

## AGENDA

### **AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2023**

**4.00 PM**

**COUNCIL CHAMBER, FENLAND HALL,  
COUNTY ROAD, MARCH**

Committee Officer: Jo Goodrum  
Tel: 01354 622285  
e-mail: [memberservices@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:memberservices@fenland.gov.uk)

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.
- 2 Previous Minutes. (Pages 3 - 6)  
  
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held 24 July 2023.
- 3 To report additional items for consideration which the Chairman deems urgent by virtue of special circumstances to be now specified.
- 4 Members to declare any interests under the Local Code of Conduct in respect of any item to be discussed at the meeting.
- 5 Audit Results Report 2021/22 (Pages 7 - 56)

To consider the Audit Results Report for Year Ended 31 March 2022 from the Council's appointed independent external auditor - EY (Ernst and Young).

- 6 Statement of Accounts 2021/22 (Pages 57 - 194)

To review and approve the Statement of Accounts 2021/22.

7 Letter of Representation 2021/22 (Pages 195 - 204)

To agree the format and content of the Letter of Representation provided to the External Auditors at the conclusion of the 21-22 Statement of Accounts audit.

8 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy (Pages 205 - 232)

To agree the new Anti-Fraud Policy.

9 Annual Governance Statement 2022 - 23 (Pages 233 - 250)

To consider the content of the AGS and approves its content for inclusion in the Council's published statement of accounts 2021/22.

10 Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 - Update (Pages 251 - 264)

To consider and discuss the revised Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.

11 Audit and Risk Management Committee Work Programme (Pages 265 - 270)

For Information purposes

12 Items of Topical Interest.

13 Items which the Chairman has under item 3 deemed urgent.

Monday, 18 September 2023

Members: Councillor K French (Chairman), Councillor S Harris (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Booth, Councillor G Christy, Councillor J Mockett and Councillor S Tierney

## AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 24 JULY 2023 - 4.00 PM



**PRESENT:** Councillor K French (Chairman), Councillor S Harris (Vice-Chairman), Councillor G Christy and Councillor S Tierney

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor G Booth

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Amy Brown (Assistant Director), Peter Catchpole (Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer), Mark Saunders (Chief Accountant), David Thacker (Interim Internal Audit Manager), Linda Albon (Member Services & Governance Officer) and Helen Moore (Member Services and Governance Officer)

### **ARMC1/23 TO APPOINT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR.**

It was proposed by Councillor Harris, seconded by Councillor Tierney and resolved that Councillor Kim French be elected Chairman of the Audit and Risk Management Committee for the municipal year 2023/24.

### **ARMC2/23 TO APPOINT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR.**

It was proposed by Councillor French, seconded by Councillor Christy and resolved that Councillor Harris be elected Vice Chairman of the Audit and Risk Management Committee for the municipal year 2023/24.

### **ARMC3/23 PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 20 March 2023 were approved and signed.

### **ARMC4/23 INTERNAL AUDIT OUTTURN AND QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW 2022/23**

Members considered the Internal Audit Outturn and Quality Assurance Review 2022/2023 report presented by David Thacker, Interim Internal Audit Manager.

David Thacker explained that the overall audit opinion is one of adequate although there is a reduction in the number of audits that were able to be achieved during the year due to resource constraints. He made the point that there was a broad coverage compared to the plan.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Christy asked whether the recruitment of the role for a permanent Internal Audit Manager is taking place as currently the post is being filled on an interim basis? Peter Catchpole confirmed that an advert is currently running with a closing date for the end of July for applications to be submitted.
- Councillor Christy referred to 7.4 of the report which detailed the external quality assessment and asked for further information concerning that aspect of the report. David Thacker explained that it is his understanding that from an external point of view the auditors were happy with the processes and policies of the Internal Audit Team and, therefore, they awarded the highest rating that they could which, in his opinion, is a positive

outcome for the Internal Audit team. He added that there are challenges that do need to be addressed and stated that he would like to see an element of change in future reports which will be more focussed, making the point that he was very happy with the External Quality Assessment outcome.

- Councillor Christy stated that given the staffing challenges it would appear that a great deal of work has been achieved and for that the team should be congratulated.
- Peter Catchpole explained that it is a legal requirement that every three years an external assessment is undertaken, and, in his opinion, he is extremely happy with the opinion achieved as it is the highest rating which can be awarded. He added that the assessors had noted that there was an excess of audits carried out for such a small District Council and, therefore, looking forward consideration will be given to undertaking less internal audits but more work with regards to the risk assessment which was one of the recommendations that had been suggested. Peter Catchpole explained that even through the full audit plan was not delivered last year he was extremely pleased to see the audit opinion of adequate for the 2022/23 financial year.

#### **Members noted the**

- **outturn for Internal Audit for 2022/23, which highlights the audits that were completed as per the agreed Internal Audit Plan and their associated assurance ratings and also the additional assurances gained from other sources of work completed in house and externally to support the Annual Audit Opinion;**
- **Interim Internal Audit Manager's opinion on the 'adequacy' of GRC processes; and**
- **positive outcome of the independent quality assurance review.**

#### **ARMC5/23 ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23**

Members considered the Audit and Risk Management Annual Report 2022/23 presented by David Thacker, the Interim Internal Audit Manager.

David Thacker explained that the annual report considered the commitment and effectiveness of the Audit and Risk Management Committee from April 2022 to March 2023, and outlined the topics which the committee had considered over that period. He added that there are still a couple of actions required from the previous year which will be carried forward and include the position statement of CIPFA with regards to the terms of reference for the committee and to ensure that they are aligned. David Thacker stated that there also needs to be work undertaken with regards to members and their key knowledge and skills as well as looking at the subject of value added, and these key areas will be reviewed over the next few months and then a report will be brought back to the committee.

**Members approved the Audit and Risk Management Committee Annual Report for 2022/23 to be submitted to Council.**

#### **ARMC6/23 INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER**

Members considered the Internal Audit Charter report presented by David Thacker, Interim Internal Audit Manager.

David Thacker explained that the Internal Audit Charter is a document that reflects best practice audit guidance and is reviewed every three years by the Audit and Risk Management Committee. He explained that it has been changed to reflect the reporting line and the inclusion of Amy Brown as an Assistant Director and the resources, competencies and training are all the same.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Tierney made the point that it may appear that members are disengaged by not making any comment, however, as there is nothing contentious and everything is running



smoothly then he sees no reason to make comment.

- Peter Catchpole explained that due to a typographical error the very minor changes with regards to reporting lines had not been highlighted in the document and, therefore, it was agreed that the document should be circulated to the committee, and should any queries be raised, the report can be brought forward again at the next scheduled meeting.
- Councillor Christy asked for clarification with regards to the time frame for the review of the charter? David Thacker explained that it is normally every three years in line with the External Quality Assessment (EQA) and it should only come forward if there are any changes. He added that the charter sets out the function of Internal Audit and its roles and responsibilities and should not fundamentally change at all, but it is always best practice to review it after the EQA.

**Members approved the Internal Audit Charter.**

### **ARMC7/23 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2023-24 Q1**

Members considered the Internal Audit Progress report for Quarter 1 presented by David Thacker, Interim Internal Audit Manager.

David Thacker explained that the report outlines the audits to date and what work has been brought forward. He commended the work of the Internal Audit team for the challenges they have dealt with and overcome due to the departure of the Head of Internal Audit who had moved onto a new role. David Thacker explained that the report shows that there are three audits which are still being finalised and are due for imminent completion. He explained that due to the various commitments there will be no capacity for any internal audit work to be undertaken in the month of August but that will mean that he is able to review the Audit Plan for 23/24 in order that it becomes more risk focussed and, therefore, fewer audits will be undertaken but better-quality audits in order to give better assurance to the committee.

**Members noted the activity and performance of the Internal Audit function.**

### **ARMC8/23 AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAM**

Members of the committee considered the Audit and Risk Management Committee Work programme.

**Members noted the work programme for information.**

### **ARMC9/23 ITEMS OF TOPICAL INTEREST.**

Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant, introduced himself to members of the committee and explained that as part of his role he will be presenting various items to the committee during the municipal year. He referred to the External Audit for the 2021/22 municipal year and explained that the auditors are submitting queries on a very frequent basis which are being responded to. He added that he was due to have a meeting in the next day or so with the external auditors to try and resolve the outstanding issues to ascertain and agree a timetable to finalise the audit.

Mark Saunders explained that the issue is not one that just affects this Council as it appears to be a national issue and auditors across the country are way behind with the completion of 2021/22 audits. He referred to a letter recently received from the Department of Levelling Up with regards to local audits making the point that they are currently undertaking an inquiry into the local audit regime.

Mark Saunders pointed out that within that letter it states that only 27% of audits for the 2021/22 financial year have been completed and the combined total of outstanding audits dating back to 2015/2016 is now 520 and it is a very widescale national problem for auditors not being able to

complete audits for local authorities. He added that the Department of Levelling Up will be consulting over the summer about introducing various measures in which to try and overcome and conclude some of the outstanding audits and it is hoped that the Council's audit should be concluded fairly quickly unless any new queries are raised.

Mark Saunders said looking forward it is hoped that the external auditors report concerning the audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2021/22 can be presented to the committee in September and following that they will be able to sign of the 2021/22 final accounts which can then be published on the Council's website. The final Statement of Accounts will also be presented to the committee at the September meeting.

Mark Saunders explained that completion work for the 2022/23 is still in progress, whilst monitoring work for 2023/24 is taking place. He added that in August the budget process for 2024/25 will commence and with all these aspects ongoing it does become challenging.

Mark Saunders explained that the two issues which appear to cause the auditors problems when considering the local authority accounts are the pension valuations and the PPE which is the property planning equipment or asset valuations. He added that both aspects of that work are undertaken by expert external consultants, however, those topics still appear to raise queries but will make no difference to the Council's accounts.

Mark Saunders stated that the external auditors will present their report to the committee and will also present their audit opinion at the same time. He explained that the external auditors have already advised that they will not be able to commence on audits on the 2022/23 accounts until November 2023 and, therefore, looking forward there may well be some changes to the work programme over the course of the next few meetings.

Peter Catchpole explained that the situation is becoming somewhat of a challenge for the team professionally because it is not something that they welcome or are used to. He stated that the 2021/22 accounts were published by the Council by the end of July which is in accordance with guidelines which have been adhered to.


Peter Catchpole stated that he has not yet authorised the publication of the 2022/23 accounts because until he has an audit opinion on the 2021/22 accounts, he does not feel he can answer the statutory true and fair question and, therefore, the accounts for that financial year will not be published until the 2021/22 accounts are concluded. He stated that if there is an issue with the 2021/22 accounts that would mean that the opening balance into the 2022/23 accounts would be affected.

Peter Catchpole stated that on a positive note the Council finds itself in a far better position than a number of other neighbouring authorities, who still have outstanding accounts for 2019/20. He added that he would hope that by the September committee meeting he can bring some of the outstanding matters to the meeting but there could be some slippage with the work programme but that will not be due to the officer's want of trying.

Members asked questions, made comments, and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Christy asked for reassurance that even though there are various aspects outstanding with regards to accounts and audits, there is no adverse impact on the Council? Mark Saunders stated that whilst there are matters outstanding there is no impact to the general financial position of the Council. Peter Catchpole explained that the details concerning the financial out turn for 2022/23 was presented to Cabinet which outlined the financial position of the Council, and he would prefer to see the statement of accounts signed off, but the facts and figures have been presented to Cabinet and are available for everybody to see.

# Agenda Item 5

Agenda Item No:	5	
Committee:	Audit & Risk Management Committee	
Date:	26 September 2023	
Report Title:	Appointed Auditor – Audit Results Report Year Ended 31 March 2022	

## Cover sheet:

### 1 Purpose / Summary

To consider the Audit Results Report for Year Ended 31 March 2022 from the Council's appointed independent external auditor - EY (Ernst and Young).

### 2 Key issues

- EY will present their Audit Results Report arising from their duties under International Auditing Standard 260, following the completion of their audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts 2021/22.
- The Draft Audit Results Report for Year Ended 31 March 2022 is attached. EY are currently finalising their work as detailed on page 5 of their report and will provide a verbal update to Members at the meeting.

### 3 Recommendations

- It is recommended that Members note the content of the report.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	

# Fenland District Council Audit Results Report

Year ended 31 March 2022

5 September 2023

The EY logo consists of the letters 'EY' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. A yellow triangle is positioned above the 'Y', pointing downwards towards the letters.

Building a better  
working world



**Audit and Risk Management Committee Members**  
Fenland District Council  
Fenland Hall, County Road  
March, Cambridgeshire  
PE15 8NQ

5 September 2023

Dear Audit and Risk Management Committee Members

### 2021/22 Audit Results Report

We are pleased to attach our Audit Results Report, summarising the status of our audit for the forthcoming meeting of the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

The audit is designed to express an opinion on the 2021/22 financial statements and address current statutory and regulatory requirements. This report contains our findings related to the areas of audit emphasis, our views on Fenland District Council's accounting policies and judgements and material internal control findings. Each year sees further enhancements to the level of audit challenge and the quality of evidence required to achieve the robust professional scepticism that society expects. We thank the management team for supporting this process. We have also included an update on our work on the Council's Value for Money arrangements.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, other members of the Council and senior management. It is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss the contents of this report with you at the Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting on the 26 September 2023.

Yours faithfully

*MARK HODGSON*

Mark Hodgson  
Partner  
For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP  
Encl



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01 Executive Summary

02 Areas of Audit Focus

03 Audit Report

04 Audit Differences



05 Value for Money

06 Other Reporting Issues

07 Independence

08 Appendices

Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) issued the "Statement of responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies". It is available from the PSAA website (<https://www.psa.co.uk/audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities/>). The Statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between appointed auditors and audited bodies. It summarises where the different responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies begin and end, and what is to be expected of the audited body in certain areas.

The "Terms of Appointment and further guidance (updated April 2018)" issued by the PSAA sets out additional requirements that auditors must comply with, over and above those set out in the National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and in legislation, and covers matters of practice and procedure which are of a recurring nature.

This report is made solely to the Audit and Risk Management Committee and management of Fenland District Council in accordance with the statement of responsibilities. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Audit and Risk Management Committee, and management of Fenland District Council those matters we are required to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Audit and Risk Management Committee and management of Fenland District Council for this report or for the opinions we have formed. It should not be provided to any third-party without our prior written consent.



# 01 Executive Summary

# Executive Summary

## Scope update

In our Initial Audit Plan, dated 18 July 2022, we provided you with an overview of our audit scope and approach for the audit of the financial statements. We carried out our audit in accordance with this plan, with the following exceptions:

- ▶ **Changes in materiality:** In our Initial Audit Plan, we communicated that our audit procedures would be performed using a materiality of £1.15 million. We updated our planning materiality assessment using the draft financial statements and have also reconsidered our risk assessment. Based on our materiality measure of gross expenditure, we have updated our overall materiality assessment to £1.30 million. This results in updated performance materiality, at 75% of overall materiality, of £0.975 million, and an updated threshold for reporting misstatements of £0.065 million.

## Status of the audit

Our audit of the Fenland District Council financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 is substantially complete. The following items relating to the completion of our audit procedures were outstanding at the date of this report:

- ▶ Completion of procedures in relation to the restatement of Grant income notes (Notes 7,12 and 35)

Audit final closing procedures are:

- ▶ Subsequent events review;
- ▶ Agreement of the final set of financial statements;
- ▶ Receipt of signed management representation letter; and
- ▶ Final Manager and Engagement Partner reviews.

Details of each outstanding item, actions required to resolve and responsibility is included in Appendix B.

Given that the audit process is still ongoing, we will continue to challenge the remaining evidence provided and the final disclosures in the Narrative Report and Accounts which could influence our final audit opinion, a current draft of which is included in Section 3.



# Executive Summary

## Auditor responsibilities under the Code of Audit Practice 2020

Under the Code of Audit Practice 2020 we are required to consider whether the Council has put in place 'proper arrangements' to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness on its use of resources. The 2020 Code requires the auditor to design their work to provide them with sufficient assurance to enable them to report to the Council a commentary against specified reporting criteria (see below) on the arrangements the Council has in place to secure value for money through economic, efficient and effective use of its resources for the relevant period.

The specified reporting criteria are:

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

## Status of the audit - Value for Money

We have completed our Value for Money (VFM) risk assessment and have not identified any risk of significant weakness against the three reporting criteria we are required to consider under the NAO's 2020 Code.

We will need to update our assessment through to the completion of the audit of the financial statements, including additional queries in relation to the Council's response to challenges during the 2021/22 financial year, in order to remain satisfied that we have not identified a risk of significant weakness.

We plan to issue the VFM commentary by the end of October 2023 as part of issuing the Auditor's Annual Report. See Section 5 for more details on Value for Money procedures.

## Audit differences

### Uncorrected differences

There are no uncorrected audit differences as a result of our audit procedures at the time of this report.

### Corrected differences

At the date of this report, we have identified the following audit differences which are to be adjusted for by Management within the revised financial statements.

- 1. Balance Sheet - Property Plant and Equipment** - Accumulated depreciation of £0.088 million was incorrectly charged to Community Assets thereby understating the value of Property, Plant and Equipment.

**Balance Sheet - Net Pension Liability** - We reviewed the assurance report provided by the Pension Fund Auditor regarding the pension fund assets of Cambridgeshire Pension Fund. There was an understatement difference in the fair value of the Fund's plan assets, of which the Council's share was £0.296 million. As a result the Council's Pension Liability was overstated by of £0.296 million. The adjustment was made due to updated information being provided by the Actuary, as part of the audit, after the draft Statement of Accounts had been prepared.

Separate to the adjustment above, the Council requested a revised IAS 19 Actuarial following the completion of the Pension Fund Triennial Valuation at the 1 April 2022 (reported in March 2023). This resulted in a further change in the Council's Pension Liability at the 31 March 2022 balance sheet date, as a result of an update to assumptions underpinning the triennial valuation and their consequential impact on the Pension Liability at the 31 March 2022. The Net Pension Fund Liability was overstated by a further £6.926 million. The cumulative impact of these corrected differences is a total reduction in liability by £7.222 million from the balance reported within the draft financial statements.

### Disclosure Differences

We also identified a limited number of audit disclosure differences in the financial statements, which have been adjusted by Management. We do not deem any of the disclosure differences to be so significant as to require reporting to you with the exception of the following two items:

- 1. Balance Sheet - Pension Scheme Assets** - We reviewed the report provided by the Pension Fund Auditor regarding the pension fund asset of Cambridgeshire pension Fund who handles the fund assets of the council. There was a difference in the fair value of plan assets. Plan assets were understated by of £0.296 million
- 2. Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement - Grant Income** - The draft Statement of Accounts had a restatement on the grant income prior year figures on Note 35. The adjustments related to Covid-19 Grant Income which was not recognised in the prior year Statement of Accounts. The adjustment was below the overall materiality level and therefore it is now reflected in the current year financial statements as additional Grant Income of £0.62 million, as it did not meet the definition of a Prior Year Adjustment (under IAS 8).



# Executive Summary

## Areas of audit focus

In our Initial Audit Plan we identified a number of key areas of focus for our audit of the financial report of Fenland District Council. This report sets out our observations and status in relation to these areas, including our views on areas which might be conservative and areas where there is potential risk and exposure. Our consideration of these matters and others identified during the period is summarised within the "Areas of Audit Focus" section of this report.

### *Management Override: Misstatements due to fraud or error*

- *We have completed our work in this area and we have no matters to report.*

### *Management Override: Inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure including Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute (REFCUS)\**

- *We have completed our work in this area and we have no matters to report.*

### *Significant Risk :Accounting for Infrastructure Assets*

- *We have completed our work in this area and we have no matters to report.*

### *Inherent Risk: Accounting for Covid-19 related grant funding*

- *We have completed our work in this area and have no matters to report.*

### *Inherent Risk: Pension Liability Valuation & Pension disclosures*

- *We have completed our work in this area and have identified a difference to report:*

We reviewed the assurance report provided by the Pension Fund Auditor regarding the pension fund assets of Cambridgeshire Pension Fund. There was an understatement difference in the fair value of the Fund's plan assets, of which the Council's share was £0.296 million. As a result the Council's Pension Liability was overstated by of £0.296 million. The adjustment was made due to updated information being provided by the Actuary, as part of the audit, after the draft Statement of Accounts had been prepared.

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### *Inherent Risk: Valuation of Land & Buildings and Investment Property*

- *We have completed our work in this area and have no matters to report.*

### *Inherent Risk: National Non-Domestic Rates Appeals Provision*

- *We have completed our work in this area and have no matters to report.*

### *Inherent Risk: Bad debt provision and recoverability of Debtors*

- *We have completed our work in this area and have no matters to report.*

# Executive Summary

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## Areas of audit focus (Continued)

We request that you review these and other matters set out in this report to ensure:

- ▶ There are no residual further considerations or matters that could impact these issues
- ▶ You concur with the resolution of the issue
- ▶ There are no further significant issues you are aware of to be considered before the financial report is finalised.

There are no matters, other than those reported by management or disclosed in this report, which we believe should be brought to the attention of the Audit and Risk Management Committee or Management.

## Other reporting issues

We have reviewed the information presented in the Annual Governance Statement for consistency with our knowledge of the Council. We have identified two disclosure matters which we have raised with Management for consideration and amendment. We will review the changes on the final Annual Governance Statement .

We have completed the procedures required by the National Audit Office (NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts submission. The Council falls below the threshold (Threshold - £2 billion) for full review procedures, so we will submit an assurance statement verifying this position. We do not expect therefore to have any issues to report.

## Independence

Please refer to Section 7 for our update on Independence.

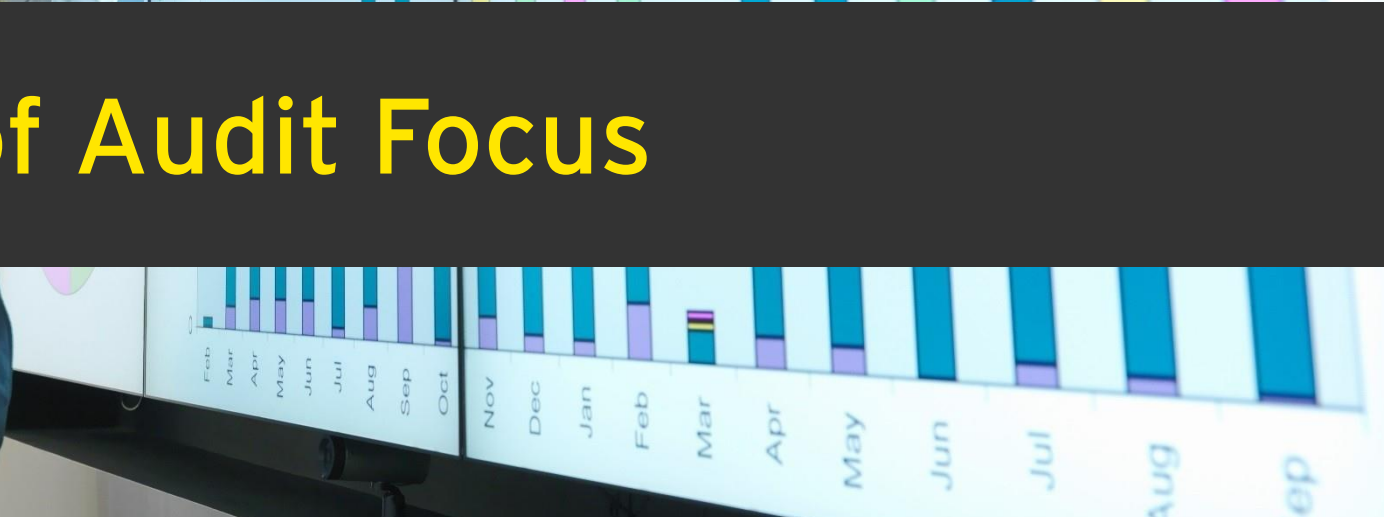
## Control observations

During the audit, we did not identify any significant deficiencies in internal control.



# 02

## Areas of Audit Focus





## Areas of Audit Focus

### Significant risk

#### Misstatements due to fraud or error

##### What is the risk?

The financial statements as a whole are not free of material misstatements whether caused by fraud or error.

As identified in ISA (UK and Ireland) 240, management is in a unique position to perpetrate fraud because of its ability to manipulate accounting records directly or indirectly and prepare fraudulent financial statements by overriding controls that otherwise appear to be operating effectively.

We identify and respond to this fraud risk on every audit engagement. Having evaluated this risk we have considered whether we need to perform other audit procedures not referred to above. We concluded that only those procedures included under 'Inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure (including REFCUS)' are required, as set out on the following page.

##### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Identified fraud risks during the planning stages.
- ▶ Inquired of management about risks of fraud and the controls put in place to address those risks.
- ▶ Documented our understanding of the oversight given by those charged with governance of management's processes over fraud.
- ▶ Considered the effectiveness of management's controls designed to address the risk of fraud.
- ▶ Tested the appropriateness of journal entries recorded in the general ledger and other adjustments made in the preparation of the financial statements.
- ▶ Reviewed the accounting estimates for evidence of management bias.
- ▶ Evaluated the business rationale for significant unusual transactions

ISA 240 mandates we perform procedures on: accounting estimates, significant unusual transactions and journal entries to ensure they are appropriate and in line with expectations of the business.

##### What are our conclusions?

We have not identified any material weakness in controls or evidence of material management override.

We have not identified any instances of inappropriate judgements being applied, or of any management bias in accounting estimates.

We have not identified any inappropriate journal entries or other adjustments to the financial statements.



## Areas of Audit Focus

### Significant risk

#### **Incorrect capitalisation of revenue expenditure including Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute (REFCUS)**

##### **What is the risk?**

Under ISA 240 there is a presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to improper revenue recognition. In the public sector, this requirement is modified by Practice Note 10 issued by the Financial Reporting Council, which states that auditors should also consider the risk that material misstatements may occur by the manipulation of expenditure recognition.

We have identified an opportunity and incentive to capitalise expenditure under the accounting framework, to remove it from the General Fund. In arriving at this conclusion we have considered the continuing pressure on the revenue budget and the financial value of its annual capital programme which is many times out materiality level.

This could then result in funding of that expenditure, that should properly be defined as revenue, through inappropriate sources such as capital receipts, capital grants, or borrowing.

##### **What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?**

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Obtained a listing of REFCUS for the year and confirmed that total REFCUS is not material;
- ▶ Obtained an analysis of capital additions in the year, reconciled it to the Fixed Assets Register (FAR), and reviewed the descriptions to identify whether there are any potential items that could be revenue in nature;
- ▶ Sample tested additions to Property, Plant and Equipment to ensure that they have been correctly classified as capital and included at the correct value in order to identify any revenue items that have been inappropriately capitalised. There were no Investment Property additions; and
- ▶ Used our data analytics tool to identify and test journal entries that move expenditure from revenue codes into capital codes.

##### **What are our conclusions?**

Our sample testing of additions to Property, Plant and Equipment found that they had been correctly classified as capital and included at the correct value.

Our sample testing did not identify any revenue items that were incorrectly classified.

Our data analytics procedures did not identify any journal entries that incorrectly moved expenditure into capital codes.





## Areas of Audit Focus

# Significant risk

### Accounting for Infrastructure Assets

#### What is the risk?

An issue has been raised via the NAO's Local Government Technical Group that some local authorities are not writing out the gross cost and accumulated depreciation on infrastructure assets when a major part/component has been replaced or decommissioned.

This matter is currently under consideration by CIPFA and given the Council hold material Infrastructure Assets Net Book Value of £5.06 million at 31 March 2021, (£5.4 million at 31 March 2022 we have raised a significant risk in this area.

#### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Discussed the matter with the Council as guidance on accounting for Infrastructure Assets is updated;
- ▶ Understood the Infrastructure Assets balance and the individual assets comprising this balance; and
- ▶ Understood the Council's process for writing out gross cost and accumulated depreciation on the Infrastructure Assets balance to determine whether this is materially correct at the Balance Sheet date.

#### What are our conclusions?

We have completed our work on above procedures and based on the work carried out, we have obtained reasonable assurance that infrastructure assets are free from material misstatement due to components not being derecognised as and when they are replaced or decommissioned.





## Areas of Audit Focus

### Inherent risk

#### Accounting for Covid-19 related grant funding - Inherent Risk

##### What is the risk?

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council have received significant levels of grant funding, both to support the Council and to pass on to local businesses. Each of these grants will have distinct restrictions and conditions that will impact the accounting treatment of these. We are aware of new COVID-19 grant income in 2021/22 for example the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) where the Council has received £1.9 million.

Given the volume of these grants, the new conditions for the Council to understand the accounting impact of, there is an inherent risk that these may be misclassified in the financial statements or inappropriately treated from an accounting perspective.

##### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Sample tested Government Grant income to ensure that they have been correctly classified as specific or non-specific in nature.
- ▶ Sample tested Government Grant income to ensure that they have been correctly classified in the financial statements based on any restrictions imposed by the funding body.
- ▶ Reviewed the instructions and conditions of a sample of grants to corroborate the Council's assessment of whether they were acting as an Agent or Principal in disbursing the grants.

##### What are our conclusions?

Our sample testing of Covid related grant funding did not identify any grants that were incorrectly classified, or any grants where the incorrect accounting treatment was applied.

The draft Statement of Accounts had a restatement on the grant income prior year figures on Note 35. The adjustments related to Covid-19 Grant Income which was not recognised in the prior year Statement of Accounts. The adjustment was below the overall materiality level and therefore it is now reflected in the current year financial statements as additional Grant Income of £0.62 million, as it did not meet the definition of a Prior Year Adjustment (under IAS 8).



## Areas of Audit Focus

### Inherent risk

#### Pension valuations and disclosures - Inherent Risk

##### What is the risk?

The Authority makes extensive disclosures within its financial statements regarding its membership of Cambridgeshire Pension Fund Scheme administered by Cambridgeshire County Council. At 31 March 2021 the liability totalled £66.17 million.

The information disclosed is based on the IAS 19 report issued to the Authority by the actuary to the Cambridgeshire Pension Fund.

Accounting for this scheme involves significant estimation and judgement and therefore management engages an actuary to undertake the calculations on their behalf.

We undertake procedures on the use of management experts and the assumptions underlying fair value estimates.

##### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Liaised with the auditors of Cambridgeshire Pension Fund, to obtain assurances over the information supplied to the actuary in relation to Fenland District Council;
- ▶ Assessed the work of the Pension Fund actuary including the assumptions they have used, by relying on the work of PWC - Consulting Actuaries commissioned by the National Audit Office for all local government sector auditors, and by considering any relevant reviews by the EY actuarial team; and
- ▶ Reviewed and tested the accounting entries and disclosures made within Fenland District Council's financial statements in relation to IAS 19, considering Fund assets and the Council's liability.

##### What are our conclusions?

We have reviewed the assessment of the Pension Fund actuary by PwC and EY Pensions and have undertaken the work and we identified issues as set out below.

We reviewed the assurance report provided by the Pension Fund Auditor regarding the pension fund assets of Cambridgeshire Pension Fund. There was an understatement difference in the fair value of the Fund's plan assets, of which the Council's share was £0.296 million. As a result the Council's Pension Liability was overstated by of £0.296 million. The adjustment was made due to updated information being provided by the Actuary, as part of the audit, after the draft Statement of Accounts had been prepared.

Separate to the adjustment above, the Council requested a revised IAS 19 Actuarial following the completion of the Pension Fund Triennial Valuation at the 1 April 2022 (reported in March 2023). This resulted in a further change in the Council's Pension Liability at the 31 March 2022 balance sheet date, as a result of an update to assumptions underpinning the triennial valuation and their consequential impact on the Pension Liability at the 31 March 2022. The Net Pension Fund Liability was overstated by a further £6.926 million. The cumulative impact of these corrected differences is a total reduction in liability by £7.222 million from the balance reported within the draft financial statements.

We have agreed the Council's IAS 19 disclosures to the Actuaries' report to ensure these are fairly stated in the accounts.



## Areas of Audit Focus

### Inherent risk

#### Valuation of Other Land & Buildings

##### What is the risk?

The fair value of Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) and Investment Properties (IP) represents a significant balance in the Council's accounts and is subject to valuation changes, impairment reviews and depreciation charges.

At 31 March 2021 the net book value of PPE was £51.78 million, and the fair value of Investment Properties was £5.0 million. We note that within PPE, our focus is on Land and Buildings and Surplus Assets.

Management is required to make material judgemental inputs and apply estimation techniques to calculate the year-end balances recorded in the Balance Sheet.

##### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Considered the work performed by the Council's valuers, including the adequacy of the scope of the work performed, their professional capabilities and the results of their work;
- ▶ Sample tested key asset information used by the valuer in performing their valuation (e.g. floor plans to support valuations based on price per square metre);
- ▶ Considered the annual cycle of valuations to ensure that assets have been valued within a 5 year rolling programme as required by the Code for PPE, and that any changes were communicated to the valuer
- ▶ Reviewed assets not subject to valuation in 2021/22 to confirm that the remaining asset base was not materially misstated;
- ▶ Considered changes to useful economic lives as a result of the most recent valuation; and
- ▶ Tested accounting entries have been correctly processed in the financial statements.

##### What are our conclusions?

An external independent valuer was engaged by Management to provide valuations on their Property Plant and Equipment, based on our review, we have not noted any issues associated with capabilities and competence of the management expert. We were able to rely on the work of the valuer.

Our review of assets not subject to valuation in 2021/22 to confirmed that the remaining asset base was not materially misstated and considered changes to useful economic lives as a result of the most recent valuation.

Our sample testing of valuations and their associated accounting entries found that they have been correctly processed in the financial statements.

Our sample testing of key asset information used by the valuer in performing their valuation did not identify any errors or inconsistencies and considered the annual cycle of valuations to ensure that assets have been valued within a 5-year rolling programme as required by the Code for PPE.



## Areas of Audit Focus

### Inherent risk

#### National Non-Domestic Rates Appeals Provision- Inherent Risk

##### What is the risk?

The calculation of the NNDR Appeals Provision is estimate based. Given the impact of Covid-19 on businesses seeking reductions in rateable values, there is a risk of material misstatement of the appeals provision due to the nature of the provision and the uncertainty around the full impact of Covid-19.

In light of this we consider there to be an inherent risk of misstatement of the Council's NNDR appeals provision.

##### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Reviewed the assumptions made by the Council's NNDR appeals provision specialist; and
- ▶ Assessed the reasonableness of any local adjustments made by the Council on the NNDR appeals provision;

##### What are our conclusions?

Our work did not identify any issues with the assumptions used by Council's specialist in the calculation of the NNDR appeals provision.

We have no matters to report.



## Areas of Audit Focus

### Inherent risk

#### Bad debt provision and recoverability of debtors

##### What is the risk?

As a result of the long term impact of Covid-19 and other market uncertainties there may be increased uncertainty around the recoverability of receivables. This includes large value debtors with subsidiary companies. The provision for these bad debts is an estimate, and calculation requires management judgement. We would expect the Council to revisit their provision for bad debt calculation in light of Covid-19 and assess the appropriateness of this estimation technique. Given that there might be some subjectivity to the recoverability of debtors the Council will need to consider the level of any provision for bad debts. We have therefore raised as an inherent risk in our audit strategy.

##### What did we do and what judgements did we focus on?

In order to address this risk we undertook the following audit procedures:

- ▶ Reviewed the calculation of the bad debt provision for reasonableness and accuracy; and
- ▶ Considered the recoverability of debts in testing a sample of trade receivables;

##### What are our conclusions?

Our work did not identify any issues.



# 03 Audit Report

**DRAFT**



## Our proposed opinion on the financial statements

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Fenland District Council ('the Authority') for the year ended 31 March 2022 under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended). The financial statements comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement, Expenditure and Funding Analysis and the related notes 1 to 42, and Collection Fund and the related notes 1 to 6.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- ▶ give a true and fair view of the financial position of Fenland District Council as at 31 March 2022 and of its expenditure and income for the year then ended; and
- ▶ have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022).

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and the Comptroller and Auditor General's AGN01, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern for a period to 30 September 2023.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report. However, because not all future events or conditions can be predicted, this statement is not a guarantee as to the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern.



## Our proposed opinion on the financial statements

### Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the 'Statement of Accounts 2021-22', other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the other information contained within the 'Statement of Accounts 2021-22'.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in this report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### Matters on which we report by exception

We report to you if:

- ▶ in our opinion the annual governance statement is misleading or inconsistent with other information forthcoming from the audit or our knowledge of the Authority
- ▶ we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- ▶ we make written recommendations to the audited body under Section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- ▶ we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- ▶ we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- ▶ we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended)
- ▶ we are not satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We have nothing to report in these respects.





### Our proposed opinion on the financial statements

#### Responsibility of the Chief Finance Officer

As explained more fully in the 'Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts' set out on page 28, the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022), and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for such internal control as the Chief Finance Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for assessing the Authority'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 Authority either intends to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

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

#### Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect irregularities, including fraud. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery or intentional misrepresentations, or through collusion. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and management.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the Authority and determined that the most significant are:

- Local Government Act 1972,
- Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 1992),
- Local Government Act 2003,
- The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended in 2018 and 2020,



### Our proposed opinion on the financial statements

- ▶ The Local Government Finance Act 2012,
- ▶ The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, and
- ▶ The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

In addition, the Authority has to comply with laws and regulations in the areas of anti-bribery and corruption, data protection, employment Legislation, tax Legislation, general power of competence, procurement and health & safety.

We understood how Fenland District Council is complying with those frameworks by understanding the incentive, opportunities and motives for non-compliance, including inquiring of management, the Head of Internal Audit, those charged with governance and obtaining and reading documentation relating to the procedures in place to identify, evaluate and comply with laws and regulations, and whether they are aware of instances of non-compliance.

We corroborated this through our reading of the Council's committee minutes, Council policies and procedures and other information. Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Our procedures had a focus on compliance with the accounting framework through obtaining sufficient audit evidence in line with the level of risk identified and with relevant legislation.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Council's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur by understanding the potential incentives and pressures for management to manipulate the financial statements, and performed procedures to understand the areas in which this would most likely arise.

Based on our risk assessment procedures, we identified inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure and management override of controls to be our fraud risks. To address our fraud risk of inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure we tested the authority's capitalised expenditure to ensure the capitalisation criteria were properly met and the expenditure was genuine.

To address our fraud risk of management override of controls, we tested specific journal entries identified by applying risk criteria to the entire population of journals. For each journal selected, we tested the appropriateness of the journal and that it was accounted for appropriately. We assessed accounting estimates for evidence of management bias and evaluated the business rationale for significant unusual transactions.

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

### Scope of the review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

We have undertaken our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice 2020, having regard to the guidance on the specified reporting criteria issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in December 2021, as to whether Fenland District Council had proper arrangements for financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

**Our proposed opinion on the financial statements**

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 Fenland District Council put in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We planned our work in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary to form a view on whether, in all significant respects, Fenland District 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 cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until the NAO as group auditor has confirmed that no further assurances will be required from us as component auditors of Fenland District Council. We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements or our work on value for money arrangements.

In addition, we cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate until we have issued our Auditor's Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2022. We have completed our work on the value for money arrangements and will report the outcome of our work in our commentary on those arrangements within the Auditor's Annual Report.

Until we have completed these procedures, we are unable to certify that we have completed the audit of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (as amended) and the Code of Audit Practice issued by the National Audit Office.

**Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the members of Fenland District 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 Authority and the Authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



# 04 Audit Differences



## Audit Differences

In the normal course of any audit, we identify misstatements between amounts we believe should be recorded in the financial statements and the disclosures and amounts actually recorded. These differences are classified as “known” or “judgemental”. Known differences represent items that can be accurately quantified and relate to a definite set of facts or circumstances. Judgemental differences generally involve estimation and relate to facts or circumstances that are uncertain or open to interpretation.

### Summary of unadjusted differences

There are no uncorrected audit differences identified as part of our audit at the date of this report.

### Summary of adjusted differences

We highlight misstatements which have been corrected by management that were identified during the course of our audit.

At the date of this report, we have identified the following audit differences which are to be adjusted for by Management within the revised financial statements.

#### Corrected differences

1. **Balance Sheet - Property Plant and Equipment** - Accumulated depreciation of £0.088 million was incorrectly charged to Community Assets thereby understating the value of Property, Plant and Equipment.

2. **Balance Sheet - Net Pension Liability** - We reviewed the assurance report provided by the Pension Fund Auditor regarding the pension fund assets of Cambridgeshire Pension Fund. There was an understatement difference in the fair value of the Fund's plan assets, of which the Council's share was £0.296 million. As a result the Council's Pension Liability was overstated by of £0.296 million. The adjustment was made due to updated information being provided by the Actuary, as part of the audit, after the draft Statement of Accounts had been prepared.

Separate to the adjustment above, the Council requested a revised IAS 19 Actuarial following the completion of the Pension Fund Triennial Valuation at the 1 April 2022 (reported in March 2023). This resulted in a further change in the Council's Pension Liability at the 31 March 2022 balance sheet date, as a result of an update to assumptions underpinning the triennial valuation and their consequential impact on the Pension Liability at the 31 March 2022. The Net Pension Fund Liability was overstated by a further £6.926 million. The cumulative impact of these corrected differences is a total reduction in liability by £7.222 million from the balance reported within the draft financial statements.





## Audit Differences

In the normal course of any audit, we identify misstatements between amounts we believe should be recorded in the financial statements and the disclosures and amounts actually recorded. These differences are classified as “known” or “judgemental”. Known differences represent items that can be accurately quantified and relate to a definite set of facts or circumstances. Judgemental differences generally involve estimation and relate to facts or circumstances that are uncertain or open to interpretation.

### Summary of adjusted differences (continued)

We highlight misstatements which have been corrected by management that were identified during the course of our audit.

#### Disclosure Differences

We also identified a limited number of audit disclosure differences in the financial statements, which have been adjustment by Management.

We do not deem any of the disclosure differences to be so significant as to require reporting to you with the exception of the following two items:

1. Balance Sheet – Pension Scheme Assets – We reviewed the report provided by the Pension Fund Auditor regarding the pension fund asset of Cambridgeshire pension Fund who handles the fund assets of the council. There was a difference in the fair value of plan assets. Plan assets were understated by of £0.296 million
2. Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement - Grant Income - The draft Statement of Accounts had a restatement on the grant income prior year figures on Note 35. The adjustments related to Covid-19 Grant Income which was not recognised in the prior year Statement of Accounts. The adjustment was below the overall materiality level and therefore it is now reflected in the current year financial statements as additional Grant Income of £0.62 million, as it did not meet the definition of a Prior Year Adjustment (under IAS 8).



**05**

**Value for Money**



# Value for money

## The Council's responsibilities for value for money (VFM)

The Council is required to maintain an effective system of internal control that supports the achievement of its policies, aims and objectives while safeguarding and securing value for money from the public funds and other resources at its disposal.

As part of the material published with its financial statements, the Council is required to bring together commentary on its governance framework and how this has operated during the period in a governance statement. In preparing its governance statement, the Council tailors the content to reflect its own individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements set out in the CIPFA code of practice on local authority accounting. This includes a requirement to provide commentary on its arrangements for securing value for money from their use of resources.

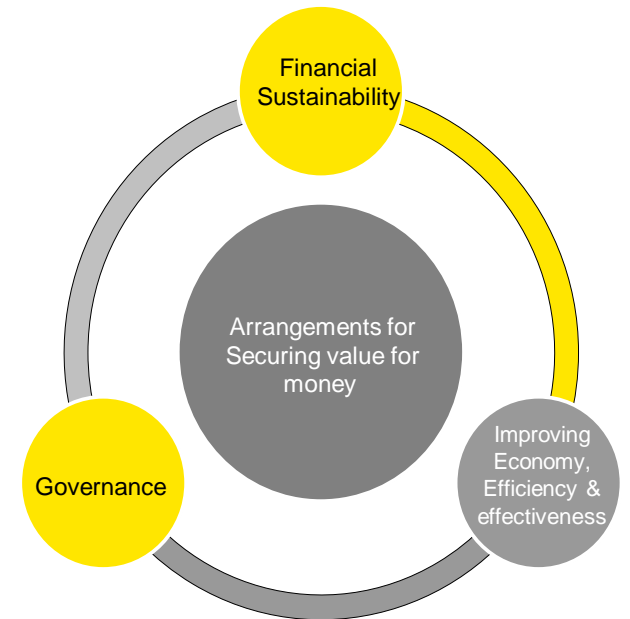
## Risk assessment

We have completed our Value for Money (VFM) risk assessment and have not identified any risk of significant weakness against the three reporting criteria we are required to consider under the NAO's 2020 Code.

## Status of our VFM work

We have completed our planned VFM procedures and have no matters to report 'by exception' in our Auditor's Report (See Section 3). We will keep this under review up to the date of our audit report.

We will include our detailed VFM commentary in the Auditor's Annual Report, which we plan to issue by the end of October 2023.







## 06 Other reporting issues

# Other reporting issues

### Consistency of other information published with the financial statements, including the Annual Governance Statement

We must give an opinion on the consistency of the financial and non-financial information in the Narrative Report with the audited financial statements. Financial information in the Narrative Report and published with the financial statements was consistent with the audited financial statements, subject to completion of our final audit procedures.

We must also review the Annual Governance Statement for completeness of disclosures, consistency with other information from our work, and whether it complies with relevant guidance. We have reviewed the Annual Governance Statement and can confirm it is consistent with other information from our audit of the financial statements, however we identified two disclosure matters which we raised with the Management for their consideration and amendment. We will review the changes on the final Annual Governance Statement.

### Whole of Government Accounts

Alongside our work on the financial statements, we also review and report to the National Audit Office on your Whole of Government Accounts return. The extent of our review, and the nature of our report, is specified by the National Audit Office.

As the Council falls below the £2 billion threshold for review as per the NAO's group instructions, we are not required to undertake detailed procedures on your consolidation schedule. We are able to submit the required Assurance Statement to the NAO confirming this. We therefore have no matters to report to you.

### Other powers and duties

We have a duty under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to consider whether to report on any matter that comes to our attention in the course of the audit, either for the Authority to consider it or to bring it to the attention of the public (i.e. "a report in the public interest").

We have not received any formal questions or objections to the Council's financial statements, following the required Inspection Period.

We did not identify any issues which required us to issue a report in the public interest.

We also have a duty to make written recommendations to the Council, copied to the Secretary of State, and take action in accordance with our responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. We did not identify any issues and have not had course to use this duty.

# Other reporting issues

### Other matters

As required by ISA (UK&I) 260 and other ISAs specifying communication requirements, we must tell you significant findings from the audit and other matters if they are significant to your oversight of the Authority's financial reporting process. They include the following:

- ▶ Significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures;
- ▶ Any significant difficulties encountered during the audit;
- ▶ Any significant matters arising from the audit that were discussed with management;
- ▶ Written representations we have requested;
- ▶ Expected modifications to the audit report;
- ▶ Any other matters significant to overseeing the financial reporting process;
- ▶ Related parties;
- ▶ External confirmations;
- ▶ Going concern;
- ▶ Consideration of laws and regulations; and

We have no matters to report





07

# Independence

## Relationships, services and related threats and safeguards

The FRC Ethical Standard requires that we provide details of all relationships between Ernst & Young (EY) and the Council, and its members and senior management and its affiliates, including all services provided by us and our network to the Council, its members and senior management and its affiliates, and other services provided to other known connected parties that we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on the our integrity or objectivity, including those that could compromise independence and the related safeguards that are in place and why they address the threats.

There are no relationships from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to the date of this report, which we consider may reasonably be thought to bear on our independence and objectivity.

### Services provided by Ernst & Young

The next page includes a summary of the fees that you have paid to us in the year ended 31 March 2022 in line with the disclosures set out in FRC Ethical Standard and in statute. Full details of the services that we have provided are in the next page. Further detail of all fees has been provided to the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

As at the date of this report, there are no future services which have been contracted and no written proposal to provide non-audit services has been submitted.

In addition to our audit of the accounts, we will also be performing the Reporting Accounting role for the certification of Fenland District Council 2021/22 Housing Benefits claim. We have adopted the necessary safeguards in our completion of this work and complied with Auditor Guidance Note 1 issued by the NAO. We confirm that we have not undertaken any other non-audit work.

## Other communications

### EY Transparency Report 2022

Ernst & Young (EY) has policies and procedures that instil professional values as part of firm culture and ensure that the highest standards of objectivity, independence and integrity are maintained.

Details of the key policies and processes in place within EY for maintaining objectivity and independence can be found in our annual Transparency Report which the firm is required to publish by law. The most recent version of this Report is for the year end 30 June 2022:

[ey-uk-transparency-report-2022.pdf](#)

## Relationships, services and related threats and safeguards

### Services provided by Ernst & Young

	Planned fee 2021/22	Scale fee 2021/22	Final Fee 2020/21
	£'s	£'s	£'s
Total Fee - Code work	37,873	37,873	31,873
Changes in work required to address professional and regulatory requirements and scope associated with risk & Additional Procedures required and as reported within the Annual Audit Letter (Note 1)	-		29,984
<b>Revised Scale Fee</b>	<b>TBC</b>	<b>37,873</b>	<b>67,857</b>
<b>Additional work:</b>			
Changes in work required to address professional and regulatory requirements and scope associated with risk (see Note 2)	28,362		
Additional Procedures required in response to the additional risks identified in in 2021/22 and set out in this Audit Results Report, in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accounting for Covid-19 related Government Grant income, NDR Appeals provision, Accounting for Infrastructure assets , Recoverability of Receivables, Going Concern, Valuation of Other Land and Buildings , Updates for Triennial Pension Valuations and resulting Audit Adjustments</li> </ul>	Note 3	-	-
<b>Total fees</b>	<b>TBC</b>	<b>37,873</b>	<b>67,857</b>

All fees exclude VAT

**Note 1** - PSAA Ltd determined the Fee Variation for 2020/21 on 30 June 2022.

**Note 2** - For 2020/21 we proposed an increase to the scale fee to reflect the increased level of audit work required which has been impacted by a range of factors, as detailed in previous Audit Results Reports - which led to the increase in the Scale Fee as set out. For 2021/22 the scale fee has again been re-assessed to take into account the same recurring risk factors and is subject to determination by PSAA Ltd.

**Note 3** - As set out in this report, we have had to perform additional audit procedures to respond to the associated audit risks and audit adjustments identified. As we are concluding our work in relation to these areas, we cannot quantify the fee impact at this time. We will provide an update on the additional fee implications at the conclusion of the audit and report this within the Auditor's Annual Report.








# 08 Appendices

## Appendix A

# Required communications with the Audit and Risk Management Committee

There are certain communications that we must provide to the those charged with governance of UK entities. We have detailed these here together with a reference of when and where they were covered:

		 Our Reporting to you
<b>Required communications</b>	 <b>What is reported?</b>	 <b>When and where</b>
Terms of engagement	Confirmation by the Audit and Risk Management Committee of acceptance of terms of engagement as written in the engagement letter signed by both parties.	The statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies
Our responsibilities	Reminder of our responsibilities as set out in the engagement letter.	Initial Audit Plan - 18 July 2022 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Planning and audit approach	Communication of the planned scope and timing of the audit, any limitations and the significant risks identified. When communicating key audit matters this includes the most significant risks of material misstatement (whether or not due to fraud) including those that have the greatest effect on the overall audit strategy, the allocation of resources in the audit and directing the efforts of the engagement team.	Initial Audit Plan - 18 July 2022 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Significant findings from the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures</li> <li>▶ Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit</li> <li>▶ Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management</li> <li>▶ Written representations that we are seeking</li> <li>▶ Expected modifications to the audit report</li> <li>▶ Other matters if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee

# Appendix A

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Going concern	<p>Events or conditions identified that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty related to going concern</li> <li>▶ Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements</li> <li>▶ The appropriateness of related disclosures in the financial statements</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Misstatements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion, unless prohibited by law or regulation</li> <li>▶ The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods</li> <li>▶ A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected</li> <li>▶ Material misstatements corrected by management</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Subsequent events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Enquiry of the Audit and Risk Management Committee where appropriate regarding whether any subsequent events have occurred that might affect the financial statements.</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee

# Appendix A

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Enquiries of the Audit and Risk Management Committee to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity</li> <li>▶ Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that a fraud may exist</li> <li>▶ Unless all of those charged with governance are involved in managing the entity, any identified or suspected fraud involving:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Management;</li> <li>b. Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or</li> <li>c. Others where the fraud results in a material misstatement in the financial statements.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures necessary to complete the audit when fraud involving management is suspected</li> <li>▶ Any other matters related to fraud, relevant to the Audit and Risk Management Committee responsibility.</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Related parties	<p>Significant matters arising during the audit in connection with the entity's related parties including, when applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Non-disclosure by management</li> <li>▶ Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions</li> <li>▶ Disagreement over disclosures</li> <li>▶ Non-compliance with laws and regulations</li> <li>▶ Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Independence	<p>Communication of all significant facts and matters that bear on EY's, and all individuals involved in the audit, objectivity and independence.</p> <p>Communication of key elements of the audit engagement partner's consideration of independence and objectivity such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The principal threats</li> <li>▶ Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness</li> <li>▶ An overall assessment of threats and safeguards</li> <li>▶ Information about the general policies and process within the firm to maintain objectivity and independence</li> </ul>	<p>Initial Audit Plan - 18 July 2022 - Audit and Risk Management Committee</p> <p>Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee</p>

# Appendix A

		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Independence (continued)	<p>Communications whenever significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place.</p> <p>For public interest entities and listed companies, communication of minimum requirements as detailed in the FRC Revised Ethical Standard 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Relationships between EY, the company and senior management, its affiliates and its connected parties</li> <li>▶ Services provided by EY that may reasonably bear on the auditors' objectivity and independence</li> <li>▶ Related safeguards</li> <li>▶ Fees charged by EY analysed into appropriate categories such as statutory audit fees, tax advisory fees, other non-audit service fees</li> <li>▶ A statement of compliance with the Ethical Standard, including any non-EY firms or external experts used in the audit</li> <li>▶ Where EY has determined it is appropriate to apply more restrictive rules than permitted under the Ethical Standard</li> <li>▶ The Audit and Risk Management Committee should also be provided an opportunity to discuss matters affecting auditor independence</li> </ul>	
External confirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Management's refusal for us to request confirmations</li> <li>▶ Inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures.</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Consideration of laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Subject to compliance with applicable regulations, matters involving identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, other than those which are clearly inconsequential and the implications thereof. Instances of suspected non-compliance may also include those that are brought to our attention that are expected to occur imminently or for which there is reason to believe that they may occur</li> <li>▶ Enquiry of the Audit and Risk Management Committee into possible instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that may have a material effect on the financial statements and that the Audit and Risk Management Committee may be aware of</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee



# Appendix A




		Our Reporting to you
Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit.</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee
Auditors report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Key audit matters that we will include in our auditor's report</li> <li>▶ Any circumstances identified that affect the form and content of our auditor's report</li> </ul>	Audit Results Report - 5 September 2023 - Audit and Risk Management Committee



## Appendix B

# Outstanding matters

The following items relating to the completion of our audit procedures are outstanding at the date of the release of this report:

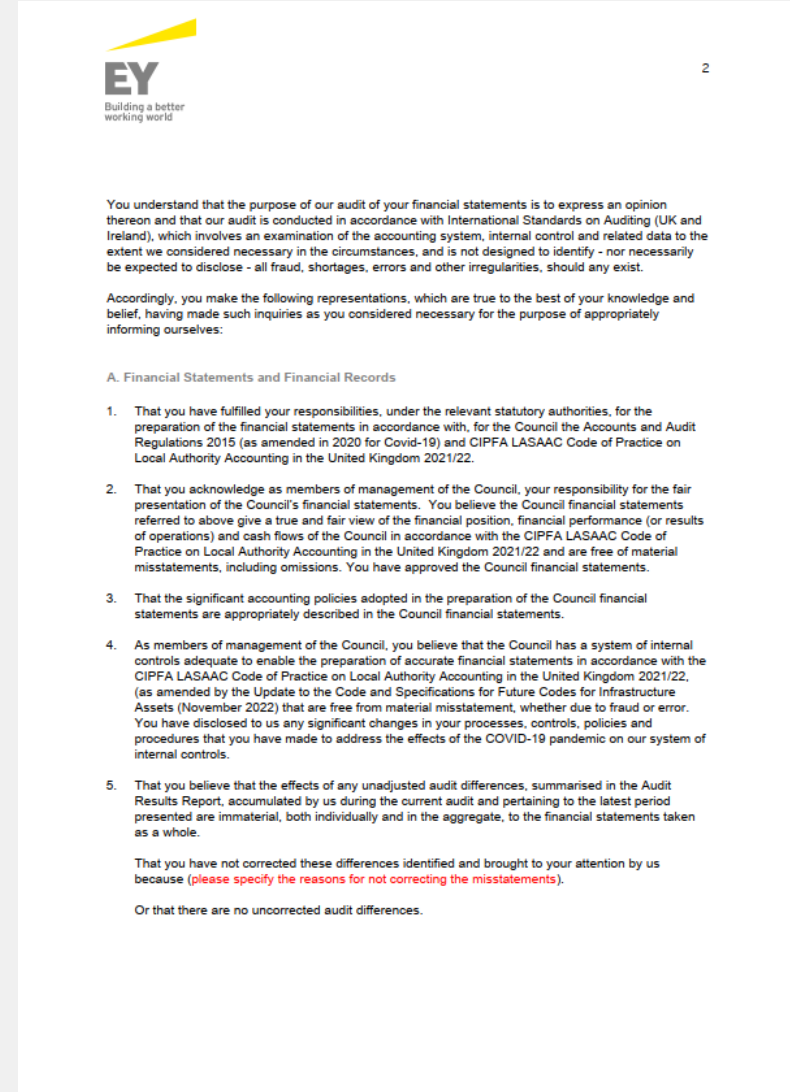
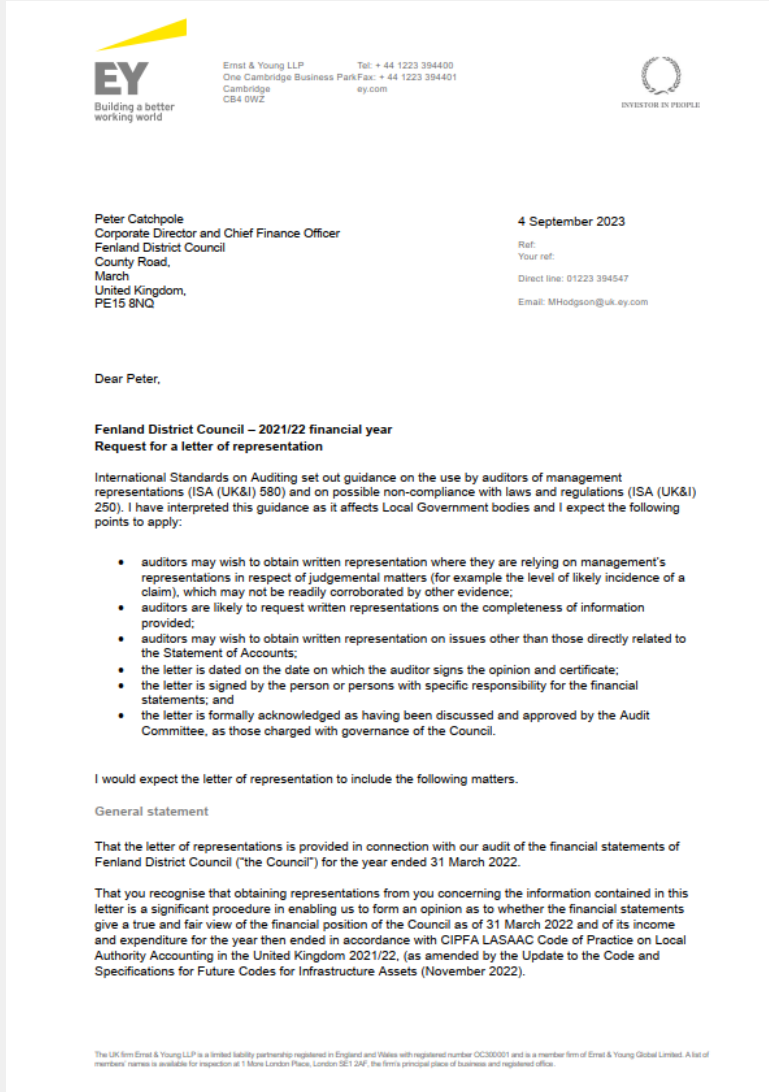
Item 	Actions to resolve 	Responsibility 
Grant Income notes	Conclude our review procedures	EY and management
Final Manager and Partner review	EY to conclude the final review procedures in relation to the latest information received from Management	EY
Receipt of management representation letter	Management to prepare and provide us with their representation letter for the 2021/22 audit	Management
Subsequent events procedures	Extension of some audit procedures like review of minutes and testing for unrecorded liabilities and provisions up to the date of our auditor's report	EY and management
Checks to the final amended set of accounts	EY to receive final set of accounts with all audit adjustments, and review it for consistency with our schedule of misstatements	EY and management

Until all our audit procedures are complete, we cannot confirm the final form of our audit opinion as new issues may emerge or we may not agree on final detailed disclosures in the Annual Report. At this point no issues have emerged that would cause us to modify our opinion, but we should point out that key disclosures on going concern remain to be finalised and audited. A draft of the current opinion (with outstanding areas highlighted) is included in Section 3.



# Appendix C - Request for a Management Representation Letter


## Request for a Management Representation Letter





# Appendix C – Request for a Management Representation Letter

## Request for a Management Representation Letter

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6. That you have disclosed to us any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that you have made to address the effects of the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus on your system of internal controls. That you do not believe that there are any significant changes.

**B. Non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud**

1. That you acknowledge that you are responsible to determine that the Council's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that you are responsible for identifying and addressing any non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.
2. That you acknowledge that you are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
3. That you have disclosed to us the results of our assessment of the risk that the Council financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
4. You have no knowledge of any identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud that may have affected the Council (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers") including non-compliance matters:
  - involving financial statements;
  - related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Council's financial statements;
  - related to laws and regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the Council's activities, its ability to continue to operate, or to avoid material penalties;
  - involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal controls, or others; or
  - in relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other non-compliance with laws and regulations communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

**C. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions**

1. You have provided us with:
  - Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters as agreed in terms of the audit engagement.
  - Additional information that we have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
  - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom we determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

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2. That all material transactions, events and conditions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the Group and Council financial statements, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.
3. That you have made available to us all minutes of the meetings of the Council and its relevant committees (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on the following date: 28 September 2023.
4. That you confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which you are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the Council's financial statements.
5. That you believe that the significant assumptions you used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
6. That you have disclosed to us, and the Council has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the Council's financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.
7. That from the date of your last management representation letter to us, through the date of this letter, you have disclosed to us any unauthorized access to your information technology systems that either occurred or to the best of your knowledge is reasonably likely to have occurred based on your investigation, including of reports submitted to you by third parties (including regulatory agencies, law enforcement agencies and security consultants), to the extent that such unauthorized access to your information technology systems is reasonably likely to have a material impact to the financial statements, in each case or in the aggregate.

**D. Liabilities and Contingencies**

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to us and are appropriately reflected in the Council's financial statements.
2. That you have informed us of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.
3. That you have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in the Council's financial statements (please specify the Notes) all guarantees that you have given to third parties.

**E. Subsequent Events**

1. That other than the disclosure described in Note 42 (Events after the balance sheet date) to the Group and Council's financial statements, there have been no events, including events related to the COVID-19 pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus, subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial



# Appendix C – Request for a Management Representation Letter

## Request for a Management Representation Letter



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statements or notes thereto.

### F. Other information

1. You acknowledge your responsibility for the preparation of the other information. The other information comprises the Narrative Report included in the Statement of Accounts 2021-22.

2. You confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

### G. Accounting Estimates

1. That you believe that the significant assumptions you used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

2. In respect of accounting estimates recognised or disclosed in the financial statements:

- That you believe the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, you used in determining accounting estimates is appropriate and the application of these processes is consistent.
- That the disclosures relating to accounting estimates are complete and appropriate in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.
- That the assumptions you used in making accounting estimates appropriately reflects your intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity, where relevant to the accounting estimates and disclosures.
- That no subsequent event requires an adjustment to the accounting estimates and disclosures included in the financial statements.

### H. Expenditure Funding Analysis

1. You confirm that the financial statements reflect the operating segments reported internally to the Council.

### I. Going Concern

1. That the Council has prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis and that Note 41 - Going Concern (note reference to be inserted) to the financial statements discloses all of the matters of which you are aware that are relevant to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, your future financial plans and the veracity of the associated future funding allocations from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the sufficiency of cash flows to support those financial plans.

