating currencies is balanced by the long term nature of investments in equity markets.

Foreign currency risk - sensitivity analysis

Following consultation with the Fund’s investment advisors, the Fund considers the likely volatility associated with foreign exchange movements to be 10%.

On the assumption that all other variables, in particular interest rates, remain constant, a 10% strengthening/weakening of the pound against the various currencies in which the Fund holds investments would increase/decrease the net assets available to pay benefits as follows:

Asset type	31 March 2023 £m	Percentage change (+/-) %	Value on increase £m	Value on decrease £m
Global equities	1,218.2	10%	1,340.0	1,096.4
Overseas pooled investments	2,548.7	10%	2,803.5	2,293.8
Private equity	344.5	10%	378.9	310.0
Private debt	356.0	10%	391.7	320.5
Infrastructure	188.9	10%	207.8	170.0
Hedge funds	1.8	10%	2.0	1.6
	4,658.1		**5,123.9**	**4,192.3**

Asset type	31 March 2022 £m	Percentage change (+/-) %	Value on increase £m	Value on decrease £m
Global equities	1,190.3	10%	1,309.3	1,071.3
Overseas pooled investments	3,229.7	10%	3,552.7	2,906.8
Private equity	339.7	10%	373.7	305.8
Private debt	299.7	10%	329.7	269.7
Infrastructure	25.5	10%	28.0	22.9
Hedge funds	2.5	10%	2.8	2.3
	5,087.4		**5,596.2**	**4,578.7**

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that the counterparty to a financial instrument will fail to meet an obligation and cause the Fund to incur a financial loss. The biggest exposure the Fund has is through its investment in corporate bonds and private debt.

The Fund is also exposed to credit risk through other investment managers that hold assets and the custodian. The Fund minimises credit risk through the careful selection and monitoring of high quality counterparties. Assets and cash held by the custodian are held in individual accounts in the Pension Fund's name, clearly segregated from the assets of other clients and the custodian.

Through the stock lending programme, operated by the Fund’s custodian, the Fund is exposed to the collateral provided by the borrower against the securities lent. To manage this risk the collateral permitted is restricted to government obligations (such as Gilts) and equities. Collateral is held in excess of the securities lent.

Foreign exchange contracts are subject to credit risk in relation to the counterparties of the contracts. The maximum credit risk exposure on foreign currency contracts is the full amount of the foreign currency the Fund pays when settlement occurs, should the counterparty fail to pay the amount which it is committed to pay the Fund.

Another source of credit risk for the Fund is the cash it holds to meet short-term commitments. The cash is managed by the Staffordshire County Council Treasury and Pensions Fund team in line with the Pension Fund's Annual Investment Strategy which sets out the permitted counterparties and limits.

Summary	Rating	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
		£m	£m
Bank current account			
Lloyds Bank (see notes 19a & 20a)	A+	**2.2**	**(0.4)**
Loan			
LGPS Central	N/A	0.7	0.7
Money market funds			
Aberdeen Ultra Short Duration Sterling Fund (formerly Standard Life Investments Short Duration Managed Liquidity Fund)	AAA	20.0	20.0
Federated (PR) Short-Term GBP Prime Fund Class 3	AAA	38.0	3.0
Goldman Sachs Sterling Liquid Reserve Institutional Inc	AAA	38.7	1.8
Aviva Investors Sterling Liquidity Fund 3	AAA	48.0	18.8
Morgan Stanley Sterling Liquidity Inst	AAA	43.0	6.7
HSBC Global Sterling H	AAA	47.0	32.7
Royal London Cash Plus Fund	AAA	10.0	10.0
		245.4	**93.7**
		247.6	**93.3**

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk represents the risk that the Fund will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. To manage this risk the Fund holds an allocation of its assets in cash, the majority of which Staffordshire County Council Treasury and Pensions Fund team have same day access to. This is to ensure short term commitments can be met.

The majority of the stocks held by the Fund's investment managers are quoted on major stock markets and may be realised quickly if required. Less liquid investments such as property, private equity, hedge funds and private debt currently make up a smaller proportion of the Fund's assets.

In the short-term the Fund can borrow money on the money markets to cover any shortfall that may arise. Overall there is very little risk that the Fund will not be able to raise cash to meet its commitments.

18. Funding Arrangements

In line with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, the Fund's actuary undertakes a funding valuation every three years for the purpose of setting employer contribution rates for the forthcoming triennial period. The last such valuation took place as at 31 March 2022.