### J. Ownership of Assets

1. That except for assets recognised as right-of-use assets in accordance with IFRS 16 Leases, the Council has satisfactory title to all assets appearing in the balance sheet, and there are no liens or encumbrances on the Council's assets, nor has any asset been pledged as collateral. All assets to which the Council has satisfactory title appear in the balance sheet.



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### K. Reserves

1. You have properly recorded or disclosed in the Council's financial statements the useable and unusable reserves.

### L. Valuation of Property, Plant and Equipment Assets

1. That you agree with the findings of the experts engaged to evaluate the valuation of the Council's Property, Plant and Equipment and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included within the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. That you did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the experts with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and that you are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the experts.

2. You believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

3. You confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of Property, Plant and Equipment appropriately reflect your intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.

4. You confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on Property, Plant and Equipment valuations and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

5. You confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

6. You confirm that you have performed a desktop review of all assets not subject to revaluation as part of the 5 year rolling programme for valuations and that each asset category is not materially misstated.

7. You confirm that for assets carried at historic cost, that no impairment is required.

### M. Retirement benefits

1. That on the basis of the process established by you and having made appropriate enquiries, you are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the pension scheme liabilities are consistent with your knowledge of the business. All significant retirement benefits and all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for.

2. You agree with the findings of the specialists that you engaged to evaluate the Valuation of Pension Liabilities and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. You did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and you are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.



# Appendix C – Request for a Management Representation Letter

## Request for a Management Representation Letter



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3. You believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
4. You confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of the pension scheme liability appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
5. You confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Pension Scheme Liability and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
6. You confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

### N. Other Estimates – NDR Appeals provision

1. That on the basis of the process established by you and having made appropriate enquiries, you are satisfied that the assumptions underlying the NDR Appeals provision are consistent with your knowledge of the business.
2. You agree with the findings of the specialists that you engaged to evaluate the NDR Appeals provision and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. You did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and you are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.
3. You believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
4. You confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of the NDR Appeals provision appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
5. You confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, on the NDR Appeals Provision and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
6. You confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.



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### O. Other Estimates – Expected Credit Losses

1. That on the basis of the process established by you and having made appropriate enquiries, you are satisfied that the assumptions underlying the Expected Credit Losses are consistent with your knowledge of the business.
2. You agree with the findings of the specialists that you engaged to evaluate the Expected Credit Losses and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. You did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and you are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.
3. You believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
4. You confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of the Expected Credit Losses appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
5. You confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Expected Credit losses and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
6. You confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

### P. Specific Representations

We do not require any specific representations in addition to those above.

I would be grateful if you could provide a letter of representation, which is appropriately signed and dated (by the s151 officer and Chair of Corporate Governance Committee) on the proposed audit opinion date (date to be advised) on formal headed paper.

Yours sincerely


Mark Hodgson  
Partner  
Ernst & Young LLP  
United Kingdom

## Appendix D

### Implementation of IFRS 16 Leases

In previous reports to the Audit and Risk Management Committee, we have highlighted the issue of new accounting standards and regulatory developments. IFRS 16 introduces a number of significant changes which go beyond accounting technicalities. For example, the changes have the potential to impact on procurement processes as more information becomes available on the real cost of leases. The key accounting impact is that assets and liabilities in relation to significant lease arrangements previously accounted for as operating leases will need to be recognised on the balance sheet. IFRS 16 requires all substantial leases to be accounted for using the acquisition approach, recognising the rights acquired to use an asset.

IFRS 16 does not come into effect for the council until 1 April 2024. However, officers should be acting now to assess the council's leasing positions and secure the required information to ensure the council will be fully compliant with the 2024/25 Code. The following table summarises some key areas officers should be progressing.

IFRS 16 theme	Summary of key measures 
Data collection	<p>Management should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Put in place a robust process to identify all arrangements that convey the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time. The adequacy of this process should be discussed with auditors.</li> <li>▶ Classify all such leases into low value; short-term; peppercorn; portfolio and individual leases</li> <li>▶ Identify, collect, log and check all significant data points that affect lease accounting including: the term of the lease; reasonably certain judgements on extension or termination; dates of rent reviews; variable payments; grandfathered decisions; non-lease components; and discount rate to be applied.</li> </ul>
Policy Choices	<p>The council needs to agree on certain policy choices. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Whether to adopt a portfolio approach</li> <li>▶ What low value threshold to set and agree with auditors</li> <li>▶ Which asset classes, if any, are management adopting the practical expedient in relation to non-lease components</li> <li>▶ What is managements policy in relation to discount rates to be used?</li> </ul>
Code adaptations for the public sector	<p>Finance teams should understand the Code adaptations for the public sector. The Code contains general adaptations, (e.g. the definition of a lease); transitional interpretations (e.g. no restatement of prior periods) and adaptations that apply post transition (e.g. use of short-term lease exemption).</p>
Transitional accounting arrangements	<p>Finance teams should understand the accounting required on first implementation of IFRS 16. The main impact is on former operating leases where the authority is lessee. However, there can be implications for some finance leases where the council is lessee; and potentially for sub-leases, where the council is a lessor, that were operating leases under the old standard.</p>
Ongoing accounting arrangements	<p>Finance teams need to develop models to be able to properly account for initial recognition and subsequent measurement of right of use assets and associated liabilities. This is more complex than the previous standard due to more regular remeasurements and possible modifications after certain trigger events.</p>
Remeasurements and modifications	<p>Finance teams need to familiarise themselves with when the 'remeasurement' or 'modification' of a lease is required and what to do under each circumstance. A modification can lead to an additional lease being recognised. It is also important to know when remeasurements require a new discount rate is to be applied to the lease.</p>



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# Agenda Item 6

Agenda Item No:	6	
Committee:	Audit & Risk Management Committee	
Date:	26 September 2023	
Report Title:	Statement of Accounts 2021/22	

## 1 Purpose / Summary

The purpose of this report is for members to review and approve the final Statement of Accounts for 2021/22.

## 2 Key issues

- The annual accounts are prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting (The Code) issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).
- The draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement were considered by this Committee on 17 October 2022 and have subsequently been the subject of external audit by EY.
- Members will receive the external auditors report on the accounts - 'Audit Results Report Year Ended 31 March 2022', prior to this item.
- The Accounts include a number of changes agreed with the auditor. These are detailed in the Audit Results Report at the previous agenda item and relate to the Pension liability and amendments to disclosure notes.
- There are no uncorrected audit differences as stated in the Audit Results Report.
- None of the corrected adjustments result in any change to the General Fund Balance, or to any of the Council's usable reserves from that previously reported.
- The Statement of Accounts requires approval by this Committee following receipt of the external auditor's report.
- The current version of the Statement of Accounts is attached for review.
- Following approval by this Committee, and subject to EY having completed all outstanding work, it is anticipated that they will 'sign off' the accounts by the end of September 2023.
- Following the auditors' signature, the accounts will be published on our website and notice will be given by advertisement in the local papers and on our website, that the audit has been concluded.

### 3 Recommendations

#### It is recommended:

- (i) that the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 as presented be approved;
- (ii) that delegation be given to the Chairman of Audit & Risk Management Committee and the Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer to agree any further amendments to the Statement of Accounts which may arise prior to the final 'sign off' by the external auditors.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
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**FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

**2021-22**

**FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

**2021/22**

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## NARRATIVE REPORT

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report explains how we've worked with residents, partners and community groups over the past year to achieve the priorities in our Business Plan. Our priorities focus on our communities, our environment and our economy.

### 2. ABOUT FENLAND

Fenland has strong community spirit and pride in its heritage. 102,500 people live in the district (Census 2021), which covers 211 square miles within North Cambridgeshire. 75% of residents live within our four market towns of Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech. Our beautiful rural landscape is home to 29 villages and attracts visitors from nationwide.

Fenland has the lowest house prices in Cambridgeshire and plentiful availability of commercial land. As a result, our population is growing quickly. By 2036, it is predicted that the population will have increased by over 12% to 115,140. We have plans in place to maximise the positive opportunities that growth brings.

Our population is also getting older. 29% of our population are aged 60 or over; above average compared to Cambridgeshire (24%) and the UK as a whole (24% - Census 2021). Alongside partners, we are working to enable residents to access the support they need to live happily, healthily and independently.

We also face some challenges around deprivation, particularly around education and health. We are the 80th (out of 326) most deprived area in the country, with some wards within the top 10% most deprived (IMD: 2019). Nevertheless, we continue to work closely with other organisations to positively overcome these challenges.

Further details can be found in our Annual Report at: [www.fenland.gov.uk/annualreport](http://www.fenland.gov.uk/annualreport)

### 3. ABOUT FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Fenland District Council has 362 employees. As an organisation, our unique 'one-team' culture supports the effective delivery of our priorities. It enables officers, elected members and partners to effectively work together without the constraints of traditional department silos. We support and invest in our workforce to give them the skills they need to work effectively in their roles, which has been recognised by continued Customer Service Excellence (CSE) re-accreditations. In our latest Staff Survey (2022), 87% of staff said they were proud to work for us.

Public sector austerity has now continued for over a decade. Since 2010, we have made savings of £10.36million, and must make a further £0.97million between 2022/23 and 2026/27. The challenge remains to deliver good quality services that our residents need, whilst investing in services and projects that help the district to grow. We continue to work closely with partners, with well-established arrangements in place for a number of our key services including Revenues and Benefits and Planning Policy. Our partnership with Freedom Leisure has already enabled improvements to be made to our leisure centre facilities.

As an organisation, work is underway to ensure we are operating as effectively as possible – not only to meet current needs, but to meet future ones too. During this financial year we have taken forward the Commercial and Investment Strategy approved in early 2020. This strategy enabled us to establish Fenland Future Ltd (in June 2020), a wholly owned subsidiary, to take forward the development of Council owned landholdings. In addition, the Council has acquired an industrial property in Wisbech (in March 2021) which is leased to the private sector and a residential property in March which is currently being utilised by our homelessness service. Our ‘My Fenland’ Customer Services project is enabling us to transform our processing of customer enquiries by utilising technology to enable residents to access services 24/7. A number of transformation projects, under our ‘Council for the Future’ agenda, spanning across a variety of service areas, are also changing the way we work to meet emerging needs.

With the cost of living skyrocketing across the board and energy, fuel, food, national insurance, mortgage rates and rents all rising, it might have been expected that the Council would raise our element of Council Tax too. However, the Council determinedly froze Fenland’s portion of the Council Tax in 2022/23 for the fourth consecutive year.

Here, as we outline our achievements for 2021/22, we’re proud to have maintained excellent public services and pushed forward with ambitious plans for the future, while consistently offering our residents a year-on-year, real-terms cut in their Council Tax.

Despite many national and global challenges in recent years, and resulting strains on our finances, the Council has remained innovative, resilient, and steadfast in its determination to improve the lives of Fenland residents. We have continued to ensure the needs of our residents and communities are recognised and responded to, put arrangements in place to secure on-going improvement, delivered vital public services to the highest of standards and, with reduced budgets, provided better value for money each year.

We have supported vulnerable members of our community; led emergency responses and built resilience; prevented and tackled homelessness; helped people to live in good quality, safe housing; worked with the police to prevent and tackle crime and anti-social behaviour; encouraged our residents to live healthier, more active lifestyles; protected and enhanced our parks and green spaces; cleaned streets and dealt with the district’s waste and recycling; promoted and lobbied for infrastructure improvements; improved our air quality; secured investment in the district and held numerous community events all across Fenland.

Our Annual Report gives a summary of this work, outlines what we have achieved in the past year and how we have spent the money we receive, and charts progress made against the ambitions and commitments set out in our Business Plan 2021/22.

Key highlights include progress on numerous regeneration programmes such as our Railway Stations Masterplans, Wisbech High Street Project and March Future High Streets Fund work, the launch of several new online service request forms to make it even easier for people to access council services, tackling more rogue landlords who breached housing and safety legislation, expanding the district’s air quality monitoring network, distributing more coronavirus business grants, and playing a key role in the Government’s Homes for Ukraine scheme by supporting Ukrainians seeking refuge from war.

We hope the report demonstrates the huge breadth of work we undertake with partners and the voluntary sector to make a positive difference to the lives of Fenland residents, and to ensure the district is well prepared for the future.

## **Covid-19 and Fenland District Council**

We've come a long way in our battle with coronavirus. At the start of 2021 we were in our second period of national lockdown, with fears about the impact it would have on jobs, businesses, and the economy, as well as people's mental health and wellbeing, at the forefront of our minds.

As a Council, meeting the demands of the Covid-19 pandemic have been vast. Whilst delivering business as usual, we have responded to, and delivered, changes in legislation within days, created new services to respond to residents' needs and communicated the latest guidance effectively with communities, businesses, and our workforce.

At the same time, we've accelerated the pace of our customer services transformation. Work to provide more modern, efficient, and flexible ways to access our services has been a Council priority for some time, but the rapid uptake of digital technologies during the pandemic meant we had to fast-track years of progress in a matter of months.

Not only have we significantly improved our online access, but we have increased the automation of our digital services and developed faster and more streamlined processes to make it even easier for people to interact with us, whilst ensuring that face-to-face services remain available for those that need them.

Meeting the challenges of Covid has also enabled even closer working with our partners, stakeholders and communities, and a greater pooling of our combined resources.

Now, as we continue to recover from the crisis, there is a great deal we can learn from our pandemic response. We have an opportunity to harness the innovation, collaboration and creativity which has flourished so much during the past almost two years and use it to evolve even further.

## **Partnership Investment in Fenland**

We're working hard to attract the crucial external funding needed to unlock Fenland's potential and bolster its prosperity and resilience in the coming years.

The diagram below shows some of the projects currently in progress across the district thanks to millions of pounds worth of inward investment already secured.

The projects include development and regeneration of key sites, investment to improve transport and digital connectivity, and innovation and technology centres.

The opportunities will help to accelerate Fenland's Covid-19 recovery, boost our economy, support new skills opportunities, and create much-needed new jobs.

Although many of these funding schemes are focused on our four market towns, our local villages will also benefit, as will neighbouring communities across Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Lincolnshire. Improvements to our rural communities are equally as important and are included in our investment work.

Extract from the Council's 2022/23 Business Plan - Key Projects in Fenland



\* Project delivered in collaboration with local partners

#### **4. GOVERNANCE**

Fenland District Council is made up of 39 Councillors, representing 24 wards.

Councillors are elected every four years by local residents to represent their area, make decisions and set priorities for the district.

We operate a Leader and Cabinet style of governance. This involves a Cabinet of 10 Councillors, each with specific responsibilities.

Currently, the Conservative group holds the majority with 27 seats. The remaining 12 seats are made up of 9 Independent Councillors, 2 Liberal Democrat Councillors and 1 Green Party Councillor.

#### **5. OUR PRIORITIES**

**Our mission as a Council is 'To improve the quality of life for people living in Fenland'**

These priorities have been developed to address the most important needs of our communities.

Our priorities are split into three headings: Communities, Environment and Economy. These priorities primarily focus on the statutory and wide variety of core services that we provide day-to-day.

The fourth priority, Quality Organisation, sits alongside everything we do. It aims to ensure that the Council runs effectively, transparently and sustainably. We invest in and support our workforce to ensure they have the skills and resources they need to work to the best of their ability.

Our unique 'one- team' culture enables officers, elected members and partners to work effectively together without the constraints of traditional department silos. This approach results in excellent staff satisfaction, with 87% of staff saying they were proud to work for us in our latest Staff Survey (2022).

Each priority is underpinned by a series of performance indicators, which is reported to all Members at our Council meetings.

We also have a fifth cross cutting priority: Council for the Future. This priority is formed from a selection of transformative projects which aim to address the future needs of residents and our organisation as a whole.

## Summary of Corporate Priorities 2021/22:

Council for the Future	Quality Organisation	Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support vulnerable members of our community</li> <li>• Promote health and wellbeing for all</li> <li>• Work with partners to promote Fenland through culture and heritage</li> </ul>
		Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service</li> <li>• Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our street scene</li> <li>• Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion</li> </ul>
		Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland</li> <li>• Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland</li> <li>• Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the District</li> </ul>

## 6. COUNCIL FOR THE FUTURE

Our Cabinet members have selected a number of projects to contribute towards our 'Council for the Future' agenda. These projects have a variety of aims; from tackling areas of particular need within Fenland, to sustainably transforming services and our organisation to be fit for the future. Although these are influenced by external factors, the aim is to have a programme of projects completed by the end of the current Council leadership term in 2023. Projects vary in scope and complexity, with some requiring close partnership working with external organisations and changes in policies before their aims can be delivered.

### Modernising council services

- ❶ Over 63,000 answered phone calls to contact centre and 99.5% of customer queries resolved at first point of contact in 2021.
- ❷ Our My Fenland team has transformed, bringing together 5 admin services, 29 staff have new roles, including technical officers to answer more detailed queries.
- ❸ Our Transformation team have completed 136 process maps, including redesigning 333 processes. These benefit either staff, our customers or both.

### Safer homes for tenants

- ❶ 277 properties where positive action from the team helped resolve issues.
- ❷ £122,252 fines given to landlords not complying with housing and safety legislation.



③ Proactive support given to tackle Covid regulations in HMO (Houses of Multiple Occupation) accommodation.

### **CCTV service**

① Business continuity maintained 24/7, 365 days a year, for the CCTV service during the pandemic.

② 1,233 incidents captured on CCTV to support police outcomes, leading to 105 arrests being made.

③ 4,633 (13 per day) pro-active camera controls completed, supporting early detection of community issues and crime reduction.

### **Planning for the future**

① Completion of “call for sites” appraisal to inform consultation on the Local Plan in 2022/23.

② Development of Local Plan Policies to inform Local Plan consultation in 2022/23.

③ Development of the evidence base to inform Local Plan consultation in 2022/23.

### **Better online services**

① Launch back-office integrated Missed Bins and Environmental Service requests forms, enabling real-time notifications of issues and reducing processing time.

② New Digital Journeys back office integrated forms launched for 17 licensing processes, enabling residents to apply for certain Taxi and Premises licenses online for the first time.

③ 1,300 successful Covid business grant applications were made through our online forms resulting in over £7million of payments made to local businesses.

### **Clamping down on poor parking**

① Completed on-street site surveys of all existing Traffic Regulation Orders in the district. This will identify works needed surrounding sign and line discrepancies.

② Working with Cambridgeshire County Council, we have prepared a draft application for the Department of Transport for the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement.

③ We wrote to all statutory consultees to find out any comments or objections in relation to the above draft application. Responses will inform the final application.

### **Competitive trade waste service**

① Modernisation of the service by introducing the ‘Bartec’ system to manage invoicing and collection schedules. Ensuring all collections are recorded accurately for invoicing, which is produced automatically via a direct connection with the finance system.

② 50 new customers joined our service from other providers.

③ Increased income year on year; income in 2021/22 was £369,000 – up 12% from 2019/20.

### **Bringing empty homes back into use**

① Implementation of new empty homes premium suspension scheme to encourage homes back into use. 8 suspensions awarded since September 2021 with 2 renovations

completed, bringing properties back into use, and 2 due to complete by the end of May 2022.

- ② 77 homes brought back into use.
- ③ £93,099 benefit from New Homes Bonus.

### **Protecting our environment**

- ① Successfully prosecuted a dark smoke offence and resolved a contaminated land incident caused by a leaking oil tank.
- ② 720 cleansing inspections undertaken to audit the cleanliness of the district.
- ③ Undertook 14 interviews under Caution with individuals who we believe may help us/have been responsible for fly-tipped waste. Issued 12 Fixed Penalty Notices for Fly-tipping or Duty of Care offenses (allowing fly-tipping to happen).

### **Better railways for Fenland**

- ① The Platform 1 building project at March Station is complete. This has redeveloped the entire station to create an open-plan ticket hall and waiting area, accessible modern toilet facilities and retail outlets.
- ② Significant progress has been made on the construction of a car park for Manea Station.
- ③ The existing car park refurbishment and extension at March Station is complete.

### **Healthy You**

- ① Re-start, continuation and new launches of Active Fenland sessions post lockdowns and Covid-19 restrictions. Fifteen different programmes in total.
- ② Creation and delivery of two multi-day social media campaigns as a digital offer for health and wellbeing providing key national messages and resources.
- ③ Delivery of healthy eating workshops by Active Fenland across Key Stage 1&2 as part of Health and Wellbeing school days in various Fenland primary schools.

### **A more commercial outlook**

- ① Received a full year's rent (£230,000) from the Wisbech property investment acquired in March 2021.
- ② Progress being made towards gaining outline planning permission for two Council owned development sites.
- ③ Strategically purchased a property in March to support the Council's commercial investment strategy.

## **7. OUR COMMUNITIES**

### **Support vulnerable members of our community**

- Since its launch in March 2020, our **Covid-19 Community Hub** has provided a lifeline to those most at risk during the outbreak. Co-ordinating the support available from over **80 different organisations**, the Hub supported vulnerable residents with food shopping, medicine collection, general errands and money and employment advice. Since the Hub's launch, **over 2,300 requests for support** have been received.

- Our Housing Options team received **1,905 requests for homeless advice and assistance**; 1,200 of these approaches were resolved through the advice provided. **335 households were prevented from becoming homeless**. Supported by our Housing Enforcement Policy, we issued a significant number of civil penalty notices to landlords choosing to flout regulations and legislation. We continue to support the increasing number of proactive landlords who request help from us to ensure their properties meet appropriate standards before being let. Hosting bi-annual landlord forums, detailing legislative amendments relevant to the private rented sector, also provides useful support to landlords.
- Through our Disabled Facilities Grants scheme, the Council provides **adaption works for elderly and disabled householders** to remain safe, secure and protected in their own homes. Last year **we assisted 119 households with adaption works**. These included the **installation of walk-in showers, stairlifts, ramped access facilities and specialist equipment such as person hoists**.
- The **14th annual Pride in Fenland awards** took place in November to celebrate the incredible contributions of unsung heroes from across the district. Organised by Fenland District Council and the Fenland Citizen newspaper, this year's online awards were **dedicated to those who went above and beyond during the pandemic**. Judges heard many inspiring stories of kindness and selfless support across five categories: Community Group, Young Person in the Community, Good Friend, Special Judges' award and the Community Covid awards.
- The **Whittlesey Big Bash** took place on September 12th at Whittlesey Manor Leisure Centre. The Golden Age team and 17 partners took part in the event, with a **great turnout of over 200 people** visiting in the space of 2 hours. As the event was not just a Golden Age fair, many partners commented on the great opportunities they had to speak with family members of older residents who were going to pass vital information on.
- As the terrible events in Ukraine unfolded in February 2022, we **pledged to provide support for Ukrainian refugees** as soon as the Government's extended safe routes opened. As part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Ukraine Refugee Response group, we arranged for property checks to be undertaken at sponsors' homes, support sponsors to undertake the DBS process and developed a welcome pack with information about essential and local services.

## Promote health and wellbeing for all

- The Freedom team have worked exceptionally hard to encourage people back into Fenland's leisure centres following the pandemic. There has been considerable success with **growth in the Swimming Lesson programme** now at almost double the number of participants compared with pre-pandemic. Casual swimming and membership levels are back above 90% of the pre-pandemic levels. The pandemic did allow people time to reassess their health and **the four leisure centres in Fenland are playing a significant role in helping people become healthier**.
- **Health and Wellbeing support** for Fenland residents continued to focus on **Covid-19**. Businesses were offered guidance surrounding Covid secure practices in the workplace, access testing for staff, risk assessments and wellbeing visits by public health staff to discuss vaccination concerns and broader issues such as long covid. This has helped deliver businesses continuity; especially for many of our larger food/product producers and

packers. **Self-isolation support through the pilot Enduring Transmission project** was provided to over 200 Fenland residents (where Covid-19 rates remained stubbornly high), with a total allocation of over £57,000. We also continued to provide support for vaccination centres including agreeing locations, monitoring uptake and accessibility.

- The pandemic made clear to our community how important open spaces are to having a happy and healthy life. Together with our contractor Tivoli, we've **continued to provide excellent open spaces across Fenland**. Work in the past year has included the improvement of several play areas with resulting increases in use by children and their families.

### Work with partners to promote Fenland through culture and heritage

- Following financial support from Arts Council England, we have appointed an officer **to work with local cultural and creative organisations and individuals to develop an action plan to amplify creativity and cultural opportunities in Fenland**, raising the profile of the many activities already taking place.

- We worked hard to **support the community by promptly re-establishing Fenland's Four Seasons events** providing opportunities for businesses to trade again. Christmas Markets were delivered in Wisbech and March, followed by March St George's Fayre. This had a bumper turn out and received extremely positive feedback. We also made use of **Government Welcome Back funding to bolster re-opening of Fenland's high streets** through a series of additional pop-up events, business support, shop local marketing and town centre aesthetic improvements including floral displays and enhanced cleaning.

Performance	Target 2021/22	Performance
Total number of private rented homes where positive action has been taken to address safety issues	250	277
Proportion (%) of households presenting to the Council as homeless whose housing circumstances were resolved through Housing Options work	New PI	57%
Number of empty properties brought back into use	70	77
New Homes Bonus achieved as a result of bringing empty homes back into use	£50,000	£93,099
Number of Active Health local sessions per year that improve community health	225	504
Customer feedback across Freedom Leisure facilities in Fenland	90%	85%*

\* Performance/service impacted by COVID-19 restrictions

## 8. OUR ENVIRONMENT

### Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service

- Core services continued without issue this year with over **2.9million bin collections** made across the district. Customers continued to recycle their waste well, generating £475,000 of income to support services as a result. Customer satisfaction with our Refuse and Recycling and Garden Waste (Brown Bin) services remains high at 96% and 97% respectively. The Garden Waste service has continued to grow with subscriptions at an all-time high of over 23,000 in 2021/22.

- Our trained **'Getting It Sorted' volunteers supported recycling in Fenland** with events, activities, education packs for schools to use, videos and online training courses. They also kept the Council's multi-lingual recycling website, [www.gettingitsorted.org](http://www.gettingitsorted.org), up-to-date and regularly posted recycling messages on social media to help residents recycle right at home.
- Our Cleansing and Rapid Response team continued to provide the usual seven-day street sweeping, litter picking and fly-tipping removal service in our towns and villages. Last year they **responded to over 1,200 service requests**: 95% on the same or next day. Over **1,300 quality inspections** were made in areas of high footfall – 99% met cleansing standards first time.

### **Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our street scene**

- As Covid restrictions gradually eased we continued to **work with community environmental volunteering groups** as permitted, with many smaller litter picks still able to take place. This year saw Gorefield Street Pride celebrate their 10th anniversary and a growth in Street Pride group numbers, now totalling 18. **Over £37,000 was awarded** to community groups living within the vicinity of wind turbines to improve their local environment. Projects included switching to LED lighting, solar powered mobile vehicle activated signs and enhancements to green spaces.
- Our Street Scene team spent **3,400 hours on patrol**. They work closely with the community to help protect our environment with a focus on preventing fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling. Over the past year they have visited over **600 sites of reported fly-tipping** to try and gather evidence that will help identify who's responsible. They investigated **241 reports of abandoned vehicles**, undertook **352 dog related actions** (including speaking to dog owners, refreshing signs in reported areas for dog fouling and working with the Green Dog Walkers volunteers), made **3015 memorial safety inspections and investigated 137 matters relating to litter**.

### **Work with partners to help keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion**

- Our **shared CCTV service** with Peterborough City Council maintained its 100% service function 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The service conducted **over 6,000 pro-active camera patrols, detected over 1,000 incidents of crime and disorder across the district** and supported our policing partners to make **86 arrests** for offences, helping to make the district safer.
- Working with internal and external partners, our Community Safety team have been involved in the **investigation of 211 reports of anti-social behaviour**, nuisance and other quality of life concerns. Examples include youth anti-social behaviour and crime in Wisbech and Chatteris, vehicle related nuisance in a public car park in Chatteris and concerns linked to highway obstruction and hoarding in Wisbech. The team is also part of the Fenland Community Safety Partnership, which have undertaken projects raising awareness of illegal money lending, loan sharks, domestic abuse and coercive control, modern day slavery, child exploitation and road safety. As well as engaging the community, training sessions were delivered to support the development of frontline professionals who work within the Fenland community surrounding domestic abuse, hate crime, cybercrime and substance abuse.



Performance	Target 2021/22	Performance
Rapid or Village Response requests actioned the same or next day	90%	95%
% of inspected streets meeting our cleansing standards (including graffiti and flyposting)	93%	99%
% of collected household waste recycled through the Blue Bin service	28%	28%
Customer satisfaction with Refuse and Recycling services	90%	96%
Customer satisfaction with Garden Waste service	85%	97%
Number of Street Pride, Green Dog Walkers and Friends of Community environmental events supported	204	191*
% of local businesses who thought they were supported and treated fairly	90%	100%
% of those asked who are satisfied with Fenland District Council's events	90%	N/A

\* The number of events held is significantly less than in previous years due to the pandemic. Restrictions were in place at the beginning of April 2021 which either prohibited groups meeting at all or meant that only groups of 6 or 30 volunteers could meet.

## 9. OUR ECONOMY

### Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland

- Our Finance and Business teams worked together to distribute **£7.094million in Government coronavirus business grants** in 2021/22. These have been paid to help businesses impacted by trading restrictions and the emerging Omicron variant. During this period over **1,300 grant payments** were made.
- We continued to **support businesses with COVID-19 guidance**, including reducing the risk of infection spreading in the workplace and compliance with the NHS COVID Pass regulations introduced in December 2021.
- **Following the closure of major employer** Alan Bartlett and Sons in Chatteris in June 2021, our Economic Growth team worked to ensure the site was reoccupied as soon as possible. It also helped new tenants, The Turmeric Co., with access to grant funding, recruitment, and business support opportunities.
- Our **Economic Growth Strategic Refresh** was approved by Cabinet in February. This sets out how our Economic Growth team, partners and wider Council teams will support local businesses to grow, local people to start a business and other businesses to relocate to the area. The **Start & Grow programme** is also underway, estimated to deliver around **£650,000 worth of business support and grants into Fenland** through a number of sources. The 'Start' programme is for individuals wanting to explore enterprise and offers intensive pre-start business information sessions, online learning, mentoring, networking and peer support. The 'Grow' programme aims to support existing early-stage micro-businesses to expand into new markets, create new jobs or increase profitability and productivity. The programme will run until July 2022.



## Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland

- Our **Planning team determined over 750 planning applications** - between 72% and 92% of these were decided on time, depending on application type. Whilst not all internal performance targets have been met, we have continued to exceed national performance targets. We lost no major planning appeals over the last 24 months, and for non-major planning appeals our performance has not exceeded 0.5% (performance cannot exceed 10%). Our team dealt with nearly 900 other types of application (such as discharge of condition, general enquiries, pre-application and licensing requests) in addition to 'traditional' planning applications. **We investigated and resolved 218 cases of unauthorised development** reported to us.

- Work continues on projects outlined in our **Growing Fenland masterplans**, part of the CPCA's (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority) strategic Market Town Masterplans, including:

- Installation of interactive highways flooding signs in Whittlesey
- Progress on the Whittlesey Heritage Walk
- Improvements to Wisbech Market Place
- Funding for local skills development in Chatteris
- Match funding to progress the March Future High Streets Fund project

- Work continues on the £8.4million **March Future High Streets Fund** project, funded by the Government and the CPCA. Together with the March Area Transport Study (MATS), the project will transform March town centre through pedestrian, public realm and traffic flow changes to the Broad Street, Riverside and Market Place areas.

- Our **Wisbech High Street Project**, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, continues to make progress. Highlights from 2021/22 include:

- Major regeneration works completed at 13-17 High Street with grant funding
- Extensive repairs carried out at 18 High Street with grant funding
- Series of free online traditional construction and heritage skills training sessions launched
- Local heritage book, 'Lost Images of Wisbech' published

## Promote and lobby for infrastructure improvements across the district

- Supported by CPCA funding, work continues to improve transport connectivity in Fenland. Progress is being made on the:

- £32million Kings Dyke Crossing Project, due to open by the end of 2022
- £25million A47 Guyhirn roundabout
- Fenland Railway Station Masterplans project, aiming to improve stations at March, Manea and Whittlesey and provide better railways for Fenland
- March Area Transport Study (MATS) infrastructure improvements

Performance	Target 2021/22	Performance
% of major planning applications determined in 13 weeks (or with extension of time)	75%	92%
% of minor applications determined in 8 weeks (or with extension of time)	80%	72%*
% of other applications determined in 8 weeks (or with extension of time)	90%	84%*
% occupancy of our Business Premises estate	92%	91%**
% occupancy Wisbech Yacht Harbour	85%	94%
Number of local businesses supported and treated fairly	90%	100%

\* The reduced performance was as a result of rising workloads and resource challenges. It should be noted that performance remains above the national performance target of 70%  
 \*\* Business unit occupancy has fluctuated during Covid. However, as we emerge from Covid we continue to see a steady uptake in occupancy.