The key elements of the funding policy are:

1) take a prudent long-term view to secure the regulatory requirement for long-term solvency, with sufficient funds to pay benefits to members and their dependants
2) use a balanced investment strategy to meet the regulatory requirement for long-term cost efficiency (where efficiency in this context means to minimise cash contributions from employers in the long term)
3) where appropriate, ensure stable employer contribution rates
4) reflect different employers' characteristics to set their contribution rates, using a transparent funding strategy
5) use reasonable measures to reduce the risk of an employer defaulting on its pension obligations
6) manage the fund in line with the stated ESG policies.

The FSS sets out how the Administering Authority seeks to balance the conflicting aims of securing the solvency of the Fund and keeping employer contributions stable. For employers whose covenant was considered by the Administering Authority to be sufficiently strong, contributions have been stabilised to have a sufficiently high likelihood of achieving the funding target over 20 years. Asset-liability modelling has been carried out which demonstrate that if these contribution rates are paid and future contribution changes are constrained as set out in the FSS, there is at least a 72% likelihood that the Fund will achieve the funding target over 20 years.

The most recent actuarial valuation carried out under Regulation 62 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 was as at 31 March 2022. This valuation revealed that the Fund's assets, which at 31 March 2022 were valued at £6,833 million, were sufficient to meet 120% of the liabilities (i.e. the present value of promised retirement benefits) accrued up to that date. The resulting surplus at the 2022 valuation was £1,137 million. Each employer had contribution requirements set at the valuation, with the aim of achieving their funding target within a time horizon and likelihood measure as per the FSS. Individual employers' contributions for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026 were set in accordance with the Fund's funding policy as set out in its FSS.

Year Employers’ contribution rate	
2022/23	19.7%
2023/24	21.2%
2024/25	21.2%
2025/26	21.2%

In addition to the primary contribution rate, most employers will also pay a secondary contribution rate depending on the demographic and actuarial factors particular to each employer. Full details of the contribution rates payable can be found in the 2022 actuarial valuation report and the Funding strategy statement on the Fund’s website. [www.staffspf.org.uk]

The principal assumptions are included in the Actuarial Statement.

Financial Assumptions

	2019	2022
	%	%
Investment Return	3.9	4.4
Benefit increases and CARE revaluation	2.3	2.7
Salary increases	2.7	3.2

Demographic Assumptions
The assumed life expectancy from age 65 is as follows:

Life expectancy from age 65		31-Mar-22	31-Mar-23
Retiring today	Males	21.2	21.4
	Females	23.8	24.3
Retiring in 20 years	Males	22.2	22.2
	Females	25.5	25.7

Experience over the period since 31 March 2022

Markets continued to be disrupted by the ongoing war in Ukraine and inflationary pressures, impacting on investment returns achieved by the Fund’s assets. High levels of inflation in the UK (compared to recent experience), have resulted in a higher than expected LGPS benefit increase of 10.1% in April 2023. Despite this, the funding level of the Fund is likely to be higher than reported at the 31 March 2022 funding valuation due to the significant rise in interest rates which reduces the value placed on the Fund’s liabilities.

The next actuarial valuation will be carried out as at 31 March 2025. The Funding Strategy Statement will also be reviewed at that time.

19. Long term assets

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m
Contributions due – employers	0.0	0.0

Total	**0.0**	**0.0**

19a. Current assets

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Short term debtors		
Contributions due – employers	10.6	10.7
Contributions due - members	2.9	2.9
Cash balances	2.2	0.0
Other	6.1	12.0
Total	**21.8**	**25.6**

20. Long term liabilities

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Income received in advance (see note 23)	(0.1)	(0.0)
Total	**(0.1)**	**(0.0)**

20a. Current liabilities

	31 March 2022 £m	31 March 2023 £m
Cash overdrawn	(0.0)	(0.4)
Investment management expenses	(1.0)	(1.5)
Income received in advance	(2.1)	(1.9)
Benefits payable	(3.8)	(5.1)
Other	(5.3)	(9.5)
Total	**(12.2)**	**(18.4)**

21. Additional voluntary contributions

As well as joining the Fund, scheme members can pay into an additional voluntary contribution (AVC) scheme run by external providers. Contributions are paid directly from scheme members to the providers.

The contributions are not included within the Fund accounts, in line with regulation 4(1)(b) of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2017. The table below shows the activity for each AVC provider in the year.