## 10. QUALITY ORGANISATION

- We collected over **£61million in Council Tax and £21million in Business Rates**. This plays a major part in funding the key services we provide to the community. A large share of this money is also passed onto the Police, Fire Service, County and Parish Councils.
- Our My Fenland team has been transformed, bringing together **5 admin services and 29 members of staff** have new roles, including the development of technical officer roles to answer specialised, more detailed queries. In addition to the team answering more than **63,000 phone calls and resolving 99.5% of customer queries at first point of call**, the transformation team have also **completed 136 process mapping tasks**, including redesigning 33 processes. These benefit either the staff, our customers, or both. We have had **15,450 payments** made via PayPoint, with over £1.84m in payments.
- Our website received **849,000 hits** and a record number of **23,000 online form submissions** across 48 different topics. As part of our ongoing work to improve our digital services and user journeys, we launched a suite of improved online forms. Our **new missed bin and environmental service request forms** (covering issues including dog fouling, fly-tipping, litter, abandoned vehicles and graffiti) are now easier to use and automatically transfer information received directly to teams on the ground and into back-office systems. This gives teams real-time notification of issues so that they can respond quickly and save hours of resource in processing time. Six new online forms have also been developed as part of our licensing service, enabling residents to be able to complete new tasks online including applying for a taxi license and premises licence.
- Our **Social Media** channels remain popular, with **8,768 Twitter followers and 5,800 Facebook followers**. Over the past year we have used our social media channels to quickly publicise and signpost the latest Covid information, including changing restrictions and availability of business grants and support. We have also increased our use of video on our social media channels to develop our online engagement with residents.
- The Licensing team **issued 461 licenses** for a variety of services including Taxi, Premises, Alcohol, Scrap Metal and Animal Licensing, to help ensure such businesses are well managed and operating safely and legally. They also worked closely with partners during the pandemic through a variety of channels to support businesses to operate safely and take enforcement action when required.

- We **consulted with residents, stakeholders and partners about a wide range of topics** to help us understand local people’s priorities and shape our service. Consultations included the concept of a Broad Concept Plan to shape future development in West March, development of a heritage walk in Whittlesey, plans for a new Community Hub in Wisbech Park and improvements to cycling, walking and mobility access across the district.

- **We were reaccredited with the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) award** last year. This is a Government standard that recognises the high quality, customer focused services that we provide. The independent assessor said the Council had continued to meet the **‘gold standard’ for customer service delivery** and that our ongoing transformation programme is clearly delivering significant benefits to customers.

- As Covid restrictions started to lift, our **Environmental Health** team focused their Public Health role to **support the Covid vaccination programme** reaching communities. As businesses could get back to normal, they supported the registration of new food businesses and the inspection of existing food businesses, whilst catching up on postponed inspections. They also visited and risk assessed all of Fenland’s high risk food premises (Approved Premises). All Environmental Permitted sites were also inspected, and new operators supported through the application process. In addition, all skin piercing businesses – including tattooing, acupuncture, botox and eyebrow blading – were inspected and licensed. The team continues to deal with a wide range of **statutory nuisance and public health issues**, from noise and pest control to infectious diseases.

Performance	Target 2021/22	Performance
% of customer queries resolved at the first point of contact	85%	99.5%
% of customers satisfied by our service	90%	91.3%
% of contact centre calls answered within 20 seconds	46.5%	30.45%*
% of contact centre calls handled	80%	75.94%**
Days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and changes	8.0 days	5.6 days
% of Council tax collected	96.77%	96.7%
Council Tax net collection fund receipts	£61,172,317	£61,692,720
% of NNDR Collected	97.25%	96.04%***
NNDR net collection fund receipts	£18,341,776	£22,579,308
Number of visits to our website	825,000	849,000

\*The dip in performance was anticipated due to the implementation of a major change initiative resulting in a new structure with new job roles, more efficient processes and more effective use of technology. The Team were also adversely affected by the COVID pandemic as this resulted in higher than predicted call volumes but also an increase in staff absence due to Covid. The new working practices are now well established and performance is consistently improving.

\*\*Performance in relation to the percentage of contact centre calls handled was achieved within 5% of the target figure, which is testament to the hard work of the team when dealing with both the direct impact (in terms of staff absence) and indirect impact (in relation to higher than predicted call volumes) of the COVID pandemic.

\*\*\* Whilst the NNDR Collection fund continues to meet targets, the in-year collection rate is below target due to the backdated large assessment which created a large debt to be collected within the last quarter of the year.

## 11. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

### The 2021/22 Revenue Budget Process

The Revenue Budget for 2021/22 was prepared against a background of meeting the Council's Corporate Plan objectives whilst continuing to face significant financial pressures from the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. A balanced budget was produced that included a deliverable level of savings and income, provided for investment in key services and funding from general reserves. This was achieved through a budget strategy that resulted in:

- the delivery of savings through the service transformation review process;
- making efficiencies through specific budget reviews and contract renewals;
- maximising new and existing income streams;
- recognising cost pressures and making decisions on budget changes where necessary; and
- strategic use of general reserves

The budget included savings or additional income of £0.295m. This compared to £0.157m included within the 2020/21 budget. The majority of the savings were based on organisational efficiency changes linked to the implementation of the first phase of the My Fenland project. In addition, higher forecast business rates growth has enabled the Council to retain more business rates in recent years, including 2021/22. However, the government is currently reviewing the system for allocating money generated from business rates to local authorities. The proposed reforms will potentially impact on the funding available to the Council from business rates from 2024/25 onwards. The budget also included £0.842m of funding from general reserves.

Council approved a net revenue budget for 2021/22 of £13.757m at its meeting on 23 February 2021. Council also approved the Fees and Charges proposals that support delivery of the revenue budget, the Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Programme and funding for 2021/22- 2023/24.

### Council Tax

At its meeting on 23 February 2021 Council resolved not to increase Council Tax in the 2021/22 financial year. The Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner increased their element of Council Tax by 6.42% and the Fire Authority increased theirs by 2.00%. Cambridgeshire County Council increased their Council Tax by 2.99%. On average Parish Councils reduced their precepts by -0.84%.

The calculation of the 2021/22 Tax-Base resulted in an increase of 328 in Band D equivalent properties (as shown in the table below). This produced a net increase in Council Tax income of £85,430 for Fenland District Council. The increase in Band D equivalent properties reflects both an increase in properties built and a reduction in the number of people claiming Council Tax Support.

The comparison of Council Tax levels and Tax Base from 2019/20 to 2021/22 is shown below:

<b>Band D Council Tax by authority</b>	<b>2019/20</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£</b>
Fenland District Council	260.46	260.46	260.46
Cambs. County Council	1,312.11	1,359.18	1,399.77
Cambs. Police & Crime Commissioner	222.66	232.65	247.59
Cambs. Fire Authority	70.74	72.09	73.53
	1,865.97	1,924.38	1,981.35
Parish Councils (Average)	46.41	48.46	48.05
<b>Total average Band D Council Tax</b>	<b>1,912.38</b>	<b>1,972.84</b>	<b>2,029.40</b>
Total average increase	87.64 (4.8%)	60.46 (3.16%)	56.56 (2.87%)
Council Tax Base			
Number of Band D equivalent dwellings	29,380	29,815	30,143

## Revenue Spending

For 2021/22, the Council agreed an original budget of net spending on services of £13.757m. This sum was to be financed in part by Government Grant together with the Council's share of Business Rates, with the remainder being raised through Council Tax. The Council Tax for 2021/22 was set at £260.46 for Band D properties. The precept on the Collection Fund (£7.851m) is the amount due to the Council net of Parish Precepts (£1.448m). The following table summarises the final figures (outturn) with those budgeted for the year

	31 March 2021		31 March 2022	
	Original Budget £000	Revised Budget £000	Actual £000	Actual to Revised Difference £000
<b>General Fund Net Spend</b>	13,757	<b>13,166</b>	<b>12,339</b>	<b>(827)</b>
<b>Financed by:</b>				
Business Rates	(5,312)	(6,735)	(6,607)	128
Transfer from Business Rates Reserve	(3,417)	(2,002)	(2,130)	(128)
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	3,621	3,621	3,621	0
Precept on Collection Fund	(7,851)	(7,851)	(7,851)	0
Council Tax Collection Fund Deficit	44	44	44	0
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>(12,915)</b>	<b>(12,923)</b>	<b>(12,923)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Deficit/(Surplus) – Transferred from/(to) General Balance/Budget Equalisation Reserve</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>(584)</b>	<b>(827)</b>
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>	

In January 2020 Cabinet agreed to establish a Budget Equalisation Reserve. When the Council returns a surplus it is transferred to this reserve. If an unbudgeted deficit arises when the outturn is finalised the balance held on the reserve is available to absorb the impact of that deficit without impacting on the General Fund. The surplus of £584,010 returned in the 2021/22 financial year has been transferred to the Budget Equalisation reserve. The current General Fund Balance of £2M reflects the level approved by Cabinet as representing an adequate amount to be held in the General Fund to mitigate against the risks and adverse circumstances that the reserve is in place to address.

The Council under-spent by £0.827m on the revised budget due principally to the following reasons:

Service Area	Description	Over(+) / Under spend (-)	
		£000	£000
<b><u>One-Off Variations</u></b>			
Fees and Charges	Income variations across a variety of services		
	Enforcement Fees (Housing Standards)	-17	
	Marine Services	-18	
	Planning & Pre-App Fees	-102	
	Court Costs raised	-30	
	Waste Services - bulky waste and recycling	-19	
	Trade Waste	-11	
	Search Fees	-17	
	Cemeteries	-20	
	Economic Estates	-53	
	Other services	-45	
			-332
Other Income/Costs	Additional Government New Burdens - Business Grants administration, Test & Trace, Licensing, Transparency etc		-99
	HM Courts & Tribunals Service - Refund of overcharged magistrate court fees paid for Council Tax liability orders		-57
	Investment Income/RTB/VAT Sharing arrangement with Clarion		-14
	Leisure Contract - Management Fee received from Freedom Leisure		-202
	<b>Sub-Total One-Off Variations</b>		<b>-704</b>
<b><u>Service Base Variations</u></b>			
Employee Costs	Variance across a variety of services mainly resulting from vacancies	-125	
Premises Costs	Lower costs across a variety of services	-18	
Transport Costs	Lower car allowance & mileage costs across a variety of services	-24	
	Higher vehicles/vessel maintenance costs	68	
Supplies and Services	Lower ICT costs - Telephones/Software/Maintenance	-78	
	Homelessness & Rough Sleepers - lower accommodation costs	-55	
	Lower costs across all services	-63	
Third Party Payments	Net impact of Housing Benefit subsidy claim and overpayments	127	
	Other costs across services	45	
	<b>Sub-Total Service Base Variations</b>		<b>-123</b>
<b>Overall improvement in outturn position since revised budget</b>			<b>-827</b>
Projected Deficit 2021-22 at Revised Estimate (Cabinet/Council February 2022)			<b>243</b>
<b>Net Surplus 2021-22</b>	<b>Transferred to Budget Equalisation Reserve</b>		<b>-584</b>



## **Budget Monitoring**

Revenue and capital budget monitoring information is reported throughout the year to Corporate Management Team and Heads of Service. Cabinet Portfolio Holders are also provided financial monitoring information regularly throughout the year and provided to Cabinet at specific times during the year. In addition, treasury management performance is reported to Cabinet and Council with reviews undertaken by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

## **Capital Spending and Funding**

In 2020/22 the Council spent £11.258m on capital projects, which included Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute (grants and loans to private sector home owners and support for community development), compared with the original budget of £17.970m and a revised budget of £12.486m. In addition, £0.325m was spent on Commercial and Investment Strategy schemes.

The main items of capital expenditure in the year were the roofing works at Hudson Leisure Centre (£229k), investment in Wisbech Port facilities and infrastructure (£369k), replacement of Council vehicles (£320k), investment in ICT infrastructure and software linked to the Council's transformation agenda (£306k), investment in Social Housing Decarbonisation in conjunction with Clarion Housing Association (£4.492m), replacement of Sewage Treatment Works (£223k), investment in Regeneration programmes (£3.492m including High Street, Wisbech (£457k), Railway Station improvements at March and Manea (£2.375m), March Future High Street works (£325k) and Growing Fenland Grants in Wisbech and Whittlesey (£287k). A further £325k was spent on acquiring a property as part of the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy. This expenditure was financed by capital grants, capital receipts and revenue contributions. Capital receipts of £100k (net of costs) were realised in 2021/22 (2020/21: £43k).

Grants of £1.363m were paid to individuals in the District who qualified for a Private Sector Renewal Grant/Disabled Facilities Grant. These grants are funded from money the Council receives from Cambridgeshire County Council as part of the national Better Care Fund arrangements.

## **Revenue Balances**

Set out in notes 27 and 28 to the core financial statements are the Council's reserves. As at 31 March 2022, the Council's uncommitted General Fund Balance stood at £2m and the total Earmarked Reserves balance stood at £12.339m.

Reserves are required to cover a number of potential unforeseen eventualities and risks of additional expenditure being required over and above that allowed for within budgets.

## **Provisions and Contingencies**

Since the introduction of the Business Rates Retention Scheme effective from 1 April 2013, Local Authorities are liable for successful appeals against business rates charged to businesses in 2021/22 and earlier financial years in their proportionate share. Therefore, a provision of £2.274m (Fenland's share) has been recognised for the best estimate of the amount that businesses are potentially due a refund, as at 31 March 2022.

## **Treasury Management**

The Local Government Act 2003 gave councils the freedom to determine how much they borrow for investment in new capital projects, subject to a regulation that such borrowing complies with the 'Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities'. The Prudential Code looks to ensure affordability, prudence and sustainability in relation to determined borrowing limits. The Council determined the required Prudential Code indicators and Treasury Management Strategy as part of the budget process for 2021/22. No new borrowing was undertaken in 2021/22 and all investment activities were undertaken in accordance with the approved strategy.

The total external loan debt was £7.8m at the year-end, unchanged from the previous year. Short-Term Investments (i.e. between 3-12 months) at the year-end amounted to £10m (£5m at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021).

## **Pension Liabilities**

At 31 March 2022, the Council's share of the assets and liabilities of the Cambridgeshire LGPS show an estimated net liability of £46.835m. This liability has no impact on the level of the Council's available reserves.

An actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2019, with the employer's contribution set as a combination of a percentage of salary plus a lump sum. As explained below, an up-front payment incorporating the lump sum payments due in respect of the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years was paid in April 2020. By paying a lump sum in this manner the Council was able to obtain a discount of £0.172m in the total value of the lump sum due when compared to what the Council would have been due to pay if payment had been made in the year the lump sums fell due.

Further information relating to the assets, liabilities, income and expenditure of the Council's pension scheme is detailed at note 39 to the financial statements.

## **Significant Transactions**

The actuarial valuation of the Council's Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities and pension reserve shown on the Balance Sheet have reduced by £19.335m during the year, from £66.170m at 31 March 2021 to £46.835m at 31 March 2022. This reflects the valuation received from the Council's actuary which included updated assumptions relating to the pension increase rate, the salary increase rate and the discount rate used. The Council also made an up-front payment of £1.874m to the Pension Fund in April 2020 reflecting the lump sum payments due in respect of the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years. Collectively the changes in assumptions offset by the lump sum payment reduced the Council's pension liability by £9.385m.

Pension fund assets are valued separately but form part of the net pension liability disclosed on the Balance Sheet. Pension fund assets attributable to the Council increased in value by £9.950m. The assumptions used are determined by the Actuary and represent the market conditions at the reporting date. The Council relies and places assurance on the professional judgement of the Actuary and the assumptions used to calculate this actuarial valuation. Further details are given in Note 39 of the core financial statements.

The Council engages Wilks Head and Eve to undertake valuations of the Council's asset base in accordance with the requirements set out in the CIPFA Code of Accounting Practice and the professional standards of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. All assets are formally re-valued at least every five years and an annual review is undertaken to ensure there has been no significant movement in the value of the Council's assets since they were last subject to formal valuation. Further details are given in Notes 13 and 28 of the core financial statements. Increases in the value of some of the Council's assets led to revaluation gains of £3.899m being recognised in the revaluation reserve. These gains were offset by downward movements in the value of other assets totalling £0.963m leading to a net credit to the revaluation reserve of £2.936m.

## **12. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2022/23 – 2026/27**

This Council, in common with most other local authorities, faces an ongoing difficult position in the medium term due to a range of pressures including providing statutory services, ongoing pressures caused by maintaining and developing sources of income through fees and charges whilst managing the impact on revenue and capital budget of delivering against the Council's strategic priorities.

There is still considerable uncertainty around the estimates for 2022/23 and the forecasts for the medium term. Currently there are a number of 'unknowns' which could both positively and negatively impact on the forecasts including:

### **Risks associated with the MTFS forecasts:**

- The ongoing impact of the Finance Settlement announcements on 2023/24 and the medium term;
- Impact of potential changes to the New Home Bonus methodology and allocations from April 2023;
- Impact of the potential business rates baseline reset from April 2023 and longer-term changes to the Business Rates Retention system;
- Impact of potential additional income in 2024/25 from the Extended Producer Responsibility scheme for managing packaging waste;
- Impact on income streams being greater than anticipated due to external factors such as Search Fees (transfer to Land Registry) and Port Income (sale of Port Sutton Bridge);
- Continuing impact of homelessness temporary accommodation costs in 2022/23 and the medium term and the impact on recovery of housing benefit subsidy;
- Potential for additional support for the Leisure Management contractor in 2022/23. A full year's Management Fee income from the Leisure Contractor has currently been included in the 2022/23 estimates and each subsequent year of the MTFS;
- Impact of service developments e.g. Marine Services future structure and Car Parking Enforcement (CPE);
- Revenue impact of funding new capital schemes not currently included in the capital programme;
- Potential impact of the My Fenland transformation programme Phases 3 and 4 with associated savings. Further detailed work is required to quantify the scope of these phases, associated savings and timing implications. £192k of savings are included in 2022/23 for Phase 3, rising to £384k per annum from 2023/24 onwards;

- Potential net benefits from Fenland Future Ltd of loan interest and dividends from future developments over and above already included in the MTFS generating revenue income;
- Commercial and Investment Strategy and future potential positive returns to the Council;

Whatever impact the above issues may have however, there will remain a significant structural deficit for the Council to address.

The forecasts for the years 2023/24 – 2026/27 are provisional at this stage and should be considered with extreme caution. Future announcements and consultation outcomes will also determine government policy and therefore the funding in the future years. In addition, the forecasts are dependent on permanently maintaining the savings identified through the My Fenland transformation initiative.

Business Rates Retention Reform, Fair Funding Review and changes to the New Homes Bonus could have a significant impact on the Council's forecast resources over term of the MTFS. Further to the risks associated with these externally determined funding streams the Council should also ensure that income budgets are achieved and new income streams considered and implemented for medium to long term sustainability in combination with any operational and transformational benefits that the Council realises. The use of general reserves to support revenue expenditure adds to the overall risks to the Council as such reserves can only be used once but the cumulative impact of such use will continue to be felt into the future.

Business Rates Baseline Funding normally increases by CPI inflation. The medium-term projections detailed below exemplify this position although the government froze the business rate multiplier for 2022/23 for which the Council receives compensation from the government. There is a significant business rates deficit in 2022/23 arising from the awarding of reliefs linked to Covid 19 in 2021/22. The impact of this deficit is offset by a transfer from a reserve containing sums received from government in 2021/22 to cover the cost of awarding Covid 19 business rate relief.

Increases in Council Tax relate only to growth in the Council Tax base. In accordance with the motion adopted by Council in July 2019, a 0% Council Tax increase has been included in the MTFS for 2022/23 and over the medium term.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as presented to Council on 24 February 2022, shows that the Council faces a continuing budget gap over the five years from April 2022. The following table summarises the position, showing a cumulative gap over the period to 2026/27 of £0.973m.

**Medium Term Financial Strategy  
(February 2022)**

	Estimate 2022/23 £000	Forecast 2023/24 £000	Forecast 2024/25 £000	Forecast 2025/26 £000	Forecast 2026/27 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<b>Service Expenditure/Income</b>					
Gross Service Expenditure	23,047	23,253	23,661	24,165	24,586
Fees and Charges	-6,442	-6,467	-6,533	-6,598	-6,665
Grants and Contributions	-2,081	-1,730	-1,715	-1,698	-1,685
Recycling Credits	-1,120	-1,140	-1,155	-1,170	-1,185
<b>Total Net Service Expenditure</b>	<b>13,404</b>	<b>13,916</b>	<b>14,258</b>	<b>14,699</b>	<b>15,051</b>
<b>Corporate Items</b>					
<b>Corporate Expenditure/Savings</b>					
Drainage Board Levies	1,722	1,860	1,897	1,935	1,974
Financing Charges - Interest on External Borrowing	623	700	700	700	700
Financing Charges - Current Capital Programme - MRP	440	550	550	550	550
Vacancy Factor (1.5%)	-181	-187	-191	-196	-201
A14 Upgrade - contribution	74	74	74	74	74
CFF Transformation Savings identified not yet implemented	-192	-384	-384	-384	-384
	<b>2,486</b>	<b>2,613</b>	<b>2,646</b>	<b>2,679</b>	<b>2,713</b>
<b>Corporate Income Items</b>					
Contribution to(+)/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	-101	-30	60	60	60
RTB/VAT Sharing Income	-70	-20	-20	-20	-20
Investment and Property Fund Income	-250	-200	-200	-210	-210
New Homes Bonus	-824	-800	-800	-800	-800
Lower Tier Services Grant	-169	-169	-169	-169	-169
Services Grant	-255	-255	-255	-255	-255
FFL - Officer Time Recharge/Net Loan Interest	-161	-475	-800	-825	-675
Contribution from Budget Equalisation Reserve	-203	0	0	0	0
	<b>-2,033</b>	<b>-1,949</b>	<b>-2,184</b>	<b>-2,219</b>	<b>-2,069</b>
<b>Total Corporate Items</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>664</b>	<b>462</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>644</b>
<b>Gross Service/Corporate Expenditure</b>	<b>25,533</b>	<b>25,866</b>	<b>26,307</b>	<b>26,844</b>	<b>27,299</b>
<b>Gross Service/Corporate Income</b>	<b>-11,676</b>	<b>-11,286</b>	<b>-11,587</b>	<b>-11,685</b>	<b>-11,604</b>
<b>Net Budget Requirement</b>	<b>13,857</b>	<b>14,580</b>	<b>14,720</b>	<b>15,159</b>	<b>15,695</b>
<b>Funding - NNDR/CT</b>					
<b>Business Rates Funding (NNDR)</b>					
Business Rates Baseline Funding/RSG	-3,702	-3,787	-3,859	-3,925	-3,991
Contribution to(+)/from(-) Business Rates Reserve	-1,415	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit	1,836	184	0	0	0
Business Rates - net additional income above baseline	-604	-1,276	-1,305	-1,332	-1,360
Business Rates - renewable energy rates retained	-970	-896	-913	-929	-944
Business Rates - reimbursement of additional Covid-19 reliefs	-621	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Pool - FDC Share of Benefit	-350	0	0	0	0
<b>Council Tax Funding</b>					
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus(-)/Deficit	-44	0	-50	-50	-50
Council Tax (increases of 0% in 22/23 onwards)	-7,987	-8,084	-8,182	-8,280	-8,377
<b>Total Funding - NNDR/CT</b>	<b>-13,857</b>	<b>-13,859</b>	<b>-14,309</b>	<b>-14,516</b>	<b>-14,722</b>
<b>Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+721</b>	<b>+411</b>	<b>+643</b>	<b>+973</b>
<b>Summary</b>					
<b>Total Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>25,533</b>	<b>25,866</b>	<b>26,307</b>	<b>26,844</b>	<b>27,299</b>
Funded by:					
Fees and Charges	-6,442	-6,467	-6,533	-6,598	-6,665
Grants and Contributions	-2,081	-1,730	-1,715	-1,698	-1,685
Recycling Credits	-1,120	-1,140	-1,155	-1,170	-1,185
New Homes Bonus	-824	-800	-800	-800	-800
Investment Income, VAT/RTB	-320	-220	-220	-230	-230
Contribution to(+)/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	-101	-30	60	60	60
Lower Tier Services Grant and Services Grant	-424	-424	-424	-424	-424
FFL - Officer Time Recharge/Net Loan Interest	-161	-475	-800	-825	-675
Retained Business Rates	-4,411	-5,775	-6,077	-6,186	-6,295
Contribution to(+)/from(-) Business Rates Reserve	-1,415	0	0	0	0
Council Tax	-8,031	-8,084	-8,232	-8,330	-8,427
Contribution from Budget Equalisation Reserve	-203	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>-25,533</b>	<b>-25,145</b>	<b>-25,896</b>	<b>-26,201</b>	<b>-26,326</b>
<b>Surplus(-)/Shortfall(+)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+721</b>	<b>+411</b>	<b>+643</b>	<b>+973</b>

## **Fair Funding Review and Future Changes to the Business Rates Retention System**

The implementation of a revised approach to central government's allocation of financial resources to local government has been subject to considerable delay. These delays have been further exacerbated by the Covid 19 pandemic and it remains unclear when the Government will be in a position to adhere to its earlier commitment to implement the Fair Funding Review and Business Rates funding changes.

The government announced on 28 June 2022, that a '2-year financial settlement' will be introduced 'next year', which is expected to cover 2023/24 and 2024/25. A consultation will be launched 'shortly'. This announcement suggests that there will be rollover settlements in both 2023/24 and 2024/25. That is, financial settlements that are broadly similar to the 2022/23 settlement. The Fair Funding Review, business rates baseline reset and other funding reforms now look set to be pushed back to 2025/26. It also suggests that the 2021 Census might not be reflected in funding allocations until 2025/26.

Pushing these major changes back to 2025/26 means that they can be aligned with the next spending review period (the current spending review runs to 2024/25) and they will follow the next General Election (no later than January 2025). However, this would mean 2025/26 would be a very significant financial year, incorporating a new spending review, the 2021 Census and funding reforms. The difficulties of these challenges might result in scaled-down changes.

The future changes to the Business Rates Retention system, New Homes Bonus and the outcome of the Fair Funding Review are very significant risk areas for this Council, for district councils in particular and the local authority sector in general, over the medium term.

## **Council for the Future (CFF)**

Through its Comprehensive Spending Review (FDC-CSR), which was established in July 2015, the Council achieved considerable success in securing savings across a number of services. The estimated total net savings generated from the FDC-CSR proposals agreed previously at £1.667m amounted to £1.76m by the end of 2020/21. Changes implemented include the introduction of a garden waste subscription service with effect from 1 April 2017, the transfer of management of the Council's leisure centres with effect from December 2018 and the implementation of shared services model with Peterborough City Council for the delivery of CCTV.

During 2021/22, our Cabinet members have selected a number of projects to contribute towards our 'Council for the Future' agenda. These projects have a variety of aims; from tackling areas of particular need within Fenland, to sustainably transforming services and our organisation to be fit for the future. Although these are influenced by external factors, the aim is to have a programme of projects completed by the end of the current Council leadership term in 2023. Projects vary in scope and complexity, with some requiring close partnership working with external organisations and changes in policies before their aims can be delivered. Progress of these projects to date are detailed in Section 6 above of this narrative report.



## **Combined Authority**

This Council is a constituent authority of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) which was formally established following the Mayoral election in May 2017. The devolution deal for the CPCA includes a new £20m fund for the next 30 years (£600m) to support economic growth, development of local infrastructure and jobs. In addition, a new £100m housing fund is to be invested over the next five years to build more homes in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough including affordable, rent and shared ownership.

The Council has continued to work closely with Combined Authority to secure investment in the District. During the 2021/22 financial year, following the production of masterplans for each of the four market towns (completed in 2020/21 and funded by the Combined Authority), capital projects in each market town have progressed with £1m from the Combined Authority having been committed for each market town. Work on the March and Manea Stations Regeneration Programme, to enhance transport infrastructure across the District, progressed well with both schemes due for completion in 2022/23. The Combined Authority has also committed funding towards the further expansion of the South Fens Business Park in Chatteris, the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement across the District, the March Future High Street project and the regeneration of properties in High Street, Wisbech. All these schemes are expected to make significant progress during 2022/23.

## **Covid 19**

In common with all local authorities the Council's finances have been impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic. In the 2021/22 financial year the pandemic has resulted in additional expenditure across a range of services, mainly homelessness and led to reductions in income from the management fee due from the Leisure contractor. Whilst much of the in-year impact has been offset by the receipt of additional government funding, there have been no commitments from government that it will provide funding to local authorities to offset the longer-term impact on the economy. The historically high levels of public debt may also have a substantial impact on future funding for public services.

As explained in Note 42 to the financial statements, management has concluded that the Council remains a going concern. However, in the context of this narrative report it is important to note that the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved in February 2022, which is referred to above, will be subject to significant and frequent revision, particularly when the government proceeds to take key decisions regarding the future financing of local authorities.

### 13. EXPLANATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The Council's financial statements for the year 2021/22 are set out on pages 29 to 116. They consist of:

- the **Movement in Reserves Statement** – shows how the movement in reserves in the Balance Sheet is reconciled to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account Deficit and what adjustments are required to be charged to the General Fund Balance for Council Tax setting purposes;
- the **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)**– a summary of the resources generated and consumed by the Council;
- the **Balance Sheet** - setting out the Council's financial position as at 31 March 2022;
- the **Cash Flow Statement** - which summarises the Council's inflows and outflows of cash for revenue and capital transactions for the year with third parties;
- the **Expenditure and Funding Analysis** – a summary of annual expenditure used and funded by the Council together with the adjustments required between funding and accounting basis to reconcile with the CIES;
- the **Collection Fund** – is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers of Council Tax and National Non – Domestic Rates (NNDR) and its distribution to precepting bodies.

The accounts referred to above are supported by **Accounting Policies**, which are in note 1 to the financial statements.

### 14. FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about these accounts is available from the Chief Accountant, Fenland Hall, County Road, March, Cambridgeshire, PE15 8NQ, (☎ 01354 622486).

This document forms part of the Council's policy of providing full information about the Council's affairs. In addition, interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts.

### 15. CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that the financial statements set out on pages 29 to 115 present a true and fair view of the financial position of Fenland District Council at 31 March 2022 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended.

**Signed:**

**27 September 2023**

**Peter Catchpole**

**Chief Finance Officer**

## STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

### The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required:

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

### The Chief Finance Officer's Responsibilities

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

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Chief Finance Officer has:

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

The Chief Finance Officer has also:

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

**Signed:**

**27 September 2023**

**Peter Catchpole  
Chief Finance Officer**

### Chairman's Declaration

I confirm these accounts were approved by the Audit and Risk Management Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2023 subject to formal delegation to myself and the Chief Finance Officer.  
Signed on behalf of Fenland District Council

**Signed:**

**27 September 2023**

**Councillor Kim French, Chair of Audit and Risk Management Committee**

**CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT**

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

<b>2020/21</b>	General Fund Balance	Earmarked Reserves	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Council Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Balance at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>6,763</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>9,038</b>	<b>(311)</b>	<b>8,727</b>
<b>Movement in reserves</b>							
Surplus on Provision of Services	4,295	0	0	0	4,295	0	4,295
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	0	0	0	0	0	(15,090)	(15,090)
<b>Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>(15,090)</b>	<b>(10,795)</b>
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulation (note 8)	1,014	0	6	5,616	6,636	(6,636)	0
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease) before Transfers (to)/from Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>5,309</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5,616</b>	<b>10,931</b>	<b>(21,726)</b>	<b>(10,795)</b>
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves (note 9)	(5,309)	5,309	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in 2020/21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,309</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5,616</b>	<b>10,931</b>	<b>(21,726)</b>	<b>(10,795)</b>
<b>Balance at 31 March 2021 carried forward</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>12,072</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5,891</b>	<b>19,969</b>	<b>(22,037)</b>	<b>(2,068)</b>

<b>2021/22</b>							
	General Fund Balance £000	Earmarked Reserves £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Total Usable Reserves £000	Unusable Reserves £000	Total Council Reserves £000
<b>Balance at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>12,072</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5,891</b>	<b>19,969</b>	<b>(22,037)</b>	<b>(2,068)</b>
<b>Movement in reserves</b>							
Surplus on Provision of Services	5,746	0	0	0	5,746	0	5,746
Other Comprehensive Expenditure and Income	0	0	0	0	0	26,771	26,771
<b>Total Comprehensive Expenditure and Income</b>	<b>5,746</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,746</b>	<b>26,771</b>	<b>32,517</b>
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulation (note 8)	(5,479)	0	(6)	3,388	(2,097)	2,097	0
<b>Net Increase/(Decrease) before Transfers (to)/from Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>3,388</b>	<b>3,649</b>	<b>28,868</b>	<b>32,517</b>
Transfers to / (from) Earmarked Reserves (note 9)	(267)	267	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Increase/(Decrease) in 2021/22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>3,388</b>	<b>3,649</b>	<b>28,868</b>	<b>32,517</b>
<b>Balance at 31 March 2022 carried forward</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>12,339</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9,279</b>	<b>23,618</b>	<b>6,831</b>	<b>30,449</b>

## COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

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

2020/21			2021/22			
Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure		Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
2,500	(969)	1,531	Growth and Infrastructure	4,809	(7,151)	(2,342)
15,357	(8,135)	7,222	Communities, Environment, Leisure and Planning	20,923	(8,327)	12,596
33,396	(28,476)	4,920	Resources and Customer Services	32,024	(24,946)	7,078
<b>51,253</b>	<b>(37,580)</b>	<b>13,673</b>	<b>Cost of Services</b>	<b>57,756</b>	<b>(40,424)</b>	<b>17,332</b>
		2,900	Other operating expenditure (note 10)			2,943
		2,773	Financing and investment income and expenditure (note 11)			930
		(23,641)	Taxation and non-specific grant income (note 12)			(26,951)
		<b>(4,295)</b>	<b>(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services</b>			<b>(5,746)</b>
		(2,114)	(Surplus)/Deficit on revaluation of property, plant and equipment assets (note 27)			(2,938)
		17,204	Re-measurement of net defined benefit liability/ (asset) (note 39)			(23,833)
		<b>15,090</b>	<b>Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>			<b>(26,771)</b>
		<b>10,795</b>	<b>Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure</b>			<b>(32,517)</b>

## BALANCE SHEET

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

<b>31 March 2021</b>		<b>Note</b>	<b>31 March 2022</b>
<b>£000</b>			<b>£000</b>
46,714	Property, Plant and Equipment	13	50,456
5,064	Infrastructure Assets	14	5,439
4,954	Investment Property	15	6,658
14	Intangible Assets	16	77
0	Long Term Investments	18	4,066
387	Long Term Debtors	17	379
<b>57,133</b>	<b>Long Term Assets</b>		<b>67,075</b>
5,002	Short Term Investments	18	10,006
65	Inventories	21	98
9,975	Short Term Debtors	22	9,816
17,965	Cash and Cash Equivalents	23	20,935
<b>33,007</b>	<b>Current Assets</b>		<b>40,855</b>
(36)	Short Term Borrowing	18	(36)
(137)	Short Term Finance Lease Liability	39	(83)
(13,779)	Short Term Creditors	24	(10,941)
(1,828)	Receipts in Advance	25	(9,471)
(2,352)	Provisions	26	(2,292)
<b>(18,132)</b>	<b>Current Liabilities</b>		<b>(22,823)</b>
(7,800)	Long Term Borrowing	20	(7,800)
(106)	Finance Lease Liability	39	(23)
(66,170)	Defined Benefit Pension Liability	40	(46,835)
<b>(74,076)</b>	<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>		<b>(54,658)</b>
<b>(2,068)</b>	<b>Net Assets/(Liabilities)</b>		<b>30,449</b>
19,969	Usable Reserves	27	23,618
(22,037)	Unusable Reserves	28	6,831
<b>(2,068)</b>	<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>30,449</b>

The notes on page 37 to 115 form part of the financial statements.

**Signed:**

**Chief Finance Officer 27 September 2023**



## THE CASH FLOW STATEMENT

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period. 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.

<b>2020/21 £000</b>		<b>2021/22 £000</b>
<b>4,295</b>	<b>Net (deficit)/surplus on the provision of services</b>	<b>5,746</b>
9,970	Adjust net deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements (note 29)	9,665
<b>(7,299)</b>	Adjust for items included in the net deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities (note 29)	<b>(12,735)</b>
<b>6,966</b>	<b>Net cash flows from Operating Activities</b>	<b>2,676</b>
6,093	Investing Activities (note 30)	(62)
(5,363)	Financing Activities (note 31)	356
<b>7,696</b>	<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>2,970</b>
10,269	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period (note 23)	17,965
<b>17,965</b>	<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period (note 23)</b>	<b>20,935</b>

## EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) is a note to the Financial Statements, however, it is positioned here as it provides a link from the figures reported in the Council's Outturn Report to the CIES. The EFA shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) by Local Council's in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by Council's in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's directorates/services/departments. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2020/21			2021/22			
Net Expenditure Chargeable to General Fund	Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis (Note 6)	Net Expenditure in the CIES		Net Expenditure Chargeable to General Fund	Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis (Note 6)	Net Expenditure in the CIES
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
1,175	356	1,531	Growth and Infrastructure	1,194	(3,536)	(2,342)
4,315	2,907	7,222	Communities, Environment, Leisure and Planning	3,821	8,775	12,596
6,264	(1,344)	4,920	Resources and Customer Services	8,362	(1,284)	7,078
11,754	1,919	13,673	<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	13,377	3,955	17,332
(11,754)	(6,214)	(17,968)	Other Income and Expenditure	(13,377)	(9,701)	(23,078)
<b>0</b>	<b>(4,295)</b>	<b>(4,295)</b>	<b>(Surplus) or Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(5,746)</b>	<b>(5,746)</b>
<b>2,000</b>			<b>Opening General Fund Balance</b>	<b>2,000</b>		
<b>0</b>			<b>Add/(Less) Surplus/(Deficit) on General Fund in Year</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>2,000</b>			<b>Closing General Fund Balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March</b>	<b>2,000</b>		

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## NOTES TO THE CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### i. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2021/22 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2022. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, which those Regulations require to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 and Service Reporting Code of Practice 2021/22, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). Policies have been consistently applied except for the policy in relation to heritage assets where some of the measurement rules are relaxed (details are provided in paragraph xi below).

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

#### ii. ACCRUALS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

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

- Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Council transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.
- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Council can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplied, received and their consumption, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet. Exceptions to this principle include utility bills, maintenance contracts and other similar quarterly payments, which are charged at the date of billing rather than being apportioned between financial years. This policy is consistently applied each year and therefore does not have a material effect on the year's accounts.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including those rendered by the Council's officers) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received, rather than when payments are made.
- Interest payable on borrowings and receivable on investments are accounted for on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.

- Grants paid or payable to third parties by the Council are recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure account if the Council is acting as principal to the transaction. Where the Council is acting as the agent of another organisation when paying a grant, the Council does not account for the grant paid or payable or the funding received to award the grant in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure account.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where there is evidence that debts are unlikely to be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

### **iii. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

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

In the Cash Flow Statement, cash and cash equivalents are shown that are repayable on demand and form an integral part of the Council's cash management.

### **iv. 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 period adjustment.

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

Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period.

### **v. CHARGES TO REVENUE FOR NON-CURRENT ASSETS**

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

- Depreciation/amortisation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service.
- Revaluation and Impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written-off.

The Council is not required to raise Council Tax to cover depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisation. However, it is required to make an annual provision from revenue to contribute towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement (equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by guidance). Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisation are therefore replaced by revenue provision 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.

## **vi. COUNCIL TAX AND NON – DOMESTIC RATES**

The Council as billing authority, act as an agent, collecting council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) on behalf of the major preceptors (including government for NDR) and, as principal, collecting council tax and NDR for themselves. Billing authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate fund (i.e. the Collection Fund) for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and NDR. Under the legislative framework for the Collection Fund, billing authorities, major preceptors and central government share proportionately the risks and rewards that the amount of council tax and NDR collected could be less or more than predicted.

### Accounting for Council Tax and NDR

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

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

## **vii. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**

### Benefits Payable During Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as salaries, paid annual leave, paid sick leave and non-monetary benefits for current employees and are recognised as an expense in the year in which employees render service to the Council. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

### Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's



decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits and are charged on an accruals basis to the appropriate service segment or, where applicable, to a corporate service segment at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of these benefits or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

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

### Post-Employment Benefits

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

### **The Local Government Pension Scheme**

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

- The liabilities of the Cambridgeshire County Council pension scheme attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc., and projections of earnings for current employees.
- Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate of 2.7% (based on the yields of the constituents of the IBoxx £ Corporates AA index and the Council's weighted average duration).
- The assets of Cambridgeshire County Council pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:

**quoted securities** – current bid price

**unquoted securities** – professional estimate

**unitised securities** – current bid price

**property** – market value

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

Service cost comprising:

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

**past service cost** – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in

earlier years – debited to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non Distributed Costs.

**net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), i.e. net interest expense for the Council** – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.

Re-measurements comprising:

**the return on plan assets** – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined liability (asset) – charged to the Pensions Reserve as other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

**actuarial gains and losses** – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the Pension Reserves as Other Comprehensive Income and expenditure.

Contributions paid to the Cambridgeshire County Council pension fund – cash paid as employer’s contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

Statutory provisions limit the Council to raising Council Tax to cover the amounts payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations to and from the Pension 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 to the fund but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pension Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact on the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

### **Discretionary Benefits**

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

## **viii. FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT**

The Council measures some of its non- financial assets and liabilities at fair value at the end of the reporting period. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability at the measurement date. The fair value measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either:

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

The Council measures the fair value of an asset or liability on the same basis that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability (assuming those market participants were acting in their economic best interest).

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

The Council uses appropriate valuation techniques for each circumstance, maximising the use of relevant known data and minimising the use of estimates or unknowns. This takes into account the three levels of categories for inputs to valuations for fair value assets: Level 1 – quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the Council can access at the measurement date.

Level 2 – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.

Level 3 – unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

## **ix. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

A financial asset or liability is recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. This will normally be the date that a contract is entered into but may be later if there are conditions that need to be satisfied.

Financial assets are recognised by the Council on the Balance Sheet only when goods or services have been provided or rendered to a third party. Financial liabilities are recognised when the goods or services ordered from a third party have been received by the Council and the third party has performed its contractual obligations.

### **Financial Liabilities**

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

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

Gains and losses on the repurchase or early settlement of borrowing are credited and debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year of repurchase/settlement. However, where repurchase has taken place as part of a restructuring of the loan portfolio that involves the modification or exchange of existing instruments, the premium or discount is respectively deducted from or added to the amortised cost of the new or modified loan and the write-down to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is spread over the life of the loan by an adjustment to the effective interest rate.

Where premiums and discounts have been charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, regulations allow the impact on the General Fund Balance to be spread over future years. The Council has a policy of spreading the gain/loss over the term that was remaining on the loan against which the premium was payable or discount receivable when it was repaid. The reconciliation of amounts charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the net charge required against the General Fund Balance is managed by a transfer to or from the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

### **Financial Assets**

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

- amortised cost;
- fair value through profit or loss (FVPL), and
- fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI)

The authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost with the exception of the Council's investment in pooled property funds which is measured at fair value through profit or loss. Further detail is provided below.

### **Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost**

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

However, the Council has made a number of loans to private individuals at nil interest and the loans form a charge on the individual's properties. This means that market rates of interest have not been charged and these loans are classed as "soft loans". When soft loans are made, a loss is recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (debited to the appropriate service) for the present value of the interest that will

be foregone over the life of the instrument, resulting in a lower amortised cost than the outstanding principal.

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

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

### **Expected Credit Loss Model**

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

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

### **Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss (FVPL)**

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

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

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

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

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

Any gains or losses that arise on the derecognition of the asset are credited or debited to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income

and Expenditure Statement. Where fair value cannot be measured reliably, the instrument is measured at cost (less any impairment losses).

#### **x. GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **xi. HERITAGE ASSETS**

Heritage assets are held by the Council principally for their contribution to knowledge or culture. The heritage assets held by this Council are monuments, war memorials, public clocks, civic regalia and operational historic buildings in cemeteries.

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

The historical cemetery buildings are operational assets accounted for at depreciated replacement cost within Property, Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet.

The remaining heritage assets are not recognised in the financial statements as no information is available on the cost.

The Council is of the view that obtaining valuations for these assets would involve a disproportionate cost in comparison to the benefits that would be provided to the users of the Council's financial statement.

These assets are recorded in the asset register of the Council and detailed records are kept on each asset.

## xii. INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

Infrastructure assets include sewage treatment works, the port quay, footpaths, street lighting and roads.

### Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition or replacement of components of the network is capitalised on an accrual basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

### Measurement

Infrastructure assets are generally measured at depreciated historical cost. However, this is a modified form of historical cost – opening balances for highways infrastructure assets were originally recorded in balance sheets at amounts of capital undischarged for sums borrowed as at 1 April 1994, which was deemed at that time to be 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.

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

Additions and enhancements are recorded at cost and have increased the balance. These have been recorded in the Council's fixed asset register as an individual asset. The infrastructure balance has been reduced annually by depreciation. This has been calculated using the Council's depreciation policy.

### Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on the parts of the 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 and non highways infrastructure are assessed by the Highways, Sewage Works and Port Quay Engineers and using industry standards where applicable and vary depending on the asset classification.

<b>Infrastructure Type</b>	<b>Useful Life</b>
Sewage Treatment Works	20 years
Port Quay and Nene Waterfront	40 years
Foot Paths and Roads	30 years
Street Lighting	15 years



## **Disposals and Derecognition**

When a component of the network is disposed of, decommissioned, or replaced, the carrying amount of the component in the Balance Sheet is written off to the 'Other operating expenditure' line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain 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 (ie netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal).

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

### **xiii. INTANGIBLE ASSETS**

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

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

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

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

### **xiv. INVENTORIES**

Inventories are valued at latest price, with an allowance made for obsolete and slow moving items. While this is a departure from the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and IAS 2, which require inventories to be shown at the lower of cost and net realisable value, the effect of the different treatment is not material.

### **xv. INVESTMENT PROPERTY**

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

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

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the Financing and Investment Income line and result in a gain for the General Fund Balance. However, revaluation and disposal gains and losses are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund Balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the Capital Adjustment Account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000) the Capital Receipts Reserve.

## **xvi. LEASES**

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

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

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

### The Council as Lessee

#### **Finance Leases**

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

Lease payments are apportioned between:

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

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

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

### **Operating Leases**

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense of the service benefitting from use of the leased property, plant or equipment. Charges are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, generally meaning that rentals are charged when they become payable.

#### The Council as Lessor

### **Operating Leases**

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

## **xvii. OVERHEADS AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

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

## **xviii. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**

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

### **Recognition**

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (e.g. repairs and

maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred. Assets valued at less than £10,000 are not normally recognised in the Balance Sheet. The exception to this principal relates to land holdings which may have a current value of less than £10,000 but where they meet the Assets Held for Sale criteria. The total value of such assets does not materially affect the Property, Plant and Equipment disclosure note.

## Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

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

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

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its current value, unless the acquisition will not increase the cash flows of the Council. In the latter case, the cost of the acquisition is the carrying amount of the asset given up by the Council.

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

- Infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost.
- Surplus assets – the current value measurement basis is fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective.
- All other assets – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV).

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

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

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

Where decreases in value are identified, the loss is accounted for by:

- Where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).

- Where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service revenue line(s) in the Comprehensive income and Expenditure Statement.

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

## **Impairment**

Assets are assessed at each year-end as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. Where indications exist and any possible differences are estimated to be material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated and, where this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for by:

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

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

## **Depreciation**

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

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the value.
- Land is not depreciated.
- Vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment – a percentage of the value of each class of assets in the balance sheet, as advised by a suitably qualified officer.
- Infrastructure – straight – line allocation up to 40 years.

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment has major components with different estimated useful lives and whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately.

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

### **Disposals and Non-current Assets Held for Sale**

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less cost 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 recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

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

Assets that are to be abandoned or scrapped are not reclassified as Assets Held for Sale.

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

Disposal proceeds in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts is required to be credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve, and can then only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow (the capital financing requirement). Receipts are appropriated to the Reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against Council Tax, as the cost of Property, Plant and Equipment 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.

## **xix. PROVISIONS**

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits

or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the Council may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

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

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes more likely than not that a transfer of economic benefits will not now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

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

## **xx. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

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

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

## **xxi. CONTINGENT ASSETS**

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

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

## **xxii. RESERVES**

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



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

**xxiii. REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE**

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset (e.g. renovation grants) has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year.

Where the Council has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from existing capital resources or by borrowing, a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses out the amounts charged so there is no impact on the level of Council Tax.

**xxiv. VALUE ADDED TAX (VAT)**

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

The Council has complied with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, with the exception of its inventory policy as stated above. Despite this departure from the code, management has concluded that the accounts present a true and fair view of the Council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows.

## 2. ACCOUNTING STANDARDS THAT HAVE BEEN ISSUED BUT HAVE NOT YET BEEN ADOPTED

Under the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) the Council is required to disclose information setting out the expected impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new accounting standard that has been issued but not yet adopted. This applies to the adoption of the following new or amended standards within the 2022/23 Code:

- IFRS 1 (First-time adoption) – amendment relates to foreign operations of acquired subsidiaries transitioning to IFRS
- IAS 37 (Onerous contracts) – clarifies the intention of the standard
- IFRS 16 (Leases) – amendment removes a misleading example that is not referenced in the Code material
- IAS 41 (Agriculture) – one of a small number of IFRSs that are only expected to apply to local authorities in limited circumstances.

The Council does not anticipate these changes will have a material impact on its financial statements.

## 3. CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

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

The critical judgements made in the financial statements are:

### **Business Rates**

Since the introduction of the Business Rates Retention Scheme effective from 1st April 2013, the Council is liable for successful appeals against business rates charged to businesses in 2021/22 and earlier financial years in their proportionate share. Therefore, a provision has been recognised for the best estimate of the amount that businesses have been overcharged up to 31st March 2022. The estimate has been calculated using the latest Valuation Office (VOA) ratings list of appeals and the analysis of successful appeals to date when providing the estimate of total provision up to and including 31st March 2022. The Council's share of the balance of business rate appeals provisions held at this date amounted to £2.274m. This has increased by £0.112m from the previous year.

### **Investment Properties**

The Council acquired a commercial property in Wisbech during the 2020/21 financial year. The property is leased to a commercial tenant on a long-term lease. Having obtained and reviewed an independent valuation of the property, the Council is satisfied that the property should be accounted for as an investment property as the Council's residual interest in the property exceeds the value of the Council's net investment in the lease. Had this not been the case the property would have been de-recognised as at 31 March 2021 and a long-term debtor reflecting the value of the Council's net investment in the lease would have been reflected in the Balance Sheet instead.

## **Grants payable as a consequence of Covid 19**

The Council has administered a range of grant schemes linked to the pandemic at the request of government. These schemes have resulted in the Council making payments to both residents living in Fenland and businesses operating in the District. The eligibility criteria relating to each grant scheme vary, as does the extent to which the Council is responsible for determining that eligibility criteria.

Several schemes have a discretionary element where the Council is able to decide the eligibility criteria without requiring approval from government. Where the Council is responsible for determining the eligibility criteria the grants paid out, together with the funding received from government to enable those payments to be made, have been recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account and the associated notes as the Council has determined it is acting as Principal in accordance with the requirements of IFRS 15 and the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

Where the Council has made payments to residents and businesses in accordance with eligibility criteria determined by government, the Council's judgment is that it is acting as an agent. Consequently, the grants paid out, together with the funding received from government to enable those payments to be made, are excluded from the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account and the associated notes.

Within the Balance Sheet amounts owed to or by government where the Council is acting as an agent are disclosed as a creditor and debtor respectively.

## **Group Accounts**

The Council established a wholly-owned subsidiary, Fenland Future Limited ('the company') in June 2020. The Council owns 100% of the company's share capital. During the 2021/22 financial year the company incurred expenditure as part of work to prepare its business plan for consideration and approval by the Council's Investment Board in July 2022. This expenditure was not deemed to be material based on a consideration of both quantitative and qualitative criteria. The company did not generate any turnover from its activities during 2021/22.

As at 31 March 2022 the company had no assets. Its liabilities comprised solely short-term creditors representing amounts owed to the Council in respect of services the Council has provided where the balances owed by the company have not yet been settled. Details of the total creditor balance are provided as part of the related party transactions note to these financial statements (Note 37).

Based upon the information above regarding 2021/22 transactions recognised by the company and its Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2022 the Council has assessed that Fenland Future Limited is not a material component. On this basis Group Accounts have not been prepared.

## **4. ASSUMPTIONS MADE ABOUT THE FUTURE AND OTHER MAJOR SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY**

The financial statements contain estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the Council about the future or that are otherwise uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because

balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates.

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

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment	<p>Depreciation and amortisation are provided for Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangible assets respectively. This enables the assets to be written down to their residual value over their estimated useful lives and show an appropriate cost of the use of the asset in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.</p> <p>Management judgement is used to determine the useful economic lives of the Plant and Equipment. The Council's valuers provide estimates for the useful life of property assets.</p> <p>The methodology for valuing properties at Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC), e.g. Leisure Centres, includes an adjustment for obsolescence as deemed reasonable by the Council's valuers and management</p>	<p>If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the assets falls.</p> <p>It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for buildings would increase by £11k for every year that useful life is reduced.</p> <p>A reduction of 10% in the value of assets valued on the basis of Existing-Use-Value and Fair Value would reduce the carrying value of Investment Property by £666,000 and the value of Property, Plant Equipment by £2.576m. An increase would result in an upward increase by the same amount.</p>
Pensions Liability	<p>Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.</p>	<p>The effects on the net pension's liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For example:</p> <p>(i) a 0.1% decrease in the real discount rate assumption would result in an increase in the pension liability of £3.015m</p> <p>(ii) a 1 year increase in member life expectancy would result in an increase in the pension liability of £6.032m</p> <p>(iii) a 0.1% increase in the salary increase rate would result in an increase in the</p>

		<p>pension liability of £0.284m  (iv) a 0.1% increase in the pension increase rate would result in an increase in the pension liability of £2.708m  However, the assumptions interact in complex ways, so care should be taken when looking at changes in one variable in isolation.</p>
<p>Provision –  Rateable  Value  Appeals</p>	<p>Appeals by non-domestic ratepayers for a reduction in the rateable value of their premises are outstanding. Appeals are determined by the Valuation Office and are not within the Council's control. However, expert independent advice has been sought in arriving at an estimated provision.</p>	<p>The provision is based upon the latest list of outstanding rating list proposals provided by the Valuation Office Agency. It is an estimate based on changes in comparable hereditaments, market trends and other valuation issues, including the potential for certain proposals to be withdrawn. The estimate includes appeals and proposals in respect of live and historic Rating List entries. It does not include any allowance or adjustment for the effects of transition or for changes in liability. The estimated provision is made up of the estimated outcome of appeals calculated by a weighted average of the historic outcomes. It should be noted that the impact on the Council of appeals, as well as other NNDR, is limited by Safety Net calculation (the calculation of which is limited by regulation).</p> <p>A 10% variation in the estimated provision would be £0.5684 million for the Collection Fund of which £0.227 million would be attributable to the General Fund.</p>

## **5. MATERIAL ITEMS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE**

During the 2021/22 financial year the Council received a distribution of funds in the form of two grants with a total value of £3,891,500 from Cambridgeshire Horizons Limited, a company controlled by Cambridgeshire County Council. Whilst the amount received has been recognised as part of gross income in the Growth and Infrastructure Directorate, £3,669,679 has been transferred to an earmarked reserve at the end of the year. Further details can be found in Note 9.

## 6. EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ADJUSTMENTS ANALYSIS

<b>Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2021/22</b>	<b>Adjustments for Capital Purposes (Note i) £000</b>	<b>Net Change for the Pensions Adjustment (Note ii) £000</b>	<b>Other Differences (Note iii) £000</b>	<b>Total Adjustments £000</b>
<b>Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Amounts</b>				
Growth and Infrastructure	600	110	(4,246)	(3,536)
Communities, Environment, Leisure and Planning	5,830	1,428	1,517	8,775
Resources and Customer Services	128	524	(1,936)	(1,284)
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>6,558</b>	<b>2,062</b>	<b>(4,665)</b>	<b>3,955</b>
<b>Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis</b>	<b>(11,024)</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>(217)</b>	<b>(9,701)</b>
<b>Difference between General Fund Surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>(4,466)</b>	<b>3,602</b>	<b>(4,882)</b>	<b>(5,746)</b>

<b>Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2020/21</b>	<b>Adjustments for Capital Purposes (Note i)</b>	<b>Net Change for the Pensions the Pensions Adjustment (Note ii)</b>	<b>Other Differences (Note iii)</b>	<b>Total Adjustments</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Amounts</b>				
Growth and Infrastructure	353	27	(24)	356
Communities, Environment, Leisure and Planning	1,239	440	1,228	2,907
Resources and Customer Services	59	52	(1,455)	(1,344)
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>(251)</b>	<b>1,919</b>
<b>Other Income and Expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis</b>	<b>(5,299)</b>	<b>1,206</b>	<b>(2,121)</b>	<b>(6,214)</b>
<b>Difference between General Fund Surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus on the Provision of Services</b>	<b>(3,648)</b>	<b>1,725</b>	<b>(2,372)</b>	<b>(4,295)</b>

**Note (i): Adjustments for Capital Purposes**

This column adds in depreciation and impairment and revaluation gains and losses in the services line, and for:

**Other Operating Expenditure** – adjusts for capital disposals with a transfer of income on disposal of assets and the amounts written off for those assets.

**Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure** – the statutory charges for capital financing i.e. Minimum Revenue Provision and other revenue contributions are deducted from other income and expenditure as these are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices.

**Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure** – capital grants are adjusted for income not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices. Revenue grants are adjusted from those receivable in the year to those receivable without conditions of for which conditions were satisfied throughout the year. The Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure line is credited with capital grants receivable in the year without conditions or where conditions attached to the grant were satisfied in the year.



## Note (ii): Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments

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

**For 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 CIES.

## Note (iii): Other Differences

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

This includes changes relating to the Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. This includes the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations for Council Tax and NNDR that was projected to be received at the start of the year and the income recognised under generally accepted accounting practices in the Code. This is a timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future surpluses or deficits on the Collection Fund.

Entries included in this column of the above note also identify the impact of internal recharges which are recognised in the year-end position, in accordance with relevant guidance, but do not form part of the outturn position which is presented to management during the year and at the year-end.

## Segmental Income

Fees, charges and other service income is analysed by segment as follows:

<b>Services</b>	<b>2021/22 Income from Services £000</b>	<b>2020/21 Income from Services £000</b>
Growth and Infrastructure	(457)	(202)
Communities, Environment, Leisure and Planning	(5,043)	(4,367)
Resources and Customer Services	(763)	(241)
Financing and Investment Income	(2,262)	(1,955)
<b>Total Fees, charges and other service income</b>	<b>(8,525)</b>	<b>(6,765)</b>

## 7. EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ANALYSED BY NATURE

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

<b><u>Expenditure/Income</u></b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>Restated £000</b>
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>		
Employee Benefits Expenses	17,076	14,911
Other Service Expenses	42,279	37,976
Depreciation, Revaluation, Amortisation and Impairment	245	2,349
Interest Payments	491	497
Precepts and Levies	3,363	3,177
Gain on the Disposal of Assets	(100)	(43)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>63,354</b>	<b>58,867</b>
Fees, Charges and Other Service Income	(8,563)	(6,765)
Interest and Investment Income	(132)	(70)
Income from Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates	(13,754)	(9,375)
Government Grants, Reimbursements and Other Contributions	(46,651)	(46,952)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(69,100)</b>	<b>(63,162)</b>
<b>Surplus on Provision of Services</b>	<b>(5,746)</b>	<b>(4,295)</b>

## **8. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER REGULATION**

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

### **General Fund Balance**

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

### **Capital Receipts Reserve**

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

### **Capital Grants Unapplied Account**

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

2021/22	Usable Reserves			
	General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in Unusable Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:</b>				
<b><u>Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u></b>				
Charges for depreciation of non-current assets	1,834	0	0	(1,834)
Deficit arising from revaluation and impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment	106	0	0	(106)
Movements in the market value of Investment Properties	(1,704)	0	0	1,704
Amortisation of intangible assets	9	0	0	(9)
Capital grants and contributions that have been applied to capital financing	(4,539)	0	0	4,539
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	8,391	0	0	(8,391)
<b><u>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u></b>				
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment	(366)	0	0	366
Capital expenditure charged against General Fund Balance	(584)	0	0	584
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:</b>				
Transfer of sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(100)	100	0	0
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new Capital expenditure	0	(106)	0	106
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account:</b>				
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(8,097)	0	8,097	0
Capital Grants Unapplied applied to Financing of Capital Expenditure	0	0	(4,709)	4,709

2021/22	Usable Reserves			
	General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in Unusable Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Pooled Investments Fund Adjustment Account:</b>				
Movement in the fair value of Pooled Funds credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(65)	0	0	65
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account:</b>				
Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in	(15)	0	0	15
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the LGPS Pensions Reserve:</b>				
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	6,037	0	0	(6,037)
Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(2,435)	0	0	2,435
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:</b>				
Amount by which Council Tax and non-domestic rating income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from the Council Tax and non-domestic rating income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(3,892)	0	0	3,892
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absences Account:</b>				
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 requirement	(59)	0	0	59
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>(5,479)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	<b>3,388</b>	<b>2,097</b>

2020/21	Usable Reserves			
	General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in Unusable Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Adjustment Account:</b>				
<b><u>Reversal of items debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u></b>				
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	1,743	0	0	(1,743)
Revaluation Surplus on Property, Plant and Equipment	332	0	0	(332)
Movements in the market value of Investment Properties	264	0	0	(264)
Amortisation of intangible assets	9	0	0	(9)
Capital grants and contributions that have been applied to capital financing	(1,621)	0	0	1,621
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	1,289	0	0	(1,289)
<b><u>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</u></b>				
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment Capital expenditure charged against General Fund Balance	(349)	0	0	349
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Receipts Reserve:</b>	(760)	0	0	760
Transfer of sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(43)	43	0	0
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new Capital expenditure	0	(37)	0	37

2020/21	Usable Reserves			
	General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in Unusable Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Capital Grants Unapplied Account:</b>				
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(5,623)	0	5,623	0
Capital Grants Unapplied applied to Financing of Capital Expenditure	0	0	(7)	7
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the LGPS Pensions Reserve:</b>				
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	4,110	0	0	(4,110)
Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(2,384)	0	0	2,384
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Collection Fund Adjustment Account:</b>				
Amount by which Council Tax and non-domestic rating income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from the Council Tax and non-domestic rating income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	3,786	0	0	(3,786)
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Accumulated Absences Account:</b>				
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	279	0	0	(279)
<b>Adjustments primarily involving the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account:</b>				
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	(18)	0	0	18
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>1,014</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5,616</b>	<b>(6,636)</b>

## 9. TRANSFERS TO/(FROM) EARMARKED RESERVES

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund Balance in Earmarked Reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from Earmarked Reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2021/22.