	Scottish Widows £m	Utmost £m	Standard Life £m
Opening value	**0.9**	**0.3**	**2.2**
Income		0.3	0.7
Expenditure		(0.0)	(0.3)
Change in market value		(0.3)	(0.1)

Closing value	**0.9**	**0.3**	**2.5**

22. Related-party disclosure

- Staffordshire Pension Fund is administered by Staffordshire County Council. During the reporting period the County Council incurred costs of £2.3m (£2.2m in 2021/2022) in relation to the administration of the Pension Fund. The County Council was subsequently reimbursed by the Fund for these expenses.
- The Pension Fund holds a proportion of its assets in cash to meet short term commitments. This cash is managed by the Staffordshire County Council Treasury and Pension Fund team in line with the Fund's Annual Investment Strategy, which sets out the permitted counterparties and limits. At 31 March 2023 the Fund held £93.3m in cash (£247.6m at 31 March 2022).
- The County Council are the largest employer and they have fully paid for all their contributions.

LGPS Central Limited

- LGPS Central Limited has been established to manage investment assets on behalf of nine Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) funds across the Midlands. It is jointly owned in equal shares by the eight administering authorities participating in the LGPS Central Pool, of which Staffordshire County Council, as the administering authority for Staffordshire Pension Fund, is one of the shareholders.
- The Fund had £1.315m invested in share capital and £0.685m in a loan to LGPS Central at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2022, £1.315m and £0.685m, respectively) and was owed interest of £0.047m on the loan to LGPSC on the same date (31 March 2022, £0.032m).
- During 2022/2023 the Fund disinvested £127m from the Global Equities fund and invested a further £139.6m in the Corporate Bond Fund and also a new investment of £126.9m in the Global Sustainable Fund.
- The Fund incurred £1.160m in respect of Governance, Operator Running and Product Development costs in connection with LGPS Central Limited in 2022/2023 (£1.050m in 2021/2022).

22a. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Fund are the Staffordshire County Council County Treasurer (Section 151 Officer), Director of Corporate Services, and the Head of Treasury and Pensions. Total remuneration payable to key personnel in respect of the Pension Fund is set out below:

	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
	£m	£m

Short Term Benefits	0.1	0.1
Post-employment Benefits	0.1	0.1
	0.2	**0.2**

23. Deferred liability

A cash transfer of £0.188m was made to the Fund in 2011/2012 by the Environment Agency. The transfer was in respect of Pre-1974 Water Company Pensions increase recharges and represents income received in advance. £0.013m has been transferred to the revenue account in 2022/2023 and £0.013m will be released per year until 2025/2026. At 31 March 2023 the remaining balance was £0.0375m as per the long term liabilities in note 20.

24. Accounting Standards issued but not yet adopted

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

- Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendments to IAS 8) issued in February 2021.
- Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS 1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2) issued in February 2021.

Glossary

Accounting Period
The period of time covered by the accounts. This is normally 12 months beginning on 1 April.

Accrual
An amount included in the final accounts to cover income or spending during an accounting period for goods or work done, but for which we have not received or made a payment by the end of that accounting period.

Actuarial Strain
This is a charge paid, or due to be paid to the pension fund for paying pensions early.

Actuarial Valuation
This is when an actuary checks what the pension scheme's assets are worth and compares them with what the scheme owes. They then work out how much the contributions from employers must be so that there will be enough money in the scheme when people get their pensions.

Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)
This is an extra amount (contribution) a member can pay to their own pension scheme to increase their future pension benefits.

Admitted Bodies
Organisations which carry out public functions or receive public finance (or both), and are members of our fund (for example, housing associations).

Agency Services
When one organisation (the agent) provides services on behalf of another organisation that will pay for those services.

Amortisation
A charge we make each year in the income and expenditure account to reduce the value of an asset to zero over a period of years.

Asset Ceiling
Is the present value of any economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan.

Balances
The total general balances we have available, including any income built up, which allows us to work without borrowing until we receive the first precept payments in the early part of the financial year. Balances form part of our reserves.

Balance Sheet
This is a summary of all our assets and liabilities, bringing together all our accounts except the pension fund and various trust funds, whose assets we cannot use.

Benchmarks
These are investment performance standards that we expect our investment managers to achieve and against which we measure their investment return.

Bid-Market Price
The price a buyer pays for a stock.

Billing Authority
The local authority responsible for collecting council tax. In shire areas the billing authority is the District Council.