	Note	Balance at 1 April 2020	Movements in year		Balance at 31 March 2021	Movements in year		Balance at 31 March 2022
			Receipts	Applied		Receipts	Applied	
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Travellers Sites	1	322	4	0	326	62	0	388
Maintenance -Station Road, Whittlesey	2	2	3	0	5	3	0	8
CCTV	3	48	10	(37)	21	10	0	31
Invest to Save	4	84	32	(13)	103	0	(103)	0
Management of Change Reserve	5	948	0	(146)	802	0	(307)	495
Specific Grants Reserve	6	1,070	1,408	(244)	2,234	183	(1,178)	1,239
Local Government Resource Review	7	721	3,433	(7)	4,147	1,287	(3,418)	2,016
Capital Contribution Reserve	8	341	463	(489)	315	0	(180)	135
Port – Buoy Maintenance	9	147	0	0	147	0	0	147
Repairs & Maintenance Reserve	10	637		(74)	563	80	(98)	545
Wisbech High St HLF Reserve	11	114	0	(33)	81	0	(29)	52
Solid Wall Remediation	12	100	0	0	100	0	0	100
Street Lighting	13	24	6	0	30	17	0	47
Investment Strategy Reserve	14	1,350	0	(10)	1,340	0	0	1,340
Budget Equalisation Reserve	15	315	167	0	482	584	0	1,066
Planning Reserve	16	497	0	(106)	391	10	(118)	283
Covid 19	17	43	0	(43)	0	0	0	0
Election Reserve	18	0	30	0	30	30	0	60
Covid Local Authority Support Grants	19	0	741	0	741	0	(298)	443
Council Tax Hardship Fund	20	0	36	0	36	0	(32)	4
Pilots Development Training	21	0	24	0	24	0	0	24
National Leisure Recovery Plan	22	0	154	0	154	0	(154)	0
Council Tax Energy Rebate	23	0	0	0	0	217	0	217
Cambridgeshire Horizons Reserve	24	0	0	0	0	3,891	(192)	3,699
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,763</b>	<b>6,511</b>	<b>(1,202)</b>	<b>12,072</b>	<b>6,374</b>	<b>(6,107)</b>	<b>12,339</b>



## **Notes**

1. The Travellers Sites Reserve is used to fund future maintenance programmes.
2. The Station Road, Whittlesey Reserve was set up in 2004/05 to finance future maintenance costs in relation to the un-adopted estate road. Contributions are received annually from the Companies who have purchased the freehold of individual sites.
3. CCTV Reserve is to provide for future plant and equipment requirements.
4. The Invest to Save Reserve was set up for services to “borrow” from in order to finance ways of producing savings.
5. The Management of Change Reserve was established for the effective management of any organisational changes required to meet the Council’s future priorities.
6. Specific grants received in year but not spent. Balance available to fund specific spending commitments in future years.
7. The Local Government Resource Review Reserve was established to assist the Council in delivering the localisation of council tax support and business rates retention from 2013/14. Transfers to and from this reserve in 2020/21 and 2021/22 reflect the impact of the significant grants received by the Council to fund the award of business rate relief to businesses impacted by the Coronavirus. The impact of awarding this relief is reflected in the Collection Fund. The balance on this reserve has been used to mitigate the impact of recognising the Council’s share of the Collection Fund deficit in the General Fund.
8. The Capital Contributions Reserve was set-up to provide funding for future capital schemes.
9. The Port Buoy Maintenance Reserve was established to provide funding for future buoy maintenance to windfarms.
10. The Repairs and Maintenance Reserve was established in 2016/17 to provide funding for one-off schemes, not covered by the normal Repairs and Maintenance revenue budgets.
11. The Wisbech High Street Heritage Lottery Fund Reserve was established in 2017/18 to facilitate work on grant-funded projects on buildings located in Wisbech High Street.
12. The Solid Wall Remediation Reserve has been established in 2018/19 to fund potential costs linked to solid wall installations in the District.
13. The Street Lighting Reserve has been established in 2018/9 to fund future repairs and maintenance relating to street lighting.
14. The Investment Strategy Reserve was established following a meeting of Cabinet held in January 2020. The purpose of the reserve is to enable the Council to take forward projects approved in accordance with the Council’s Commercial and Investment Strategy.
15. The Budget Equalisation Reserve was established in January 2020. The purpose of the reserve is hold surpluses achieved in previous financial years so that these are available to cover deficits returned in future years should the Council wish to do so.

16. The Planning Reserve was established in January 2020 using balances held previously in the Local Plan Reserve and the Neighbourhood Planning Reserve.
17. The Covid 19 Reserve was established in March 2020 to hold ring-fenced funding received from central government and the County Council from March 2020 onwards to cover some of the costs associated with the Council's response to the Covid 19 pandemic. The Council has been notified that funds held in this reserve can continue to be used during the 2022/23 financial year providing funds are deployed in line with the relevant grant determinations published by government.
18. The Elections Reserve was established in 2020/21 to fund the cost of future District Council elections.
19. The Covid Local Authority Support Grants reserve held money received from government to support local business which had not been paid out as at 31 March 2021. The balance was paid out over the course of the 2021/22 financial year.
20. The Council Tax Hardship Fund reserve holds money received from government to assist Council Taxpayers experiencing hardship linked to the Covid 19 pandemic. Most of the balance carried forward at 1 April 2021 was distributed by the Council during the 2021/22 financial year. There is a small balance which is due to be distributed in the 2022/23 financial year.
21. The Pilots Development Training reserve holds money to be utilised in future years to fund the training of maritime pilots to fulfil the authority's statutory functions.
22. The National Leisure Recovery Plan reserve holds the balance of funding the Council received to assist its leisure operator with costs linked to the re-opening of its leisure centres when restrictions linked to the Covid 19 pandemic were eased. The balance was utilised during the 2021/22 financial year.
23. The Council Tax Energy Rebate reserve was set up in the 2021/22 financial year. It contains funds received from government for the purpose of making payments, on a discretionary basis, to households impacted by the increase in energy prices in accordance with a policy introduced by central government in February 2022. The Council expects to utilise this reserve in full during the 2022/23 financial year.
24. The Cambridgeshire Horizons reserve was set up in the 2021/22 after the Council received a distribution from Cambridgeshire Horizons Limited. The funds received are to be used to make a contribution towards the cost of improvements to the A14 and to contribute to sustainable development and infrastructure improvements in Fenland.

## 10. OTHER OPERATING EXPENDITURE

	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£000</b>
Parish Council Precepts	1,449	1,444
Drainage Board Levies	1,594	1,499
Loss/(Gain) on the Disposal of Non-Current Assets	(100)	(43)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,943</b>	<b>2,900</b>

## 11. FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£000</b>
Deficit on Trading Accounts	1,212	1,001
Interest payable and similar charges	491	497
Interest on the net defined pension liability	1,356	1,147
Interest receivable and similar income	(131)	(70)
Income and expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value	(1,998)	198
<b>Total</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>2,773</b>

## 12. TAXATION AND NON-SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME

	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£000</b>
Council Tax income	(9,393)	(9,159)
Net share of business rate income	(4,101)	(38)
Non-ring-fenced Government grants	(4,394)	(8,452)
Capital grants and contributions	(9,063)	(5,992)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(26,951)</b>	<b>(23,641)</b>

### 13. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Movements in 2021/22:

	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	Asset Under Construction	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>						
At 1 April 2021	38,008	18,098	212	1,389	3,497	26,204
Additions	612	768	1,072	0	0	2,452
Revaluation Surplus/(Deficit) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	1,905	0	0	0	256	2,161
Revaluation Surplus/(Deficit) recognised in the Deficit on the Provision of Services	(76)	0	0	0	37	(39)
Transfers	(160)	0	160	0	0	0
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>40,289</b>	<b>18,866</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>3,790</b>	<b>65,778</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment</b>						
At 1 April 2021	(947)	(13,543)	0	0	0	(14,490)
Depreciation charge	(354)	(1,025)	0	0	0	(1,379)
Impairments	(68)	0	0	0	0	(68)
Depreciation charge to the Revaluation Reserve	(160)	0	0	0	0	(160)
Depreciation charge written out to the Revaluation Reserve	775	0	0	0	0	775
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>(754)</b>	<b>(14,568)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(15,322)</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>						
<b>At 31 March 2022</b>	<b>39,535</b>	<b>4,298</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>3,790</b>	<b>50,456</b>
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>37,061</b>	<b>4,555</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>46,714</b>

Comparative Movements in 2020/21:

	Other Land & Buildings	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	Asset Under Construction	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>						
At 1 April 2020	35,995	17,187	200	1,477	3,437	58,296
Additions	364	911	12	0	0	1,287
Revaluation Surplus/(Deficit) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	1,411	0	0	0	455	1,866
Revaluation Surplus/(Deficit) recognised in the Deficit on the Provision of Services	(36)	0	0	0	15	(21)
Transfers	293	0	0	0	(410)	(117)
Disposals	(19)	0	0	0	0	(19)
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>38,008</b>	<b>18,098</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1,477</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>61,292</b>
<b>Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment</b>						
At 1 April 2020	(401)	(12,595)	0	(88)	0	(13,084)
Depreciation charge	(367)	(948)	0	0	0	(1,315)
Impairments	(305)	0	0	0	0	(305)
Depreciation charge to the Revaluation Reserve	(134)	0	0	0	0	(134)
Depreciation charge written out to the Revaluation Reserve	260	0	0	0	0	260
Depreciation charge written out in respect of Disposals	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>(947)</b>	<b>(13,543)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(88)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(14,578)</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>						
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>37,061</b>	<b>4,555</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>3,497</b>	<b>46,714</b>
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>35,594</b>	<b>4,592</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>3,437</b>	<b>45,212</b>

## **Fair Value Hierarchy**

All the Council's surplus assets and investment properties have been assessed as Level 2 on the fair value hierarchy for valuation purposes (see accounting policy note 1 viii for an explanation of the fair value levels).

## **Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 2 Fair Values for Surplus Assets and Investment Properties**

The fair value of surplus assets and investment properties have been measured using a market approach, which takes into account quoted prices for similar assets in active markets, existing lease terms and rentals, research into market evidence including market rentals and yields, the covenant strength for existing tenants, and data and market knowledge gained in managing the Council's asset portfolio. Market conditions are such that similar properties are actively purchased and sold and the level of observable inputs are significant, leading to the properties being categorised as level 2 on the fair value hierarchy.

There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for surplus assets or investment properties

## **Highest and Best Use**

In ascertaining the fair value of the Council's surplus assets and investment properties the ultimate aim is to arrive at the notional 'Highest and Best use value' for the asset either as a stand-alone asset or in combination with other assets within the principal market whilst ensuring that any alternative use is physically, legally and financially possible.

This has been achieved, for these purposes, by comparing the 'current use' of the asset to the notional 'alternative use' based on potential redevelopment on a land value basis for the site(s).

## **Valuation Process for Investment Properties**

The Council's investment properties have been valued as at 1 April 2021 by Wilks Head & Eve in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Management obtained a market review from Wilks Head & Eve in April 2022. This indicated that relevant market data indicated that the value of the Council's Investment Properties was likely to have increased by a material amount between 1 April 2021 on 31 March 2022. Management has reviewed in detail the valuations provided in respect of the investment properties recognised in the Council's Balance Sheet and made an appropriate allowance to reflect anticipated changes in the value of each asset. The increases applied range from 0% to 15%.

## Depreciation

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

- Other Land and Buildings – Up to 55 years (Land is not depreciated)
- Vehicles, Plant, Furniture & Equipment – 5-20 years
- Infrastructure – Up to 40 years

## Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2022 the Council had contractual capital commitments of £1.036m (31 March 2021 £0.683m).

## Revaluations

A full re-valuation of all assets valued at current value or fair value was undertaken as at 1 April 2020. All assets required to be valued at current value are re-valued at least every 5 years. The Council also instructs its valuers to undertake an annual valuation, as at 1<sup>st</sup> April each year of all assets considered to be materially significant in the context of the Council's overall property portfolio. This includes all assets valued on the basis of fair value in accordance with IFRS13.

All valuations were carried out externally by Wilks Head & Eve in accordance with the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The basis for valuations is set out in the accounting policies, Note 1 of the financial statements.

Additionally, the Council instructs its valuers annually to undertake a market review of all land and property assets, to ensure that the carrying value of those assets is not materially different from their fair value at the end of the reporting period.

In April 2022, having considered the market review provided by the Council's valuers, management determined that some adjustments to the valuations provided as at 1 April 2021 would be required to ensure the valuation of land and property owned by the Council as at 31 March 2022 would not be materially misstated. The following approach was adopted:

- The market review indicated that movement in the relevant industry indices meant the Council's four leisure centres had potentially increased in value by a material amount between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 2022. Updated valuations, reflecting the value as at 31 March 2022, were obtained from the Council's external valuer. The valuations provided were incorporated into the Council's Balance Sheet
- The market review observed that there had been significant increases in the value of industrial assets and developable land between 1 April 2021 and 31 March 20122. Management has reviewed in detail the valuations provided in respect of the assets it holds in this category and made an appropriate allowance to reflect anticipated changes in the value of each asset. The increases applied range from 0% to 15%.

The following table analyses the Council's Property, Plant and Equipment according to when it was last revalued. It includes those assets held at historical cost valuation in accordance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Accounting Practice. All other assets have been revalued in accordance with the process explained above.

	<b>Land &amp; Buildings £000</b>	<b>Infrastructure Assets £000</b>	<b>Community Assets £000</b>	<b>Vehicles, Plant &amp; Equipment £000</b>	<b>Surplus Assets £000</b>	<b>Total £000</b>
Valued at historical cost	0	5,439	1,389	4,298	0	11,126
Valued at current/fair value as at:						
31 March 2021	2,796	0	0	0	0	2,796
31 March 2022	36,739	0	0	0	3,790	40,529
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,535</b>	<b>5,439</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>4,298</b>	<b>3,790</b>	<b>54,451</b>

## 16. INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

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

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

	<b>2021/22 £000</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>
Balance at start of the year	5,064	4,957
Additions	669	401
Depreciation	(294)	(294)
<b>Balance at end of the year</b>	<b>5,439</b>	<b>5,064</b>

## 17. INVESTMENT PROPERTY

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

	<b>2021/22 £000</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>
Rental income from investment property	(294)	(66)
Loss/(Gain) on revaluation of investment property	(1,704)	264
<b>Net (Gain)/Loss</b>	<b>(1,998)</b>	<b>198</b>



There are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Council's right to the remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property or carry out repairs, maintenance or enhancement. The following table summarises the movement in the fair value of investment properties over the year:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Balance at start of the year	4,954	1,402
Transfers from Property, Plant and Equipment	0	117
Additions	0	3,699
Net gain/(loss) from fair value adjustments	1,704	(264)
<b>Balance at end of the year</b>	<b>6,658</b>	<b>4,954</b>

### Fair Value Hierarchy

All the Council's investment properties have been assessed as Level 2 on the fair value hierarchy for valuation purposes (see accounting policy note 1 viii and note 13 to the core financial statements for an explanation of the fair value levels).

## 18. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Purchased software licences are held for a variety of IT systems. All software is given a 5-year finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be used by the Council and to be consistent with the general policy for all capitalised IT purchases.

The carrying amount of intangible assets is amortised on a straight-line basis in line with the Council's general depreciation/amortisation policy. The amortisation of £9,564 charged to revenue in 2021/22 is charged to the IT cost centre and then absorbed as an overhead across all service headings in the Net Cost of Services. It is not possible to quantify exactly how much of the amortisation is attributable to each service heading.

The movement on Intangible Asset balances during the year is as follows:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Balance at start of year</b>		
Gross Carrying amount	<b>1,498</b>	<b>1,498</b>
Accumulated amortisation	(1,484)	(1,474)
<b>Net carrying amount at start of year</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>
Additions	72	0
Amortisation for the year	(9)	(10)
<b>Net carrying amount at end of year</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Comprising:</b>		
Gross carrying amounts	1,570	1,498
Accumulated amortisation	<b>(1,493)</b>	<b>(1,484)</b>

## 19. LONG TERM DEBTORS

Long term debtors which fall due after a period of at least one year:

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Mortgages	48	49
Private sector housing improvement loans	228	217
Employee car loans	103	104
Other	0	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>387</b>

## 20. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

### Categories of financial instruments

The following categories of financial instruments are carried in the Balance Sheet:

	<b>Carrying amount</b>	
	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Financial liabilities</b>		
<b>(Measured at Amortised Cost)</b>		
Long Term Liabilities	(7,800)	(7,800)
Short Term Borrowings	(36)	(36)
Creditors	(6,996)	(5,056)
	<b>14,832</b>	<b>(12,892)</b>

<b>Financial Assets</b>		
<b>(Fair Value Through Profit &amp; loss)</b>		
Long Term Investments	4,066	0
<b>(Measured at Amortised Cost)</b>		
Debtors	6,903	3,303
Cash & Cash Equivalents	20,935	17,965
Investments	10,006	5,002
	<b>41,910</b>	<b>26,270</b>

## Income, expense, gains and losses

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

	<b>Financial Liabilities</b>	<b>Financial Assets</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>31 March 2022 £000</b>	<b>31 March 2022 £000</b>	<b>31 March 2022 £000</b>
<b>Gains on Investments</b>			
Fair value through profit and loss	0	(65)	<b>(65)</b>
<b>Amortised Cost</b>			
Interest Income – soft loans	0	(11)	<b>(11)</b>
Interest and Investment Income	0	(55)	<b>(55)</b>
Increase in allowance for expected credit losses	0	318	<b>318</b>
Interest payable and similar charges	491	0	<b>491</b>
Net loss for year	<u>491</u>	<u>187</u>	<b>678</b>

	<b>Financial Liabilities</b>	<b>Financial Assets</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>31 March 2021 £000</b>	<b>31 March 2021 £000</b>	<b>31 March 2021 £000</b>
Interest Income – soft loans	0	(15)	<b>(15)</b>
Interest and Investment Income	0	(55)	<b>(55)</b>
Increase in allowance for expected credit losses	0	532	<b>532</b>
Interest payable and similar charges	497	0	<b>497</b>
Net loss for year	<u>497</u>	<u>462</u>	<b>959</b>

Realised and unrealised gains and losses, interest and other items of income and expense are accounted for in the financial year to which they relate and are shown at actual value paid or received.

The increase in the allowance for expected credit losses reflects the additional amount required in the year which is chargeable to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

## 21. FAIR VALUE OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Units held within pooled investment funds are measured at fair value in the balance sheet on a recurring basis with reference to unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical units.

For financial liabilities and financial assets (loans and receivables) which are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their Fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that take place over the remaining life of the instruments

(level 2 on the fair value hierarchy, see accounting policy note 1 viii), using the following assumptions:

- No early repayment or impairment is recognised
- Where an instrument will mature in the next 12 months, the carrying amount is assumed to approximate to the fair value
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.
- For loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB), new borrowing rates have been applied from the PWLB to provide fair value disclosures at the balance sheet date. As an alternative, the Debt Management Office provides a fair value valuation under PWLB debt redemption procedures calculated without undertaking a repayment or transfer.
- For other market debt, PWLB (new certainty) prevailing market rates have been applied to provide the fair value disclosures at the balance sheet date.

As at 31 March 2022 the Council held £37.844m financial assets and £14.832m liabilities for which level 3 valuations will not apply. All the financial assets, excluding investments in pooled funds, are classed as loans and receivables and held within Notice Accounts. The financial liabilities are held with PWLB and market lenders. All of these investments and borrowings were not quoted on an active market and a Level 1 valuation is not available. To provide a fair value which provides a comparison to the carrying amount, for all long-term liabilities we have used a financial model valuation provided by Link Asset Services. This valuation applies the net present value approach, which provides an estimate of the value of payments in the future in today's terms as at the balance sheet date. This is a widely accepted valuation technique commonly used by the private sector. Our accounting policy uses new borrowing rates to discount the future cash flows.

In accordance with advice received from Link Asset Services the fair value of all financial instruments classified as being short-term in the balance sheet has been assumed to be the same as the book value.

	<b>Carrying Amount 31 March 2022</b>	<b>Fair Value 31 March 2022</b>	<b>Carrying Amount 31 March 2021</b>	<b>Fair Value 31 March 2021</b>
	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Financial liabilities</b>				
Long Term Liabilities	(7,800)	(11,072)	(7,800)	(12,012)
Short Term Borrowing	(36)	(36)	(36)	(36)
Creditors	(6,996)	(6,996)	(5,056)	(5,056)
	<u>(14,832)</u>	<u>(18,104)</u>	<u>(12,892)</u>	<u>(17,104)</u>
<b>Financial Assets</b>				
Long Term Investment	4,066	4,066	0	0
Total Debtors	6,903	6,903	3,303	3,303
Cash & Cash	20,935	20,935	17,965	17,965
Equivalents				
Investments	10,006	10,006	5,002	5,002
	<u>41,910</u>	<u>41,910</u>	<u>26,270</u>	<u>26,270</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>27,078</u></b>	<b><u>23,806</u></b>	<b><u>13,378</u></b>	<b><u>9,166</u></b>

The fair value of long-term liabilities are greater than the carrying amount due to the Council's portfolio of loans consisting of a number of fixed rate loans, where the interest payable is higher than the rates available for similar loans at the Balance Sheet date. The fair value of creditors is taken to be the invoiced amount.

The Council has a continuing ability to borrow at concessionary rates from the PWLB rather than from the markets, termed the PWLB Certainty interest rates. As a result of its PWLB commitments for fixed rate loans a comparison of the terms of these loans with the new borrowing rates available from the PWLB has been used to calculate the fair value. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £4.532m would be valued at £6.250m. But, if the Council were to seek to avoid the projected loss by repaying the loans to the PWLB, the PWLB would raise a penalty charge, based on the redemption interest rates, for early redemption of £2.130m for the additional interest that will not now be paid. The exit price for the PWLB loans including the penalty charge would be £6.662m.

This redemption charge is a supplementary measure of the fair value of the PWLB loans of £6.662m. It measures the economic effect of the terms agreed with the PWLB compared with estimates of the terms that would be offered for market transactions undertaken at the Balance Sheet date, which has been assumed as the PWLB redemption interest rates. The difference between the carrying amount and the fair value, measures the additional interest that the Council will pay over the remaining terms of the loans under the agreements with the PWLB, against what would be paid if the loans were at prevailing market rates.

## **22. NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

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

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

### **How the Council Manages These Risks**

The Council's overall risk management programme focus on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the resources available to fund services. Risk management is carried out by a central treasury team, under policies approved by the Council in the annual treasury management strategy. The Council provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as written policies covering specific areas, such as interest rate risk, credit risk and the investment of surplus cash.

#### ***Credit Risk***

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

The risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria, in accordance with the Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors Credit Ratings

Services. In addition, the Investment strategy also limits maximum amounts and time limits to be deposited in respect of each financial institution. Additional selection criteria are also applied after this initial criteria is applied. Full details of the Investment Strategy can be found on the Council's website.

Deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they meet the minimum criteria laid out within the creditworthiness service provided by Capita Asset Services (see Annual Investment Strategy). A maximum of £5m is allowed to be invested (£10m with the Council's approved bank) within any one approved institution for up to 5 years. Unlimited overnight investments levels are allowed with the Council's approved bank.

At 31 March 2022 there was a maximum of £5m with approved counterparties and a maximum of 2 times this limit may be invested in total with counterparties belonging to the same group. In light of the above investment strategy, the Council considers that it has taken all reasonable steps to reduce to a minimum any exposure to credit risks in relation to investments at 31 March 2022 and that any residual risk cannot be quantified.

The following table shows the original sums of investments at 31 March analysed by the nature of financial institution and remaining period to maturity.

<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>Maturity Bands</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>Less than 3 Months</b>	<b>3 Months to 6 Months</b>	<b>6 Months to 1 year</b>	
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	
Banks	5,050	7,000	3,000	15,050
Building Societies	16,800	0	0	16,800
Local Authorities	0	0	0	0
	<b>21,850</b>	<b>7,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>31,850</b>

<b>31 March 2021</b>	<b>Maturity Bands</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>Less than 3 Months</b>	<b>3 Months to 6 Months</b>	<b>6 Months to 1 year</b>	
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	
Banks	10,000	5,000	0	15,000
Building Societies	7,000	0	0	7,000
Local Authorities	2,000	0	0	2,000
	<b>19,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24,000</b>

In addition to the above, the Council has investments in financial assets held at fair value through profit and loss, as detailed at note 19, which do not have a defined maturity date.

The simplified approach is used to determine the provision for expected credit losses for trade debtors. A matrix is used to determine the appropriate level of provision. The likelihood of a debtor not fulfilling their obligations is assessed based on the Council's experience of securing payment in previous financial years for debt where the credit period had been exceeded adjusted to reflect the Council's understanding of how economic

trends expected to prevail over the medium-term may impact on the prospect of the Council securing the payments due.

For financial assets not classified as a trade debtor, the provision for expected credit losses is based upon an assessment of the extent to which credit risk associated with individual assets has increased since initial recognition. The following factors are taken into account:

- the Council normally only allows counterparties credit of 14 days. If this period has been exceeded without contact from the counterparty this is likely to be indicative of an increase in the credit risk associated with the financial asset;
- the Council permits some customers to pay off their outstanding balance in instalments. If two or more instalments have been missed this is likely to be indicative of an increase in the credit risk associated with the financial asset; and
- the Council regularly reviews outstanding balances to determine if circumstances have arisen which make the debt eligible for write-off in accordance with the Council's policy on write-offs. Write-offs are approved promptly and arrangements are in place to ensure outstanding proposals for write-off are actioned prior to each Balance Sheet date.

The changes in the loss allowance during the year analysed according to the method using to calculate the expected credit loss is shown in the table below:

	<b>12-Month Expected Credit Losses</b>	<b>Lifetime Expected Credit Losses – Not Credit Impaired</b>	<b>Lifetime Expected Credit Losses – Simplified Approach</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Opening Balance at 1 April 2021</b>	421	200	82	703
New Financial Assets Originated or Purchased	179	0	0	179
Amounts Written Off	0	0	(40)	(40)
Changes in Model/ Risk Parameters	16	0	145	161
<b>As at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>1,003</b>

	<b>12-Month Expected Credit Losses</b>	<b>Lifetime Expected Credit Losses – Not Credit Impaired</b>	<b>Lifetime Expected Credit Losses – Simplified Approach</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Opening Balance at 1 April 2020</b>	0	293	62	355
New Financial Assets Originated or Purchased	0	0	0	0
Amounts Written Off	0	(74)	(9)	(83)
Changes in Model/ Risk Parameters	421	(19)	29	431
<b>As at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>703</b>

The Council has the following exposure to credit risk at 31 March 2022

<b>Basis for Calculation of Expected Credit Loss</b>	<b>Gross Carrying Amount 31 March 2022 £000</b>	<b>Gross Carrying Amount 31 March 2021 £000</b>
12-Month Expected Credit Losses	4,796	1,797
Lifetime Expected Credit Losses – Not Credit Impaired	200	200
Lifetime Expected Credit Losses – Simplified Approach	1,907	1,306

### **Liquidity Risk**

As the Council has ready access to borrowings from the PWLB, it does not face any significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments.

The Council recognises that if it were to sell the units it holds in property funds typically there would be a delay before the Council was able to receive the associated cash as it would usually be necessary to identify a purchaser on the secondary markets. This has not been assessed as a significant risk as the Council considers its investment in property funds to be a long-term investment and, as explained above, the Council has ready access to PWLB to fund its immediate liquidity needs.

All financial liabilities as at 31 March 2022 are due within one year, apart from long term borrowings and finance lease liabilities. The maturity analysis of long-term borrowing is as follows:

	<b>31 March 2022 £000</b>	<b>31 March 2021 £000</b>
Between 5 and 10 years	4,500	2,000
Between 10 and 15 years	0	2,500
Between 30 and 35 years	3,300	3,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,800</b>	<b>7,800</b>

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

### **Market Risk**

The Council has placed funds in two pooled property funds. The valuation of each property fund is updated at least quarterly in accordance with independent professional valuations of the property assets held by each fund. The valuation of property depends on market conditions and consequently the value of the Council's holding is subject to increase or decrease. The value of the fund does not necessarily impact on the returns the Council receives as returns are based on rents collected by managers of the property fund. Those rents reflect lease agreements and the terms on which rent reviews and/or early termination of leases are available to tenants will vary according to the detail set out in each lease agreement. The fund manager has responsibility for balancing the level of risk to which its investors are exposed taking account of a range of considerations including



the degree of exposure to different sectors of the property market, types of tenants and the length of unexpired leases.

The Council intends to retain its investment in pooled property funds over the long-term. This reduces the risk that the Council might receive a smaller amount than it originally invested when the units held are sold as the Council has sufficient flexibility to determine when to exit the market based on forecast market conditions and advice from its external treasury advisors.

The Council is exposed to minimal risk in respect of adverse interest rate movements in its investments. This is because fixed rate investments are of less than one year in duration and the changes to fair value will be minimal. The Council does, however, utilise “call accounts” for short term deposits and the interest rate on these accounts move in line with the bank base rate. In general terms, a rise in interest rates would have the following effects:

- Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise; and
- Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall.

The Council’s treasury management officers play a pro-active role in assessing interest rate exposure that feeds into the Council’s annual budget setting process and which is used to revise budget projections as necessary during the financial year. The assessment procedures indicate that if interest rates were one percentage point higher, with all other variables held constant, the effect in 2021/22 would have been an increase in income of £14,000 (£90,000 increase in 2020/21).

The impact of a one percentage point fall in interest rates would be the reverse of the net effect identified in the table above. The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting 2021/22 suggests a sensitivity analysis of one percentage point.

## 23. INVENTORIES

	<b>Total (General &amp; Vehicle)</b>	
	<b>2021/22 £000</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>
<b>Balance outstanding at start of year</b>	65	53
Purchases	427	343
Recognised as an expense in the year	(394)	(331)
<b>Balance outstanding at year-end</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>65</b>

## 24. SHORT TERM DEBTORS

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Central Government bodies	1,695	4,386
Trade Receivables	1,420	914
Other	6,701	4,675
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,816</b>	<b>9,975</b>

Each line item is presented net of a provision for expected credit losses. Details of the Council's approach to determining the level of provision required is explained in Note 19 to the financial statements.

## 25. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

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

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Cash held by the Council	21,861	19,002
Bank Current Accounts	(926)	(1,037)
<b>Total Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>	<b>20,935</b>	<b>17,965</b>

## 24. SHORT TERM CREDITORS

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Central Government bodies	3,739	8,556
Trade	3,088	2,200
Other entities and individuals	4,114	3,023
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,941</b>	<b>13,779</b>

The Council has received a number of developer's contributions that have yet to be recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them that require the monies to be returned to the giver if not used as prescribed. This liability is included within the 'Other Entities and Individuals' category in the table above at a value of £2,049,981 (2020/21 £1,927,291).

## 25. RECEIPTS IN ADVANCE

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Central Government Bodies	8,120	618
Council Tax receipts in advance	235	262
Business Rates receipts in advance	285	141
Trade	77	78
Garden Waste receipts in advance	753	699
Other	1	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,471</b>	<b>1,828</b>

## 26. PROVISIONS

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Balance at 1 April	2,352	1,671
Additional Provision	599	952
Utilised in Year	(659)	(271)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>2,292</b>	<b>2,352</b>

Included within Provisions are amounts set aside to meet potential future liabilities for Business Rates Appeals and amounts set aside in respect of exit packages associated with decisions taken by the Council prior to 31 March 2022.

## 27. USABLE RESERVES

Movements in the Council's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement and notes 8 and 9 of the financial statements.

## 28. UNUSABLE RESERVES

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Revaluation Reserve	21,834	19,058
Capital Adjustment Account	33,716	31,887
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	(270)	(285)
Pensions Reserve LGPS	(47,813)	(68,044)
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	(271)	(4,162)
Accumulated Absences Account	(430)	(491)
Pooled Funds Adjustment Account	65	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,831</b>	<b>(22,037)</b>

## Revaluation Reserve

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

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

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

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>19,058</b>	<b>17,082</b>
Upward revaluation of assets	3,899	3,732
Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus on the Provision of Services	(963)	(1,618)
Surplus on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus on the Provision of Services	2,936	2,114
Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	(160)	(134)
Accumulated gains on assets transferred, sold or scrapped	0	(4)
Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account	(160)	(138)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>21,834</b>	<b>19,058</b>

## Capital Adjustment Account

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

The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties that have yet to be consumed by the Council.

The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains. Note 8 of the financial statements provide details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>31,887</b>	<b>32,613</b>
Charges for depreciation of non-current assets	(1,834)	(1,743)
(Deficit)/Surplus arising from revaluation and impairment of Property, Plant and Equipment	(106)	(332)
Amortisation of intangible assets	(9)	(10)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(8,391)	(1,289)
Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	160	134
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	106	37
Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	4,539	1,621
Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	4,709	7
Transfer from Revaluation Reserve in respect of Non-Current assets transfers and assets sold or scrapped	0	4
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund Balance	367	349
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund Balance	584	760
Movements in the market value of Investment Properties credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	1,704	(264)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>33,716</b>	<b>31,887</b>

## Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for income and expenses relating to certain financial instruments and for bearing losses or benefiting from gains per statutory provisions.

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>(285)</b>	<b>(303)</b>
Proportion of premiums incurred in previous financial years to be charged against the General Fund Balance in accordance with statutory requirements	15	19
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	(1)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(270)</b>	<b>(285)</b>

## Pension Reserve – Local Government Pension Scheme

The Pension Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Council accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require a benefit 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 the benefits come to be paid.

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>(68,044)</b>	<b>(49,115)</b>
Re-measurements of the net defined benefit liability	23,833	(17,204)
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(6,037)	(4,110)
Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	2,435	2,385
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(47,813)</b>	<b>(68,044)</b>

## Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of Council Tax and non-domestic rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from council tax and business rate payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>(4,162)</b>	<b>(376)</b>
Amount by which council tax and non-domestic rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and non-domestic rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	3,891	(3,786)
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(271)</b>	<b>(4,162)</b>

## Accumulated Absences Account

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

	2021/22 £000	£000	2020/21 £000	£000
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>(491)</b>		<b>(212)</b>	
Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	491		212	
Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	(430)		(491)	
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		<b>(430)</b>		<b>(491)</b>
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>		<b>(430)</b>		<b>(491)</b>

## Pooled Fund Adjustment Account

In accordance with accounting standards, movements in the fair value of the Council's interest in pooled investment funds are required to be recognised in the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account. However, statutory requirements mean that any increase or decrease in the fair value cannot be recognised as part of the General Fund balance. Consequently, the Pooled Fund Adjustment Account balance reflects the difference between the cost to the Council of acquiring its interest in pooled investment funds and their fair value as reflected in the Council's Balance Sheet.

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Increases/(decreases) in fair value recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure reversed to the Pooled Fund Adjustment Account in accordance with statutory requirements	65	0
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>

## 29. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – OPERATING ACTIVITIES

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

a) Adjust net deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements.

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
Depreciation	1,834	1,743
Impairment & downward/upward revaluations	106	332
Amortisation	9	9
Increase/(decrease) in impairment for bad debts (operational debtors)	640	86
Increase/(decrease) in Creditors	2,747	8,232
(Increase)/decrease in Debtors	1,708	(3,573)
Decrease/(Increase) in inventories	(33)	(12)
Movement in pension liability	4,497	1,725
Contribution to/(from) provisions	(60)	681
Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or de-recognised	0	0
Movement in fair value of investment properties	(1,704)	264
Other non-cash transactions	(79)	483
	<b>9,665</b>	<b>9,970</b>



b) Adjust for items included in the net deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities.

	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£000</b>
Capital grants credited to the deficit on the provisions of services	(12,635)	(7,256)
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment and repayment of loans	(100)	(43)
	<b>(12,735)</b>	<b>(7,299)</b>

c) Interest received and interest paid included in cash flow from operating activities

	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£000</b>
Interest received	52	71
Interest paid	(491)	(496)
	<b>(439)</b>	<b>(425)</b>

### 30. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – INVESTING ACTIVITIES

	<b>2021/22</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>2020/21</b> <b>£000</b>
Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(1,133)	(5,295)
Purchase of short-term investments	(30,500)	(14,000)
Purchase of long-term investments	(4,001)	0
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets and repayment of grants and loans	35	75
Proceeds from short-term investments	25,500	18,000
Other payments for investing activities	0	(2)
Other receipts from investing activities	10,037	7,315
<b>Net cash (outflow)/inflows from investing activities</b>	<b>(62)</b>	<b>6,093</b>

### 31. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – FINANCING ACTIVITIES

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
Cash payments for the reduction of the outstanding liabilities relating to finance leases	(137)	(163)
Other (payments)/receipts for financing activities	493	(5,200)
<b>Net cash (outflow)/inflows from investing activities</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>(5,363)</b>

### RECONCILIATION OF LIABILITIES ARISING FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES

	1 April 2021 £000	Financing Cash Flows £000	31 March 2022 £000
Long Term Borrowing	7,800	0	7,800
Lease Liabilities	243	(137)	106
<b>Total Liabilities from financing activities</b>	<b>8,043</b>	<b>(137)</b>	<b>7,906</b>

### 32. TRADING OPERATIONS

Included within the expenditure figures below are capital charges (depreciation, revaluation and impairment) which are reversed out of the General Fund Balance through the Movement in Reverses Statement to ensure there is no impact on the Council's Taxpayer.

#### Market Undertaking

The Council operates outdoor markets in March, Chatteris and Whittlesey.

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
Expenditure	101	93
Income	(23)	(18)
<b>Deficit Before Capital Charges</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>75</b>
Capital Charges	4	4
<b>Deficit Taken to General Fund</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>79</b>

## Port Undertaking

The Council is the statutory Port Authority for the Port of Wisbech. Financial results were as follows:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Expenditure	1,351	1,053
Income	(768)	(865)
<b>Deficit Before Capital Charges</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>188</b>
Capital Charges	235	282
<b>Deficit Taken to General Fund</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>470</b>

## Mini-factories, Estates and Office Units

The Council operates 69 mini-factory units located in March, Chatteris and Wisbech. South Fens Business Centre, Chatteris offers 45 office and 8 workspace units. The Boathouse, Wisbech offers 37 office units. Estate areas amounting to 44.5 acres are operated by the Council. Financial results were as follows:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Expenditure	1,205	1,082
Income	(730)	(719)
<b>Deficit Before Capital Charges</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>363</b>
Capital Charges	(30)	184
<b>Deficit Taken to General Fund</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>547</b>

## Trade Waste

The financial results for Trade Waste were as follows:

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Expenditure	314	247
Income	(447)	(342)
<b>(Surplus) taken to General Fund</b>	<b>(133)</b>	<b>(95)</b>

There are currently no capital charges in relation to Trade Waste.

### 33. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Council paid the following amounts to members of the Council during the year. Full details can be found on the Council's website. Details of payments to individual members are published annually in a local newspaper and on the Council's website.

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Allowances	347	334
Expenses	5	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>336</b>

### 34. EMPLOYEES' REMUNERATION

The following table sets out the remuneration disclosures for senior officers who received more than £50,000 per year.

#### Senior Officers Remuneration

Name/Officer	Note	Year	Gross Salary	Benefits in Kind (e.g. car allowance)	Total Remuneration (excl. Pension contributions)	Employers Pension Contributions	Total Remuneration (incl. pension contributions)
			£	£	£	£	£
Chief Executive		<b>2021/22</b>	<b>152,304</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>154,304</b>	<b>26,501</b>	<b>180,805</b>
		2020/21	150,053	2,000	152,053	26,109	178,162
Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer		<b>2021/22</b>	<b>91,508</b>	<b>9,450</b>	<b>100,958</b>	<b>14,000</b>	<b>114,958</b>
		2020/21	90,156	9,450	99,606	15,687	115,293
Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer	1	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>73,216</b>	<b>9,450</b>	<b>82,666</b>	<b>15,916</b>	<b>98,582</b>
		2020/21	90,156	9,450	99,606	15,687	115,293
Corporate Director	2	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
		2020/21	26,960	1,773	28,733	3,560	32,293

**Note 1:** The post holder commenced maternity leave on 12th December 2021. The annualised salary was £91,508.

**Note 2:** The Corporate Director position remains in the Council's Corporate Management Team structure, but as at 31 March 2022 the Council had not recruited to the position. The previous postholder retired from their position on 16 June 2020. The annualised salary was £90,156.

The numbers of employees whose remuneration, excluding employer's pension contributions, was £50,000 or more in bands of £5,000 are shown in the table below.

Remuneration Band	Number of Employees	
	2021/22 Total	2020/21 Total
£50,000 - £54,999	5	6
£55,000 - £59,999	7	11
£60,000 - £64,999	7	6
£65,000 - £69,999	4	4
£70,000 - £74,999	4	0
£80,000 - £84,999	2	0
£95,000 - £99,999	0	2
£100,000 - £104,999	1	0
£150,000 - £154,999	1	1

The band changes from 2020/21 to 2021/22 are due to pay progression within individual's terms and conditions, and the nationally agreed cost of living increases.

The numbers of exit packages with total cost per band and total cost of the compulsory and other redundancies are set out in the table below. The exit packages arose from a programme of service staffing reviews.

Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band		Total cost of exit packages in each band	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
							£000	£000
£0 - £20,000	0	1	11	1	11	2	106	23
£20,001-£40,000	0	0	2	0	2	0	68	0
£40,001-£60,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>23</b>
Total cost included in Comprehensive Income and Expenditure							174	23

### 35. EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

In 2021/22 Fenland District Council incurred the following fees relating to external audit and inspection:

	2021/22 £000	2020/21 £000
Fees payable with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor	80	65
Fees payable for the certification of grant claims and returns	18	21
<b>Total Audit Costs</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>86</b>

The final fees for external audit services and grant certification work undertaken in relation to the 2020-21 and 2019-20 financial year were agreed after the 2020-21 accounts had been published. The amounts disclosed in the 2021/22 column above include additional fees of £15,184 in respect of external audit services relating to 2020/21 and a reduction of £5,974 in respect of external services relating to the 2019/20 financial year. The total amount disclosed in respect of fees payable for the certification of grant claims includes £3,292 in respect of fees relating to the 2020/21 financial year which were confirmed after the 2020/21 financial statements had been published.

### 36. GRANT INCOME

The Council credited the following significant grants and contributions to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2021/22:

	2021/22	2020/21
<b>Credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Net Share of Business Rate Income	4,101	38
New Homes Bonus Grant	875	1,119
Capital Grants and Contributions	9,063	5,992
Business Rate Reliefs Funded by Government	2,639	4,806
Taxation Income Guarantee – Council Tax	0	2
Taxation Income Guarantee – NNDR	0	313
Lower Tier Services Grant	158	0
Government Income Compensation-Sales Fees and Charges	88	418
Covid-19 Non-Ring-Fenced Grant	634	1,794
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,558</b>	<b>14,482</b>
<b>Credited to Services</b>		
Housing Benefit Subsidy	20,384	21,358
Capital Grants and Contributions	3,551	1,174
Housing Benefits/Local Council Tax Support Admin	393	429
NNDR Cost of Collection	120	120
Homelessness Prevention	744	605
New Burdens Grant	98	262
Covid-19	1,977	5,248
Cambridgeshire Horizons	3,892	0
Other	768	1,214
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,927</b>	<b>30,410</b>

## 37. RELATED PARTIES

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Council or to be controlled or influenced by the Council. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council. No material related party transaction balances remain outstanding at year end.

### **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, housing benefits). Grants received from Government departments are set out in note 7 Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature, to the core financial statements.

### **Members**

A number of elected members are also members of Cambridgeshire County Council, Town and Parish Councils and have an interest in voluntary organisations that are grant aided by the Council.

### **Entities Controlled or Significantly Influenced by the Council**

The Anglia Revenue Partnership (ARP) Joint Committee was set up to deliver the Housing Benefit, Council Tax and Business Rates service for Breckland Council and Forest Heath District Council. East Cambridgeshire District Council joined the partnership on 1 April 2007 and formally joined the Joint Committee in October 2010. St Edmundsbury Council joined the new Joint Committee on 1 April 2011. Waveney District Council, Fenland District Council and Suffolk Coastal joined the partnership on 1 April 2014. With effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019, following the mergers of Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury Councils (to form West Suffolk) and Waveney and Suffolk Coastal Councils (East Suffolk), ARP now consists of 5 partner authorities. The five authorities hold equal voting rights but shares in costs and surpluses arising from the arrangement are based on an agreed share which is reviewed annually.

This Council's share for 2021/22 was 13.51%. This Council's share of partnership transactions and balances are included within the relevant lines within the accounts.

The Council established a wholly-owned subsidiary, trading as Fenland Future Limited, in June 2020. Arrangements exist whereby the Council provides services to Fenland Future Limited which enable Fenland Future Limited to undertake activities connected to its business plan and the Council's Commercial and Investment Strategy. During the 2021/22 financial year the Council has recognised income of £250,145 in respect of transactions between Fenland Future Limited and the Council. As at 31 March 2022 Fenland Future Limited owed the Council £253,070.

The Council did not owe any monies to Fenland Future Limited as at 31 March 2022. There is no expenditure recognised in the Council's accounts in respect of amounts paid to Fenland Future Limited.

## 38. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND CAPITAL FINANCING

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below (including the value of assets acquired under finance leases), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as assets are used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), 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.

	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
<b>Opening Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>6,177</b>	<b>2,274</b>
<i>Capital investment</i> (as reported in notes 13-15)		
Property, Plant and Equipment and Intangibles	3,192	1,688
Investment Properties	0	3,699
<i>Capital expenditure charged to Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>		
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	8,391	1,289
Private Sector Housing Loans	0	2
<b>Sources of finance</b>		
Capital receipts	(106)	(37)
Government grants and other contributions	(9,248)	(1,629)
Sums set aside from revenue:		
Direct revenue contributions	(584)	(760)
Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	(366)	(349)
<b>Closing Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>7,456</b>	<b>6,177</b>
<b>Explanation of movements in year</b>		
Capital Expenditure Funded from Internal Borrowing	1,645	4,252
MRP charge to Revenue	(366)	(349)
<b>Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>1,279</b>	<b>3,903</b>

## 39. LEASES

### Council as Lessee

#### Finance Leases

The Council leases a number of vehicles under finance leases. The assets acquired under these leases are carried as Property, Plant and Equipment (Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment) in the Balance Sheet with a carrying value of £113,882 as at 31 March 2022 (31 March 2021: £273,801).

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



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

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Finance lease liabilities (net present value of minimum lease payments):		
• current	83	137
• non –current	23	106
Finance costs payable in future years	4	12
Minimum lease payments	<b>110</b>	<b>255</b>

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

	<b>Minimum Lease Payments</b>		<b>Finance Lease Liabilities</b>	
	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Not later than one year	86	145	83	137
Later than one year and not later than five years	24	110	23	106
Later Than 5 Years	0	0	0	0
	<b>110</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>243</b>

#### *Operating Leases - Land and Buildings*

The Council leases nine properties for homeless families.

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

	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Not later than one year	32	52
Later than one year and not later than five years	0	0
	<b>32</b>	<b>52</b>

Lease payments for 2021/22 amounted to £51,953 (2020/21: £51,225).

## Council as Lessor

### Operating Leases

The Council leases out land and property under operating leases for the purposes of provision of community (sports facilities) and economic development services. Additionally, the Council entered into a long-term lease with a commercial tenant during the 2020/21 financial year.

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

	<b>31 March 2022 £000</b>	<b>31 March 2021 £000</b>
Not later than one year	308	312
Later than one year and not later than five years	978	978
Later than five years	4,741	4,986
	<b>6,027</b>	<b>6,276</b>

#### 40. **DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES** **(i) The Local Government Pension Scheme**

##### **Participation in pension scheme**

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers and other employees, the Council offers retirement benefits. Although these benefits will not actually be payable until employees retire, the Council has a commitment to make the payments (for those benefits) and to disclose them at the time that employees earn their future entitlement. The Council participates in the following pension scheme:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme for civilian employees, administered by Cambridgeshire County Council – this is a funded defined benefit 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.

##### **Transactions Relating to Post-Employment Benefits**

The Council recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge we are required to make against Council Tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions are charged across all service headings in the Net Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year.

	<b>Local Government Pension Scheme</b>	
<b>Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<i>Cost of Services:</i>		
• Current service cost	4,624	2,963
• Past Service Cost (including curtailments)	57	0
• Effect of settlements	0	0
<i>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</i>		
• Interest income on scheme assets	(1,807)	(1,628)
• Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	3,163	2,775
<i>Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services</i>	<b>6,037</b>	<b>4,110</b>
<i>Other Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>		
Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:		
• Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	(5,429)	(16,550)
• Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(341)	1,776
• Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	(9,612)	33,221
• Other	(8,451)	(1,243)
<i>Total Remeasurement (Gains)/Losses</i>	<b>(23,833)</b>	<b>17,204</b>
<i>Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>	<b>(17,796)</b>	<b>21,314</b>
<i>Movement in Reserves Statement:</i>		
• Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit for the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(3,602)	(1,725)
<i>Actual amount charged against General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:</i>		
• Employers' contributions payable to scheme	1,539	4,259

### **Pension Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet**

	<b>Local Government Pension Scheme</b>	
	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Present value of funded liabilities	(146,916)	(156,215)
Present value of unfunded liabilities	(1,076)	(1,162)
Fair value of plan assets	101,157	91,207
<b>Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation</b>	<b>(46,835)</b>	<b>(66,170)</b>

## Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets

	Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	91,207	71,477
Effect of Settlements	0	0
Interest income	1,807	1,628
Remeasurement gain/(loss):		
• The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in the net interest expense	5,429	16,550
• Other experience	4,118	0
Contributions from employer	1,539	4,259
Contributions from employees into the scheme	576	565
Benefits paid	(3,519)	(3,272)
<b>Closing fair value of scheme assets</b>	<b>101,157</b>	<b>91,207</b>

## Reconciliation of Present Value of the Scheme Liabilities

	Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22	2020/21
	£000	£000
Opening balance at 1 April	(157,377)	(120,592)
Current service cost	(4,624)	(2,963)
Past service cost (including curtailments)	(57)	0
Effect of Settlements	0	0
Interest cost	(3,163)	(2,775)
Contributions from scheme participants	(576)	(565)
Re-measurement gains and (losses):		
• Actuarial gains/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	341	(1,776)
• Actuarial gains/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	9,612	(33,221)
• Other experience	4,333	1,243
Benefits paid	3,519	3,272
<b>Closing balance at 31 March</b>	<b>(147,992)</b>	<b>(157,377)</b>

## Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised:

Asset Category	Fair Value of Scheme Assets							
	Quoted prices in active markets £000	2021/22 Quoted prices not in active markets £000	Total £000	% of Total Assets	Quoted prices in active markets £000	2020/21 Quoted prices not in active markets £000	Total £000	% of Total Assets
<b>Equity Securities:</b>								
Consumer	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
Manufacturing	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
Energy and Utilities	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
Financial Institutions	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
Health and Care	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
Information and Technology	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
<b>Debt Securities:</b>								
UK Government	0	4,965	4,965	5%	0	3,677	3,677	4%
<b>Private Equity:</b>								
All	0	10,796	10,796	11%	0	8,481	8,481	9%
<b>Real Estate:</b>								
UK Property	0	7,104	7,104	7%	0	5,556	5,556	6%
Overseas Property	0	0	0	0%	0	1	1	0%
<b>Investment Funds and Unit Trusts:</b>								
Equities	0	58,320	58,320	58%	0	54,237	54,237	60%
Bonds	0	10,752	10,752	11%	0	10,083	10,083	11%
Infrastructure	0	8,037	8,037	8%	0	7,644	7,644	8%
Other	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0%
<b>Derivatives:</b>								
Other	0	205	205	0%	0	(1,078)	(1,078)	(1%)
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents:</b>								
All	978	0	978	1%	2,503	0	2,503	3%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>100,179</b>	<b>101,157</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,503</b>	<b>88,601</b>	<b>91,106</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc. The County Council Fund's liabilities have been assessed by Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the County Council Fund being based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2022.

The principal assumptions used by the actuary have been:

	<b>Local Government Pension Scheme</b>	
	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2020/21</b>
<i>Longevity at 65 for current pensioners</i>		
Men	<b>22.0 years</b>	22.2 years
Women	<b>24.6 years</b>	24.4 years
<i>Longevity at 65 for future pensioners</i>		
Men	<b>22.8 years</b>	23.2 years
Women	<b>26.1 years</b>	26.2 years
Rate of increase in pensions	<b>3.20%</b>	2.85%
Rate of increase in salaries	<b>3.70%</b>	3.35%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	<b>2.70%</b>	2.00%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes while all the other assumptions remain constant. The estimations in the sensitivity analysis have followed the accounting policies for the scheme, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit cost method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis below did not change from those used in 2020/21.

<b>Change in assumptions at 31 March 2022</b>	<b>Approximate % increase to Employer Liability</b>	<b>Approximate Monetary Amount £000</b>
0.1% decrease in real discount rate	2%	2,723
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4%	5,920
0.1% increase in the salary increase rate	0%	272
0.1% increase in the pension increase rate	2%	2,431

### **Impact on the Council's Cash Flows**

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. The County Council has arranged a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve an appropriate funding level over the period until 31 March 2023.

The latest triennial valuation has been completed as at 31 March 2022.

The scheme has taken into account the national changes to the scheme under the Public Pensions Services Act 2013. Under the Act, the Local Government Pension Scheme in England may not provide benefits in relation to service after 31 March 2014. The Act provides for scheme regulations to be made within a common framework, to establish new

career average revalued earnings schemes to pay pensions and other benefits to certain public servants.

Allowances for full Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMP) indexation and for the potential impact of the McCloud judgement were included by the actuary in the closing balance sheet position as at 31 March 2020 and these have been rolled forward and included in the liabilities as at 31 March 2021 and 31 March 2022.

The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the Council has in the long run to pay post-employment (retirement) benefits. The total liability of £46.835m has a substantial impact on the net worth of the Council as recorded in the Balance Sheet. However, statutory arrangements for funding the deficit mean that the financial position of the Council remains healthy. The deficit on the local government scheme will be made good by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees (i.e. before payments fall due), as assessed by the scheme actuary.

The Council anticipates paying £1.637m contributions to the scheme in 2022/23. In addition, an up-front payment of £2.687m was paid in April 2020 in respect of lump sums due for the 3-year period 2020/21 - 2022/23. This is reflected in the pension liability in the Balance Sheet in those years to take account of the up-front payment. The weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation for scheme members is 21 years.

Further information relating to the Cambridgeshire County Council Pension Fund can be found in Cambridgeshire County Council's Pensions Fund Annual Report, which is available from the Chief Finance Officer, Local Government Shared Services, 1 Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, NN1 1ED.

#### **41. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

Material contingent liabilities are not recognised within the accounts as an item of expenditure or income but are required to be disclosed in a note to the financial statements.

##### **Stock Transfer**

As part of the stock transfer agreement completed on 5 November 2007, the Council gave Roddons HA (now Clarion) certain warranties in relation to transferring staff, property and environmental pollution. This is to ensure that there are no matters in connection with the land or property transferring that could cause the housing association financial or other loss. The Council has given warranties both to the association and separately to the association's funders. This is standard practice for all stock transfers. The duration of the various warranties in the contract are up to 30 years from completion.

The potential amounts the Council could be liable for under these warranties are unquantifiable. However, the risks associated with the warranties are considered low and therefore are not expected to have a material impact on the Council's accounts.

##### **Pilots' National Pension Fund (PNPF)**

In February 2018, the Council paid to the PNPF the amount due as a result of the Council triggering a Section 75 (of the Pensions Act 1995) debt whereby the Council ceased to employ any active members of the PNPF. Provision for this payment was made in the 2016/17 accounts. Following payment of this liability, the Council is not required to make any further annual deficit payments to the PNPF and the Council no longer needs to

recognise any liability to the PNPf in its Balance Sheet (the deficit was written out of the balance sheet in the 2016/17 accounts).

Although the Council has repaid its S75 debt liability, it will not be released as a Participating Body under PNPf rules. The PNPf has confirmed, however, that they have no present intention of making any additional contribution demands on the Council under PNPf rules.

The potential amounts the Council could be liable for in the future are unquantifiable and the risks associated with this obligation are considered low and therefore are not expected to have a material impact on the Council's accounts.

## **Pension Contingent Liabilities**

### **Leisure Centres Management Contract**

The Council has entered into a 15-year management contract for its leisure centres with Freedom Leisure Ltd. The contract began on 4 December 2018 and all staff involved in the operation of the centres have been TUPE transferred to Freedom Leisure. The Council has given certain guarantees in relation to the pension rights of the transferred staff for the duration of the contract.

The potential amounts the Council could be liable for under these guarantees are unquantifiable. However, the risks associated with the guarantees are considered low and therefore are not expected to have a material impact on the Council's accounts.

## **42. GOING CONCERN**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 (the Code), which is based upon International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), as amended for the UK public sector. The accounts have been prepared on the going concern basis.

In carrying out its assessment that this basis is appropriate for the going concern period to 30 September 2024, management of the Council has undertaken forecasting of both income and expenditure, the expected impact on reserves, and cashflow forecasting. Our most recent year-end balances, as reported in these statements are as follows:

<b>Date</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>Earmarked reserves</b>
31 March 2022	£2.000m	£12.339m

The draft 2022/23 Statements will report that the General Fund and Earmarked Reserve position has a balance of £2.000 million and £11.125million respectively as at 31 March 2023. Our expected General Fund and Earmarked Reserve position as at 31st March 2024, are a predicted balance of £2.000 million in the General Fund and £9.630 million in other Earmarked Reserves. [Figures from the 2023/24 budget approved by Full Council on the 20 February 2023.] The General Fund balance is forecast to remain at our target balance of £2 million. In addition, the Council has significant earmarked reserves as set out above. These reserves could be utilised if there was a short-term deterioration in the Council's financial health. Reserve balances are subject to regular review and where no longer required for their original purpose Cabinet can re-designate reserves as necessary.



If the General Fund balance did fall below the minimum level set, that balance would be directly increased from Earmarked Reserves from the 1 April 2024.

Our cash flow forecasting and assessment of the adequacy of our liquidity position demonstrates positive cash balances throughout the going concern period, and no expectation of external borrowing other than to support the capital programme which is consistent with our plans and normal practice.

The key assumptions within this forecast include ongoing savings as part of the corporate-wide transformation programme, a full years' worth of Management Fee being received from the Leisure Management contractor in 2022/23 and 2023/24 following two years of pandemic related support from the Council and additional provision to recognise the continuing high demand for the homelessness and rough sleeper's service. The Council is also providing support for the Leisure Management contractor to mitigate the impact of significant energy cost increases during 2022/23 and 2023/24. The transformation work programme is ongoing and expanding to cover all services provided by the Council. It is Management's judgment that significant additional savings can be realised before the end of March 2025. We have, however, developed an alternative scenario whereby the savings are not achieved and/or additional costs relating to Leisure and homelessness are incurred. If these scenarios were to transpire, management's view is that the above projections would not be materially affected although some re-designation of uncommitted earmarked reserves might be required. Detailed cash-flow forecasting indicates that liquidity would be maintained in all conceivable scenarios.

The Council has in recent years, always underspent its budget at year-end and in 2022/23, an underspend of £800k has been achieved as reported to Cabinet on 17 July 2023. This was transferred to the Budget Equalisation Reserve which at 31 March 2023 had a balance of £1.867m. The budget setting process for 2023/24 culminated in the Council deciding to reduce its' Council Tax level by 2% without any contributions from either the General Fund Balance or Budget Equalisation Reserve [From the 2023/24 budget approved by Full Council on the 20 February 2023.]

In addition, the Council at its' meeting on 17 July 2023 agreed to re-position the MTFS by keeping the amount of Council Tax raised at the 2023/24 level rather than the previously adopted 0% increase, while recognising that the Council continues to face significant financial challenges and uncertainties that may not allow this ambition to be met.

On this basis, the Council has a reasonable expectation that it will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence throughout the going concern period up to 30 September 2024, maintaining the provision of its services. For this reason, alongside the statutory guidance, we continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing these financial statements.

#### **43. EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE**

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Chief Finance Officer on 27 September 2023. This is the date up to which events after the balance sheet have been considered. Management has assessed whether any events have occurred after the Balance Sheet date which might need to be disclosed as non-adjusting events within the notes to the financial statements. No such events have been identified.

## THE COLLECTION FUND

Total 2020/21 £000		N o t e	Council Tax 2021/22 £000	NNDR 2021/22 £000	Total 2021/22 £000
<b>INCOME</b>					
<b>58,536</b>	Council Tax Receivable	2	62,474	0	<b>62,474</b>
<b>871</b>	S13A1C transfer from General Fund		32	0	<b>32</b>
<b>17,377</b>	Business Rates Receivable	3	0	26,777	<b>26,777</b>
<b>76,784</b>	<b>Total Income</b>		<b>62,506</b>	<b>26,777</b>	<b>89,283</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>					
<b>Precepts, Demands and Shares:</b>					
<b>12,289</b>	Central Government		0	12,420	<b>12,420</b>
<b>19,042</b>	Fenland District Council		9,300	9,936	<b>19,236</b>
<b>42,736</b>	Cambridgeshire County Council		42,193	2,236	<b>44,429</b>
<b>6,936</b>	Cambs. Police & Crime Commissioner		7,463	0	<b>7,463</b>
<b>2,395</b>	Cambridgeshire Fire Authority		2,216	248	<b>2,464</b>
<b>83,398</b>			<b>61,172</b>	<b>24,840</b>	<b>86,012</b>
<b>Apportionment of Previous Year Surplus / (Deficit):</b>					
<b>(389)</b>	Central Government		0	(4,526)	<b>(4,526)</b>
<b>(183)</b>	Fenland District Council		(44)	(3,621)	<b>(3,665)</b>
<b>478</b>	Cambridgeshire County Council		(192)	(815)	<b>(1,007)</b>
<b>93</b>	Cambs. Police & Crime Commissioner		(33)	0	<b>(33)</b>
<b>22</b>	Cambridgeshire Fire Authority		(10)	(90)	<b>(100)</b>
<b>21</b>			<b>(279)</b>	<b>(9,052)</b>	<b>(9,331)</b>
<b>Charges to Collection Fund:</b>					
<b>120</b>	Cost of Collection Allowance		0	120	<b>120</b>
<b>1,120</b>	Increase in Bad Debts Provision	4	693	1,759	<b>2,452</b>
<b>1,907</b>	Increase/(Reduction) in Provision for Appeals	5	0	1,499	<b>1,499</b>
<b>319</b>	Renewable Energy Retention		0	1,715	<b>1,715</b>
<b>3,466</b>			<b>693</b>	<b>5,093</b>	<b>5,786</b>
<b>86,885</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>61,586</b>	<b>20,881</b>	<b>82,467</b>
<b>10,101</b>	<b>(Surplus)/Deficit for the Year</b>		<b>(920)</b>	<b>(5,896)</b>	<b>(6,816)</b>
<b>COLLECTION FUND BALANCE</b>					
<b>371</b>	(Surplus)/Deficit b/fwd at 1 April		295	10,177	<b>10,472</b>
<b>10,101</b>	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year (as above)		(920)	(5,896)	<b>(6,816)</b>
<b>10,472</b>	<b>(Surplus)/Deficit c/fwd at 31 March</b>	6	<b>(625)</b>	<b>4,281</b>	<b>3,656</b>

## NOTES TO THE COLLECTION FUND ACCOUNTS

### 1. GENERAL

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation of billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers of Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) and its distribution to local government bodies and the Government.

### 2. COUNCIL TAXPAYERS

Council Tax income is derived from charges raised according to the value of residential properties, which have been classified into 8 valuation bands using estimated valuations as at 1 April 1991. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police Authority, Cambridgeshire Fire Authority and the Council for the forthcoming year and dividing this figure by the Council Tax base of 30,143 in 2021/22 (2020/21: 29,815). The increase in Council Tax base in 2021/22 is a result of a combination of new builds and lower numbers of Council Tax Support claimants.

The Council Tax base is the total number of properties in each band adjusted by a proportion to convert the number to a Band D equivalent adjusted for discounts etc. This basic amount of tax for a Band D property (average of £2,029.40 for 2021/22 compared to £1,972.84 for 2020/21) is then multiplied by the proportion specified for the particular Band (after adjusting for individual Parish Council precepts) to give an individual amount due.

Council Tax bills were based on the following proportions for Bands A to H:

	Proportion of Band D Charge (ninths)	Equated no of Chargeable Dwellings
Band A	6	7,772
Band B	7	7,804
Band C	8	6,663
Band D	9	4,201
Band E	11	2,587
Band F	13	838
Band G	15	251
Band H	18	27
		<hr/>
		30,143
		<hr/>

Income receivable from Council Taxpayers in 2021/22 was £62.474m (£58.536m in 2020/21).

### 3. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES (NNDR)

The Council collects NNDR for its area based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) multiplied by a uniform business rate set nationally by Central Government. In 2013/14, the administration of NNDR changed following the introduction of a business rates retention scheme, which aims to give Councils a greater incentive to grow businesses but also increases the financial risk due to volatility and non-collection of rates. Instead of paying NNDR to the central pool, local authorities retain a proportion of the total collectable rates due. In the case of Fenland, the local share is 40%. The remainder is distributed to Central Government (50%), Cambridgeshire County Council (9%) and Cambridgeshire Fire Authority (1%).

The business rates share payable for 2021/22 were estimated before the start of the financial year as £12.420m to Central Government, £2.236m to Cambridgeshire County Council, £0.248m to Cambridgeshire Fire Authority and £9.936m to Fenland District Council. These sums have been paid in 2021/22 and charged to the collection fund in year.

When the scheme was introduced, Central Government set a baseline level for each authority, identifying the expected level of retained business rates and a top-up or tariff amount to ensure that all authorities receive their baseline amount. Tariffs due from authorities and payable to Central Government are used to finance the top-ups to those authorities who do not achieve their targeted baseline funding. In this respect, Fenland paid a tariff to the government of £6.027m in 2021/22 (£6.027m in 2020/21) which is charged to the General Fund.