Budget
A statement of our financial plans for a certain period of time. We prepare and approve a budget before the start of the financial year. We prepare our budget on an 'outturn basis', which means that increases for pay and prices during the financial year are contained within the total budget figure.

Budget Requirement
The amount of spending paid for using the council tax and government grant.

Capital Adjustment Account
This mainly represents the balance of the gains or losses arising when we revalue non-current assets to neutralise any effect on the taxpayer.

Glossary

Capital Charge
A charge to reflect the cost of non-current assets used to provide services.

Capital Direction
An instruction from the Government saying what spending can be treated as capital expenditure. This means that instead of having to be counted as revenue, we can pay for it using borrowed money or capital receipts.

Capital Expenditure
Spending to buy significant non-current assets that we will use or benefit from for more than a year (for example, land and buildings).

Capital Financing Requirement
Our need to borrow to pay for capital expenditure.

Capital Programme
Our plan of capital projects and spending over future years, including buying land and buildings, putting up new buildings and work, design fees and buying vehicles and major items of equipment.

Capital Receipts
The proceeds from selling an asset (for example, land or buildings) which we may use to pay for new capital spending or to repay loans we owe.

Capitalised
Spending on assets which carry a future benefit.

Centrally-Controlled Items
Budgets not under the control of chief officers. They include spending relating to property, insurance, repairs and maintenance, interest earned on funds and repaying money borrowed.

CIPFA
The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This is the professional organisation for accountants working in the public service.

Collateral Holdings
Assets pledged to a lender until the loan is repaid. If the borrower does not pay off the loan, the lender has the legal right to seize the asset and sell it to pay off the loan.

Collection Fund
A fund run by each billing authority into which council tax money is paid.

Combined Code
This represents best practice in corporate governance, as recommended by various reports on the subject.

Community Assets
Assets that we plan to hold onto indefinitely, that have no set useful life and that may have restrictions on being sold. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings.

Commutations
When a member of the fund gives up part of their pension in exchange for a lump sum.

Contingency
The money we set aside for unexpected spend.

Contingent Liabilities
An amount we could owe when we send the accounts for approval. We will include the liability in the balance sheet if we can estimate it reasonably accurately. Otherwise we would add the liability as a note to the accounts.

Contributors
Employees of authorities who contribute to the pension fund.

Corporate Governance
Issues relating to the way in which a company makes sure that it is giving most importance to the interests of its shareholders and how shareholders can influence how the company is managed.

Glossary

County Fund
Our main revenue fund into which the precept, National Non-Domestic Rates, government grants and other income are paid, and from which we pay the costs of providing services.

Credit Approvals
Authorisations the Government gives to local authorities. They allow the local authorities to pay for capital spending by borrowing or other credit arrangements such as leasing.

Creditors
Amounts we owe for work done, goods received or services provided which have not been paid for by the end of the financial year.

Credit Ceiling
This is a measure of the difference between our total liabilities for capital expenditure paid for using credit and the provision that has been made to meet those liabilities.

Curtailment Costs
Curtailment costs arise when many employees transfer out of the scheme at the same time, such as when an organisation transfers its members to another scheme.

Custody
Where a financial institution holds and manages the assets of the fund.

Debtors
Amounts owed to us for work done or services supplied which have not been paid by the end of the financial year.

Deferred Liabilities
Liabilities which by arrangement are payable beyond the next year at some point in the future or paid off with a yearly amount over a period of time.

Deficit
A situation where spending is more than income.

Depreciation
The loss of value of a non-current asset as it ages, wears out, is used, or comes to the end of its life.

Discontinued Operations
Any operation which meets all of the following conditions.

a The operation is completed:
- during a relevant period or within three months of the start of the next period; or
- on the date on which we approve the accounts;

whichever is earlier.

b All activities have permanently stopped.

c The assets, liabilities, income and spending of operations and activities are clearly separated for financial reporting purposes.

Fees and Charges
As well as income from council tax payers and the Government, we can charge for a number of services including providing school meals, meals-on-wheels, hiring out school halls and sporting facilities.

Financial Instrument
A contract that provides a financial asset for one organisation and, at the same time, another organisation owes us the same amount. Usually for us this is for long-term loans used to raise funds for capital investment.

Financial Instruments Adjustment Account
A non-cash reserve where we can balance the different rates at which gains and losses in financial instruments are recognised.

Financial Regulations
A written code of procedures we have approved, aimed at providing a framework for sound financial management.

Glossary

Fixed-interest Investments
Investments, mainly in stocks issued by the Government, which provide a fixed rate of interest.

Futures Contracts
A legally-binding agreement to buy or sell a certain amount of a financial product at an agreed price and on an agreed date in the future.

Hedge Fund
This is an investment fund that uses a number of types of investments to make a consistent and steady return. It aims to make money whether markets are falling or rising.

Impairment
Where an asset's value has been reduced for reasons other than normal wear and tear. The asset's value in the accounts has to be reduced to reflect this impairment.

Index-linked Securities
Investments in stock where the rate of interest and capital value are linked to the rate of inflation.

Infrastructure Asset
A non-current asset that cannot be taken away or transferred, and which we can only continue to benefit from by actually using it. Examples of infrastructure are roads, bridges and footpaths.

Investment Management Expenses
All expenses relating to managing the pension fund's investments.

Investment Managers
Firms we appoint to deal with the pension fund's investments on a day-to-day basis.

Leasing
A way of paying for capital spending where we pay a rental charge for a certain period of time. There are two main types of leasing arrangements.

a) Finance leases, which transfer all the risks and rewards of owning a non-current asset to the person taking out the lease. These assets are included in the non-current assets in the balance sheet.

b) Operating leases, where the leasing company owns the asset and the yearly rental is charged direct to the income and expenditure account.

Local Education Authority (LEA)
The part of the county council responsible for schools in Staffordshire.

Minimum Revenue Provision
The minimum amount we must charge to the income and expenditure account each year and set aside for paying off credit. The MRP policy is approved by Council annually.

Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
A three-year financial-planning process designed to make best use of our aims within our available resources.

National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR)
This is the charge on non-domestic properties. It is the same for all businesses in England and is set each year by the Government. We pay the amounts we collect to the Government, and we then receive a share of the total paid to the Government.

Non-Current Assets
Assets that give us benefits for more than one year.

Payments in Advance
Amounts actually paid in an accounting period before the period they relate to.

Pension Administrative Expenses
All expenses relating to managing the pension scheme, including working out length of service and benefits and paying pensions.

Glossary

Performance Measurement
Measuring the investment performance of a pension fund. This often leads to comparisons with other funds and market indexes.

Plant
Items of mechanical or electrical equipment which perform specific construction or maintenance tasks, such as equipment used to maintain grass verges on roads.

Pooled Investments
When assets of more than one investor are combined.

Portfolio
A list of all the investments an investor owns.

Post Balance Sheet Events
Those events, both favourable and unfavourable, which happen between the date the balance sheet is produced and the date the statement of accounts is approved.

Precept
We get part of our income from charges on the district councils in our areas. A charge, based on the 'council tax base' of the district council, is made on each district's 'collection fund'.

Provision
An amount we set aside to provide for something we will need to pay, but where we do not know the exact amount and the date on which it will arise.

Provision for Credit Liabilities (PCL)
An amount we must set aside to repay finance leases and for other limited purposes.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)
A government agency that provides longer-term loans to local authorities.

Realised Gain, Realised Loss
The profit or loss resulting from selling investments during the year.

Receipts and Payments
Amounts we actually pay or receive in a given accounting period, no matter for what period they are due.

Receipt in Advance
Amounts actually received in an accounting period before the period they relate to.

Refunds of Contributions
The amount employees will receive if they stop their pensionable employment within the first three months of working for us (two years in the past).

Reserves
'Earmarked reserves' are amounts set aside for a specific purpose in one financial year and carried forward to meet spending in future years. 'General reserves' are balances generally available to support revenue or capital spending.

Revenue Budget
The estimate of yearly income and spending requirements, which sets out the financial implications of our policies and the basis of the yearly charge we will make.

Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)
A contribution towards paying for capital spending from the revenue account rather than by borrowing.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)
A general government grant to support local authority spending, and fixed each year in relation to the formula spending share (FSS).

Running Expenses
The day-to-day costs we pay in providing services, not including salaries and expenses, capital financing charges and revenue contribution to capital outlay.

Glossary

Scheduled Bodies
Organisations whose membership of the fund is laid down in law.

Securities
Investing in shares of companies and in fixed-interest or index-linked stocks.

Specific Grants
Government grants to local authorities to help with particular projects or services.

Standing Orders
The set of rules we follow which set the procedures we use to carry out our business.

Stock Lending
Lending some securities, such as stocks and shares, corporate bonds and government securities from one investor to another approved investor, in return for a fee.

Tactical Asset Allocation
Using futures to:

- make sure that the fund's assets are invested in the relevant area and in line with the targets set for each type of asset and each country; and
- take views on the markets and currencies we expect to perform the best.

Time-Weighted Return
The total capital and revenue returns on a fund. We give this as a percentage of the opening values of the fund in each investment period. It also takes account of any new money received in that investment period.

Transfer Values
The amount that is available from one pension to buy benefits in another pension when employees join or leave the scheme.

Trust Funds
Funds we handle for such purposes as prizes, charities, special projects and on behalf of people under the age of 16.

Withholding Tax
A tax on the income from dividends. We may be able to recover some of this.

Work in Progress
The cost of work done on a project that is not yet finished and the cost has not been charged to the appropriate account at that date.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Disclaimer of opinion

We were engaged to audit the financial statements of Staffordshire County Council (the Council') for the year ended 31 March 2023. The financial statements comprise the:

- Council Movement in Reserves Statement,
- Council Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement,
- Council Balance Sheet,
- Council Cash Flow Statement
- the related notes 1 to 44 including a summary of significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

We do not express an opinion on the accompanying financial statements of the Council. Because of the significance of the matter described in the basis for disclaimer of opinion section of our report, we have not been able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion on these financial statements.

Basis for disclaimer of opinion

The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 (Statutory Instrument 2024/907) which came into force on 30 September 2024 requires the accountability statements for this financial year to be approved not later than 13ᵗ December 2024.

The audit of the 2021/22 financial statements for Staffordshire County Council was not completed for the reasons set out in our opinion on those financial statements dated 11 December 2024. As a result of the delays to the previous year's audit together with the wider requirements of the local audit system reset, we did not have the required resources available to complete the detailed audit procedures that would be needed to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to issue an unmodified audit report on the 2022/23 financial statements before the 13 December 2024 backstop date.

Therefore, we are disclaiming our opinion on the financial statements.

Matters on which we report by exception

Notwithstanding our disclaimer of opinion on the financial statements we have nothing to report in respect of whether the annual governance statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information forthcoming from the audit, performed subject to the pervasive limitation described above, or our knowledge of the Council.

We report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
  we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)

We have nothing to report in these respects.

In respect of the following, we have matters to report by exception:

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

On the basis of our work, having regard to the Code of Audit Practice 2024, and to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024, we have identified the following significant weakness in the Council's arrangements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Significant weakness in arrangements

Our judgement on the nature of the weakness identified:

Ofsted carried out a focused visit in May 2022 that identified areas for improvement within the Council's children's services. A further inspection in November 2023 concluded that services for vulnerable children and their families and for care leavers in Staffordshire needed to improve. The overall effectiveness of the Children's services was assessed as requiring improvement to be good. In addition, the following judgement areas were also graded as requires improvement to be good:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families.
- The experience and progress of children who need help and protection.
- The experiences and progress of care leavers

The findings from Ofsted in consecutive reports represents a failure to take appropriate action and secure improvement in response to a regulatory inspection.

The report by Ofsted evidences that Staffordshire County Council does not have proper arrangements in place for the provision of children's services within the Staffordshire County Council area.

The evidence on which our view is based:

- Ofsted Children's services inspection published on 12 January 2024

Impact on the local body:

Deficiencies in the arrangements of Staffordshire County Children's services limits the ability of the Council to provide services for vulnerable children and their families and for care leavers that are effective and meet expected quality standards.

Action the body needs to take to address the weakness:

Staffordshire County Council needs to ensure that it has effective oversight and monitoring arrangements in place for the provision of children's services to address the following areas where Ofsted reported improvements were required:

- Quality and effectiveness of the referrals and assessments in the front door.
- Performance data and quality assurance practices including timely audit being conducted.
- Performance improvement being implemented i.e. the Local Authority Designated Officer to fully understand the initial assessment timeliness and the accuracy of health assessment data for children in care.
- The effectiveness of partnership working within Staffordshire to improve children's access to dentistry and for children in care with more complex health needs to get timely assessment

and support and ensure that care leavers are not placed in unsuitable temporary accommodation.

Responsibility of the Director of Finance
As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts set out on page 12, the Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022), and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Director of Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director of Finance is responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Council either intends to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements
Our responsibility is to conduct an audit of the Council's financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and to issue an auditor's report.

However, because of the matter described in the basis for disclaimer of opinion section of our report, we were not able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion on these financial statements.

We are independent of the Council in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and the Code of Audit Practice 2024 and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources
We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice 2024, having regard to the guidance on the specified reporting criteria issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in November 2024, as to whether Staffordshire County Council had proper arrangements for financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Comptroller and Auditor General determined these criteria as those necessary for us to consider under the Code of Audit Practice in satisfying ourselves whether Staffordshire County Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2023.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, Staffordshire County Council had put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We are required to give an opinion on the consistency of the financial statements of the pension fund included in the Pension Fund Annual Report of Staffordshire Pension Fund. The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 require authorities to publish the Pension Fund Annual Report by 1 December following the Scheme year end. As the Council has not yet prepared the Annual Report, we have not yet been able to conclude on the consistency with these financial statements and we have not issued our report on those financial statements. Until we have done so, we are unable to certify that we have completed the audit of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Staffordshire County Council, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Council and the Council's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Ernst & Young LLP

Hassan Rohimun (Key Audit Partner)
Ernst & Young LLP (Local Auditor)
Manchester
11 December 2024

Footnote:

The following footnote does not form part of our Auditor's Report.

Additional information related to the disclaimer of opinion is set out in our Audit Completion Report for Those Charged with Governance dated 18 November 2024, available on the Authority's website, which includes further explanations about the implementation of the statutory instrument which led to the disclaimer of our opinion on the financial statements.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ON THE PENSION FUND'S FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Opinion

We have audited the Pension Fund ("the Fund") financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended). The pension fund financial statements comprise the Fund Account, the Net Assets Statement and the related notes 1 to 25.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

In our opinion the pension fund financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial transactions of the Fund during the year ended 31 March 2023 and the amount and disposition at that date of its assets and liabilities as at 31 March 2023; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report below. We are independent of the Council as administering authority for the Pension Fund in accordance with the ethical requiremens that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and the Comptroller and Auditor General's AGN01, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the authority's ability to continue as a going concern for a period ending 31 March 2026.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the authority's ability to continue as a going concern.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts 2022/23 set out on pages 96 to 136, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The is responsible for the other information contained within the Statement of Accounts 2022/23.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended);
- we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended);
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended);
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended); or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended).

We have nothing to report in these respects.

Responsibility of the Director of Finance

As explained more fully in the Statement of ther Director of Finance's Responsibilities set out on pages 12, the Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts, which includes the pension fund financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022) the Director of Finance is also responsible for such internal control as the Director of Finance determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director of Finance is responsible for assessing the Fund's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Administering Authority either intends to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Explanation as to what extent the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect irregularities, including fraud. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests Director of Finance .

Our approach was as follows:

- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Fund and determined that the most significant are the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended), and The Public Service Pensions Act 2013.
- We understood how the Fund is complying with those frameworks by making enquries of the management. We corroborated this through [our reading of the Pension Board minutes, through enquiry of employees to confirm Pension policies, and through the inspection of employee handbooks and other information].
- Based on this understanding, we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures involved making enquiries of the management for their awareness of any non-compliance of laws or regulations, inspecting correspondence with the Pensions Regulator and review of minutes.
- We assessed the susceptibility of the Fund's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by considering the key risks impacting the financial statements and documenting the controls that the Fund has established to address risks identified, or that otherwise seek to prevent, deter or detect fraud.
- In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override. In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluated the business rationale of any identified significant transactions that were unusual or outside the normal course of business. These procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error.
- To address our fraud risk we tested the consistency of the investment asset valuation from the independent sources of the custodian and the fund managers to the financial statements.
- The Fund is required to comply with The Local Government Pensions Scheme regulations, other legislation relevant to the governance and administration of the Local Government Pension Scheme and requirements imposed by the Pension Regulator in relation ot the Local Government Pension Scheme. As such, we have considered the experience and expertise of the engagement team including the use of specialists where appropriate, to ensure that the team had an appropriate understanding of the relevant pensions regulations to assess the control environment and consider compliance of the Fund with these regulations as part of our audit procedures.

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

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of Staffordshire County Council, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and for no other purpose, as set out in paragraph 43 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Staffordshire County Council and its members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Ernst & Young LLP

Hassan Rohimun (Key Audit Partner)
Ernst & Young LLP (Local Auditor)
Manchester
11 December 2024