In addition to the local management of business rates, authorities are expected to finance appeals made in respect of rateable values as defined by VOA and hence business rates appeals outstanding as at 31 March 2022. As such, authorities are required to make a provision for these amounts. The total provision charged to the Collection Fund for 2021/22 has been calculated at £1.499m.

The lower NNDR income due in 2020/21 compared to 2021/22 is a result of the government's decision to provide 100% business rate relief in 2020/21 for all retail, leisure and hospitality properties and for all nursery education properties, as part of their response to assist businesses during the coronavirus pandemic. The total relief given in 2020/21 as a result of these specific measures was £8.603m which reduced the total NNDR income due by the same amount. In 2021/22 further reliefs were provided for these properties but at a reduced level. In addition, relief was available to those businesses affected by the pandemic but not able to access other government business rates support. Total relief given in 2021/22 as a result of these specific measures was £2.769m.

The government has reimbursed local authorities for their share of the additional relief given in 2021/22 through S31 Grant. This grant is credited to the revenue account in year, which has subsequently created a 'surplus' which has been carried forward to 2021/22, via use of an earmarked reserve, to off-set the increased deficit in the Collection Fund (see above statement and note 6 below), created by the reduced NNDR income in 2021/22.

#### **Business Rates Pooling Arrangement 2021/22**

The Council joined with the County Council, Peterborough City Council, Fire Authority, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils became part of a

pooling arrangement for business rates for the first time in 2020/21. This continued in 2021/22.

The benefit of being in a pool is that authorities will not be liable for levy payments to the government on their business rates growth. (The levy is set at 50% of the growth above the baseline level set by government). Instead, the combined levy payments of the pool are shared amongst the pooled authorities by a mutually agreed method. This is based on where the growth has originated from with an appropriate share allocated to the County Council and Fire Authority. The pool is administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council on behalf of the pooled authorities.

For 2021/22, the combined levy payments amounted to £6,726,124 (Fenland's levy was £619,757) and this Council's pool share was £359,646. The levy and pool share are charged to the revenue account and are not part of the Collection Fund.

The above pooling arrangements have continued into 2022/23.

#### 4. PROVISION FOR NON-PAYMENT OF COUNCIL TAX AND NNDR

The Collection Fund account provides for bad debts on arrears on the basis of prior years' experience and current years collection rates.

##### Council Tax Bad Debts Provision

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
2,704	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	3,465
(141)	Write-offs during year for previous years	(597)
902	Increase in provision during year	693
<b>3,465</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>3,561</b>

The Council's proportion of this provision at 31 March 2022 is £521,173 (£526,699 at 31 March 2021).

##### Non- Domestic Rates Bad Debts Provision

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
1,177	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	1,211
(184)	Write-offs during year for previous years	(243)
218	Increase in provision during year	1,759
<b>1,211</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>2,727</b>

The Council's proportion of this provision at 31 March 2022 is £1,090,777 (£484,177 at 31 March 2021).

#### 5. PROVISION FOR APPEALS – NON-DOMESTIC RATES

The Collection Fund account also provides for provision for appeals against rateable values set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) which has not been settled as at 31 March 2022.

2020/21 £000		2021/22 £000
4,177	<b>Balance at 1 April</b>	5,406
(678)	Write-offs during year for previous years	(1,221)
1,907	Increase/(Reduction) in provision during year	1,499
<b>5,406</b>	<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>5,684</b>

The Council's proportion of this provision at 31 March 2022 is £2,273,567 (£2,162,395 at 31 March 2021).

## 6. DEFICIT/ (SURPLUS) ON COLLECTION FUND

### Council Tax Collection Fund

The surplus of £625,442 at 31 March 2022 (£295,200 deficit at 31 March 2021), which related to Council Tax, will be reimbursed in subsequent financial years to Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Police and Fire Authorities and the Council in proportion to their shares of the total Council Tax raised.

This Council's share of the surplus, £88,790 is reported within the Collection Fund Adjustment Account.

The total Council Tax Collection Fund deficit/(surplus) is therefore shared as follows:

	31 March 2022 £000	31 March 2021 £000
Fenland District Council	(89)	49
Cambridgeshire County Council	(436)	203
Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Commissioner	(78)	32
Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	(22)	11
<b>Total Deficit/(Surplus)</b>	<b>(625)</b>	<b>295</b>

### Non-Domestic Rates Collection Fund

The deficit of £4,281,018 at 31 March 2022 (deficit of £10,176,514 at 31 March 2021), which related to Business Rates, will be reimbursed in subsequent financial years by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridgeshire Fire Authority, Central Government and the Council in proportion to their shares of business rates income.

This Council's share of the deficit (£1,712,407) is reported within the Collection Fund Adjustment Account.

The total Non-Domestic Rates Collection Fund deficits are therefore shared as follows:

	31 March 2022 £000	31 March 2021 £000
Fenland District Council	1,712	4,071
Cambridgeshire County Council	385	916
Cambridgeshire Fire Authority	43	102
Central Government	2,141	5,088
<b>Total Deficit</b>	<b>4,281</b>	<b>10,177</b>

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**









## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

### **ACCOUNTING PERIOD**

The period of time covered by the accounts, normally 12 months commencing on 1 April for local authorities.

### **ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Define the process whereby transactions and other events are reflected in financial statements.

### **ACCRUALS**

Sums included in the final accounts to cover income or expenditure attributable to the accounting period but for which payment has not been made/received at the Balance Sheet date.

### **AMORTISATION**

A measure of the consumption of the value of intangible assets, based on the remaining economic life.

### **BAD DEBT**

Debts whose repayment is known to be impossible or unlikely.

### **BUDGET**

A statement defining the Council's policies over a specified period of time in terms of finance.

### **BILLING AUTHORITY**

A local authority responsible for collecting the Council Tax and non-domestic rates i.e. District Councils, Metropolitan Districts, London Boroughs, the City of London and Unitary Councils.

### **CAPITAL CHARGES**

Charges made to service revenue accounts based on the value of the assets they use and comprises depreciation over the useful life of the asset.

### **CAPITAL EXPENDITURE**

Expenditure on new assets such as land and buildings, or on enhancements to existing assets which significantly prolong their useful life or increase their value.

### **CAPITAL FINANCING COSTS**

The annual cost of borrowing (principal repayments and interest charges), leasing charges and other costs of funding capital expenditure.

### **CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

The proceeds from the disposal of land or other assets.

### **COLLECTION FUND**

Accounts required to be kept by the Council to record all income collected from local taxpayers, showing how this is passed on to other local authorities and Government organisations.

**COMMUNITY ASSETS**

Assets that the Council intends to hold in perpetuity, that have no determinable useful life and that may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples are parks and historic buildings.

**CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

Potential liabilities which are either dependant on a future event or cannot be readily estimated.

**CREDITORS**

Amounts owed by the Council at 31 March for goods received or services rendered but not yet paid for.

**CURRENT ASSETS**

Assets which can be expected to be consumed or realised during the next accounting period.

**CURRENT LIABILITIES**

Amounts which will become due or could be called upon during the next accounting period.

**DEBT MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

An Executive Agency of Her Majesty's Treasury responsible for debt and cash management for the UK Government including lending to local authorities.

**DEBTORS**

Amounts owed by the Council which are collectable or outstanding at 31 March.

**DEPRECIATION**

A notional charge representing the extent to which an asset has been worn out or used up during the year.

**DERECOGNITION**

The term used for the removal of an asset or liability from the Balance Sheet.

**EFFECTIVE RATE OF INTEREST**

The rate of interest that will discount the estimated cash flows over the life of a financial instrument to the amount in the Balance Sheet at initial measurement.

**FAIR VALUE**

The amount for which an asset could be exchanged or a liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arm's length transaction.

**FINANCE LEASE**

A lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a non-current asset to the lessee.

**FINANCIAL ASSET**

A right to future economic benefits controlled by the Council. Examples include bank deposits, investments, trade debtors and loans receivable.

**FINANCIAL LIABILITY**

An obligation to transfer economic benefits controlled by the Council. Examples include borrowings, financial guarantees and amounts owed to trade creditors.

**FINANCIAL INSTRUMENT**

Any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another.

**GENERAL FUND**

The main revenue fund of the Council. Day to day spending on services is met from the fund.

**HERITAGE ASSETS**

Heritage Assets are assets with historical, artistic, scientific, technological, geophysical or environmental qualities which are held and maintained principally for their contribution to knowledge and culture.

**GOVERNMENT GRANTS**

Payments by central Government towards Council expenditure. They may be specific, for example Housing Benefit subsidy, or general such as Revenue Support Grant.

**IMPAIRMENT**

The term used where the estimated recoverable amount from an asset is less than the amortised cost at which the asset is being carried on the Balance Sheet.

**INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARD (IFRS)**

A reference to the accounting treatments that companies globally would generally be expected to apply in the preparation of their financial statements.

**MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION**

The minimum amount which must be charged to the Council's revenue account each year and set aside for debt repayment as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

**NON-CURRENT ASSETS**

Assets which can be expected to be of use or benefit the Council in providing service for more than one accounting period.

**OPERATING LEASES**

A lease under which the ownership of the asset remains with the lessor; for practical purposes it is equivalent to contract hiring.

**OUTTURN**

Refers to actual income and expenditure or balances as opposed to budget amounts.

**PRECEPT**

The levy made on a billing authority by a Precepting Authority, requiring collection of income from Council's Taxpayers on their behalf.

**PRECEPTING AUTHORITIES**

Those authorities which are not Billing Authorities i.e. do not collect Council Tax and non-domestic rate. County Council are “major precepting authorities” and parish, community and Town Councils are “local precepting authorities”.

### **PROVISIONS AND RESERVES**

Amounts set aside in one year to cover expenditure in the future. Provisions are for liabilities or losses which are likely or certain to be incurred but the amounts or the dates on which they arise are uncertain. Reserves are amounts set aside which do not fall within the definition of provisions and include general reserves (or “balances”) which every authority must maintain as a matter of prudence.

### **PUBLIC WORKS LOAN BOARD**

A central Government agency which provides long and short term loans to local authorities at interest rates only slightly higher than those at which the Government itself can borrow.

### **REVENUE EXPENDITURE**

Spending on day to day items including employees’ pay, premises costs and supplies and services.

### **REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE**

Expenditure which legislation allows to be classified as capital for funding purposes when it does not result in the expenditure being carried on the Balance Sheet as a fixed asset. The purpose of this is to enable it to be funded from capital resources rather than be charged to the General Fund and impact on that year’s Council Tax.

### **REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT**

A grant paid by central Government in aid of Council’s services.

### **THE CODE**

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. This specifies the principals and practices of accounting required to give a ‘true and fair’ view of the financial position and transactions of a local authority.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE ACCOUNTS

ARP	Anglia Revenue Partnerships
CFR	Capital Financing Requirement
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
CSE	Customer Service Excellence
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
FDC-CSR	Fenland District Council Comprehensive Spending Review
HMOs	Houses in Multiple Occupations
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standard
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivations
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision
MTEFF	Medium Term Financial Forecast
NNDR	National Non-domestic Rates
PNPF	Pilots' National Pension Fund
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board
LGA	Local Government Association
LGPS	Local Government Pension Scheme
IAS	International Accounting Standards

## FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

### 2021-22 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

#### 1. Scope of responsibility

Fenland District Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively, providing value for money. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, Fenland District Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, and for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

Fenland District Council has approved and adopted a code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. A copy of the code is on our website at [www.fenland.gov.uk](http://www.fenland.gov.uk) or can be obtained from the Chief Finance Officer. This statement explains how Fenland District Council has complied with the code and also meets the requirements of regulation 6 (1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of an annual governance statement.

#### 2. Definition of Corporate Governance

Corporate Governance generally refers to the processes by which an organisation is directed, controlled, led, and held to account.

Good Governance in the public sector means “achieving the intended outcomes while acting in the public interest at all times.

In undertaking all council work, and exercising community leadership responsibilities, the Council will have regard for the four principles of good corporate governance.

- Openness
- Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Accountability

#### 3. The governance framework

Our governance framework comprises the culture, values, systems, and processes by which the Council is directed and controlled. It brings together an underlying set of legislative and regulatory requirements, good practice, and management processes.

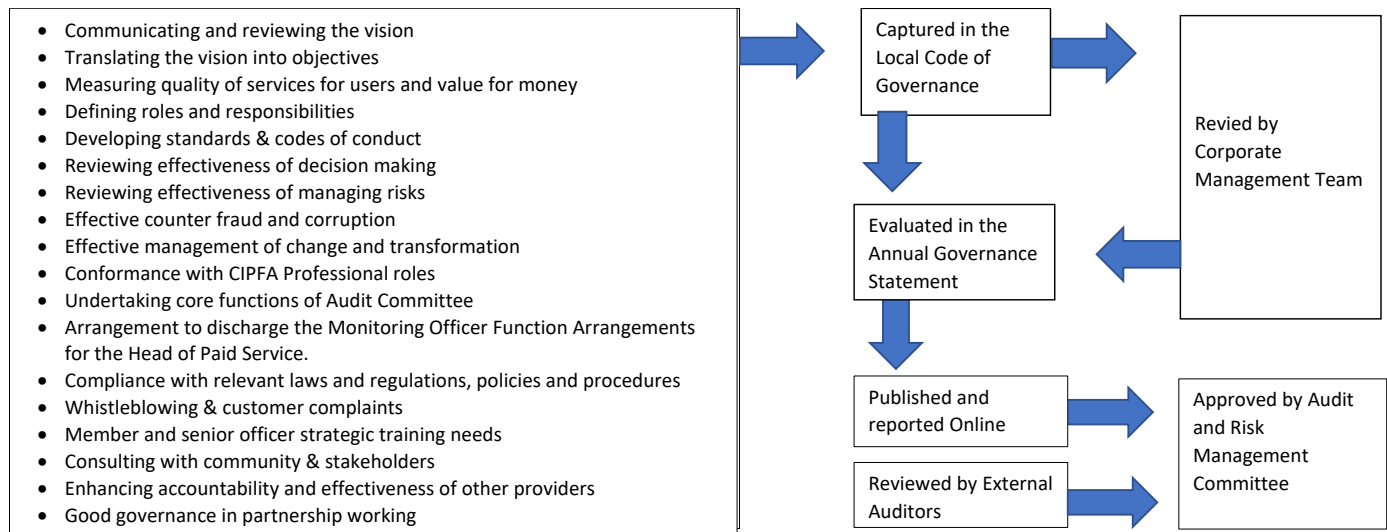
The Council has a responsibility for ensuring a sound system of governance to meet statutory requirements requiring public authorities to adhere to proper practices in reviewing the effectiveness of their system of internal control and preparing an annual governance statement.



This governance statement meets that requirement and sets out brief details of the arrangements that the Council has in place regarding the key systems and processes comprising the Council’s governance framework, which incorporates the Local Code of Governance adopted by the Council covering six themes, underpinned by the supporting principles contained within the “CIPFA/SOLACE Framework for delivering good governance in Local Government (2016 Edition)”.

**Elements of the framework**

The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the authority’s governance arrangements are as follows:



The governance framework for 2021/22 supports the Council aims and objectives. which are published on our website in the Business Plan. The vision states:

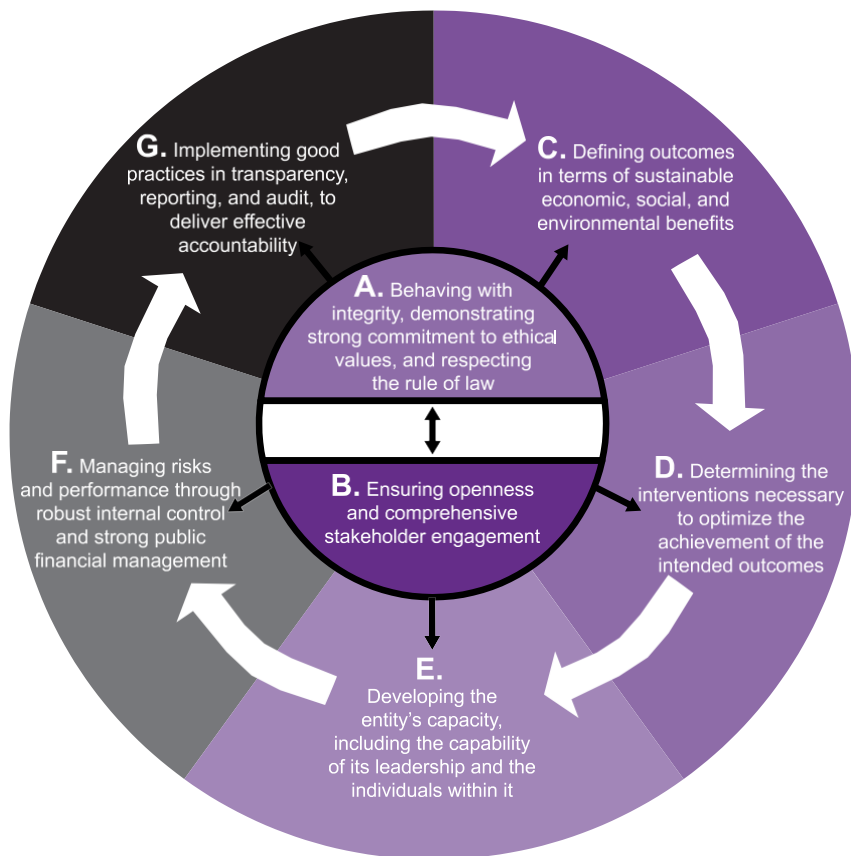
*“The outcomes we focus on, the actions we’ll deliver through working collaboratively with our partners and communities are what change people’s lives for the better and for the long-term. They help to improve opportunities for everyone and make Fenland an even better place to live, work and raise a family.”*

The Business Plan sets out our Priority Areas with specific and measurable actions. Performance against the Business Plan is published in the Annual report and is available on the website.

**Local Code of Governance**

We are responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance which incorporates the systems of internal control.

The governance framework is recorded in our Local Code of Governance, which is underpinned by the 7 principles of good governance as set out in CIPFA / SOLACE publication ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016’. The principles are:



## Roles and Responsibilities

Governance Structures	Roles and Responsibilities
Council	The Council agrees the budget and policy framework, such as the Business Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy, including the General Fund Budget and Council Tax levels and the Commercial and Investment Strategy. Further details are published on our website.
Cabinet	The Cabinet is the Council's principal decision-making body, charged with implementing the budget and policy framework agreed by the Council. Further details are published on our website.
Corporate Management Team	<p>The management team structure includes a corporate management team of a Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors and is supported by an operational Management Team. Both teams consider policy formulation and future planning.</p> <p>There is currently a vacant Corporate Director role and a Corporate Director on maternity leave. For 2021/22 these roles have been covered by the interim appointment of Assistant Directors</p>
Audit and Risk Management Committee	<p>The Audit and Risk Management Committee plays a vital role in overseeing and promoting good governance, ensuring accountability, and reviewing how things are done. It provides an assurance role to the council by examining areas such as audit, risk, internal control, anti-fraud, and financial accountability.</p> <p>The Committee exists to challenge the way things are being done, making sure the right processes are in place. It works closely with Internal Audit and senior management to continually improve the</p>

	governance, risk, and control environment. Meeting details and minutes are published on the website.
Conduct Committee	The Conduct Committee is in place to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by all members. It reviews formal complaints, ensures compliance with requirements for ethical standards, provides advice on conduct matters and maintains a framework for identifying and implementing new legislative requirements upon the Council.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	The Overview and Scrutiny committee monitors the performance of the Leader and Cabinet and scrutinises services and policies throughout the district. This may be services directly provided by the Council or services provided through partnership working arrangements and makes recommendations for improvement. Meeting details and minutes are published on the website.

**Other Review and Assurance Mechanisms**

Management have helped to review the Local Code of Governance, and also inform the Annual Governance Statement. In addition, assurances can be provided from other sources, as detailed below:

**Head of Internal Audit Opinion**

The Head of Internal Audit provides an independent opinion on the overall adequacy of the effectiveness of the Council’s governance, risk and control arrangements and the extent to which the Council can rely on it. This has been considered in the development of the Annual Governance Statement.

The Internal Audit Annual Report was presented to the Audit and Risk Management Committee in July 2022. This report outlined the key findings of the audit work undertaken during 2021/22 and other sources of assurance that were used to support the Annual Audit opinion, including any areas of significant weakness in the control environment.

From the audit reviews undertaken, no areas were identified where it was considered that, if the risks highlighted materialised, would have a major impact on the organisation as a whole. In each instance where it has been identified that the control environment was not strong enough or was not complied with sufficiently to prevent risks to the organisation, recommendations have been issued to further improve the system of internal control and compliance. The implementation of the actions is followed up by Internal Audit and is reported to the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

It is the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit that, taking into account all available evidence, adequate assurance can be given over the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council’s overall internal control risk and governance arrangements during the financial year 2021/22.

**External Audit**

The externally appointed auditors, Ernst & Young, issued their Annual Audit Results report in November 2021 which provided an unqualified opinion on the 2020/21 statement of accounts and the Council’s arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. The report praised the management and staff of the Council, and reflected positively on the co-operation, quality of working papers and timeliness of provision of information.

The Council continues to demonstrate compliance against the Customer Service Excellence standard, the UK Government's national standard for excellence in customer service. The standard demonstrates our culture and behaviours, and that we engage with customers and partners, and deliver effective use of resources.

#### 4. Review of effectiveness

Fenland District Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the Corporate Management Team and Management within the authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Audit annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

As well as the annual review, the governance and control frameworks are maintained and reviewed by a series of comprehensive processes throughout the year. The following actions and processes have been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control over the last twelve months:

Principle	Review of effectiveness for the 21/22 Financial Year	Further Improvements
<p>A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of the law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Codes of Conduct for Council Members, with revised guidance procedures in place. All members are required to sign and registration of interest with 28 days of acceptance of office and all Council meetings require a declaration of interest to be disclosed.</li> <li>• Staff codes of conduct, capability and disciplinary procedures, anti-fraud and corruption policies, Whistleblowing policy, Values statement, and competency framework.</li> <li>• Up to date register of gifts and hospitality</li> <li>• Complaints policy</li> <li>• The constitution, including terms of reference for committees.</li> <li>• Compliance with CIPFA's statement on the role of the Chief Finance Officer</li> <li>• Monitoring officer provision</li> <li>• Recording of legal advice provided</li> <li>• Statutory guidance is followed</li> </ul> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Panel established a Task and Finish group to undertake a comprehensive review of the Council Complaints policy and Performance framework which is ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council must be prepared to address any impacts that may arise as a result of changes in regulation, legislative powers, and national policy such as: Reforms to New Homes Bonus, Business Rates and the Fairer Funding Review. Comprehensive Spending Review. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' consultation on Household and Business Recycling collections</li> </ul>

<p>B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating the Council’s commitment to openness through documenting and communicating the Council’s Business Plan for 2021/22, the Annual report for 2020/21, Council Tax Support scheme for 2021/22, Medium Term Financial Strategy 201/22 – 2025/26, Fees and Charges 2021/22 and the Capital Programme 2021/22.</li> </ul> <p>All of these documents are available on the Council’s website along with Freedom of information scheme, Transparency data and minutes of all decision-making committees and decision notices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has a consultation strategy and a communications strategy and uses channels such as the website and community hubs to consult on activities relevant to the community including planning, licensing, policy, and development.</li> </ul>	
<p>C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Corporate Planning Framework of the Council ensures the delivery of services and projects to improve quality of life for Fenland residents. Partners, through the Fenland Strategic Partnership, meet and establish priorities for delivery to address the statutory duty of promoting the well-being of the district.</li> <li>• The Council, through its <a href="#">Business Plan</a> establishes its objectives by consultation with its key partners and the public as well as with reference to statutory duties, local needs, and national priorities. The Business Plan communicates the Council’s vision of its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users.</li> <li>• The Business Plan has corporate priorities which are then cascaded down to team priorities. Achievement of corporate priorities is monitored regularly via the performance monitoring framework and monitoring reports to Portfolio Holders, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Full Council. Progress against intended outcomes is reported in the Council’s Annual Report</li> <li>• Service quality is measured via customer communication channels and by measurement of performance indicators</li> <li>• The Council also approved the Economic</li> </ul>	

	<p>Growth Strategy Refresh for 2022-2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council is currently reviewing its Local Plan due for consultation later in 2022/23.</li> </ul>	
<p>D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although in a healthy financial position, the Council still faces continuing financial challenges over the medium term, resulting from changes to central government funding. The Medium Term Financial Strategy presented to Council in February 2022 highlighted the need for further savings of 973k up to 2026/27.</li> <li>• The development of the Commercial and Investment Strategy has the potential to generate additional significant returns over the medium term, through the trading company Fenland Future Ltd (FFL).</li> <li>• Cabinet also considered reports and proposals regarding the council Transformation programme to ensure continued achievement of outcomes through the efficient use of resources and improvements to service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Chief Finance Officer, with the Chief Executive will review the impact of change upon the Council in conjunction with the Leader and Finance Portfolio Holder and the Cabinet.</li> <li>• The Council's Transformation programme has placed the Council in a good position financially however, we will continue to look for more ways to become efficient and effective through looking at different service delivery models.</li> </ul>
<p>E. Developing the authority's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and individuals within it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is currently a vacant Corporate Director role and a Corporate Director on maternity leave. For 2021/22 these roles have been covered by the interim appointment of Assistant Directors to ensure sufficient capacity within the organisation.</li> <li>• The Human Resource team lead on the</li> </ul>	

	<p>development of the workforce planning and organisational development and training plan, supported by annual service planning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has a clear scheme of delegation contained within the standing orders and financial regulations which are reviewed by the Monitoring officer to ensure compliance.</li> <li>• Staff and members have access to induction programmes and training courses to support and develop their roles, which also include personal development plans that are reviewed at least annually.</li> <li>• Both the Leader and the Chief Executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles, who provide a check and balance for each other responsibility and have established an effective relationship to maintain effective communication.</li> </ul>	
<p>F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet and the Audit and Risk Committee considered the 2020/21 financial statements and the Council’s corporate objectives, performance indicators and Strategic Risk Register</li> <li>• The Council has a Risk Management Strategy that has enabled the monitoring of risk within projects, Service Plans, performance management, financial planning, policy setting and decision making. The Council has a balanced risk appetite that allows new ideas to be explored and encourages innovation. The Risk Management Framework enables risks to be escalated to an appropriate authority in the organisation to be managed. The Risk Management Strategy is reviewed annually by Audit and Risk Management Committee. The Council has a Risk Management Group who are responsible for highlighting, assessing risks and applying a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status to risks for consideration by the Corporate Management Team and ultimately by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.</li> <li>• The Council has a Port Marine Safety Code to manage potential major risks related to Marine Services. It is linked to the Council’s Business Continuity Plan as referenced above and is also regularly updated. A Port Management Group is responsible for monitoring and managing safety issues and a Duty Holder and Designated Person is appointed to review the safety management</li> </ul>	

	<p>system and associated risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee received performance reports on Covid 19 response, Shared Planning Service, Anglia Revenues Partnership, Freedom Leisure, Customer Complaints (3c's) process and Corporate Priorities of Communities, Environment and Transformation and communications. They also welcomed partnership updates from Clarion Housing, Community Safety Partnership, Wisbech Rail update, The Combined Authorities Growth Programme and Anglian Water on flood defence infrastructure.</li> <li>• The Audit and Risk Management Committee received various reports from the Council Internal Audit Manager and External Auditors regarding audit planning and annual reports including overall systems of internal control and audits of financial systems.</li> <li>• The Audit and Risk management Committee adopted new terms of reference in 2020/21 and produce an annual report demonstrating compliance with best practice guidance.</li> </ul>	
<p>G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council received an unqualified opinion on the Statement of Accounts for 2020/21. The accounts were approved in November 2021, which was slightly later than planned but accepted due to the national delays in completing external audit work.</li> <li>• As part of the Councils transformation programme, more forms have become available on the website and an increase in use has demonstrated the success of this project.</li> <li>• The Annual report has been refreshed and is now more readable and understandable to our stakeholders. This report includes information on performance, value for money and the stewardship of resources.</li> <li>• The Annual Governance Statement is discussed and owned by the Council's Management Team and is discussed with both officers and members periodically throughout the year.</li> <li>• The Council has an effective Internal Audit function that provides assurance and makes recommendations to improve performance. The function conforms with the CIPFA statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit and the</li> </ul>	



	<p>Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has approved the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd to appoint external auditors on our behalf for 2023/24 onwards.</li> </ul>	
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**5. Conclusion**

Having completed the processes set out above to review the effectiveness of the Council’s governance framework, we are satisfied that we have sufficient assurance regarding the effectiveness of the framework in place and the governance issues identified are as set out above. We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

**6. Certification**

As Leader, Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, we have been advised on the implications of the results of the review of effectiveness of the Council’s governance framework, by the Audit and Risk Management Committee. Our overall assessment is that the Annual Governance Statement is a balanced reflection of the governance environment and that an adequate framework exists within Fenland District Council to ensure effective internal control is maintained. We are also satisfied that there are no significant governance issues during 2021/22.

Signed: .....

Peter Catchpole  
 Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer  
 27 September 2023


Signed: .....

Paul Medd  
 Chief Executive  
 27 September 2023

Signed: .....

Councillor Chris Boden  
 Leader, Fenland District Council  
 27 September 2023

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Agenda Item No:	7	
Committee:	Audit and Risk Management Committee	
Date:	26 September 2023	
Report Title:	Letter of Representation	

## Cover sheet:

### 1 Purpose / Summary

To agree the format and content of the Letter of Representation provided to the independent external auditor (EY) at the conclusion of the audit of the 2021/22 Statement of Accounts.

### 2 Key issues

- Written representation provides an acknowledgement of our responsibilities in relation to the Statement of Accounts.
- The letter required by the independent external auditor is attached.
- The letter requires signing by the Chairman of this Committee and the Council's Chief Finance Officer and will be dated on the proposed audit opinion date (date to be advised by EY).

### 3 Recommendations

- It is recommended that members approve the content and form of the Letter of Representation to be signed by the Chairman of this Committee and the Council's Chief Finance Officer.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Boden, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer Mark Saunders, Chief Accountant
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	

Mark Hodgson  
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CB4 0WZ

**Peter Catchpole**  
Tel 01354 622201  
e-mail: [pcatchpole@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:pcatchpole@fenland.gov.uk)

26 September 2023

Dear Mark,

**Fenland District Council – 2021/22 Financial Year  
Letter of Representation**

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of Fenland District Council (“the Council”) for the year ended 31 March 2022.

We recognise that obtaining representations from us concerning the information contained in this letter is a significant procedure in enabling you to form an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as of 31 March 2022 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended in accordance with CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, (as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022)).

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit is conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland), which involves an examination of the accounting system, internal control and related data to the extent you considered necessary in the circumstances, and is not designed to identify - nor necessarily be expected to disclose - all fraud, shortages, errors and other irregularities, should any exist.

Accordingly, we make the following representations, which are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

**A. Financial Statements and Financial Records**

1. We have fulfilled our responsibilities, under the relevant statutory authorities, for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with, for the Council the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended in 2020 for Covid-19) and

CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.

2. We acknowledge as members of management of the Council, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the Council's financial statements. We believe the Council financial statements referred to above give a true and fair view of the financial position, financial performance (or results of operations) and cash flows of the Council in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22 and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the Council financial statements.
3. That the significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the Council financial statements are appropriately described in the Council financial statements.
4. As members of management of the Council, we believe that the Council has a system of internal controls adequate to enable the preparation of accurate financial statements in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22, (as amended by the Update to the Code and Specifications for Future Codes for Infrastructure Assets (November 2022) that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. We have disclosed to you any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that we have made to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our system of internal controls.
5. There are no uncorrected audit differences.
6. We have disclosed to you any significant changes in our processes, controls, policies and procedures that we have made to address the effects of the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus on our system of internal controls. We do not believe that there are any significant changes.

**B. Non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud.**

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible to determine that the Council's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible for identifying and addressing any non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.
2. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.
3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the Council financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
4. We have no knowledge of any identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud that may have affected the Council (regardless of the source or form and including without limitation, any allegations by "whistleblowers") including non-compliance matters:
  - involving financial statements;
  - related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Council's financial statements;

- related to laws and regulations that have an indirect effect on amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, but compliance with which may be fundamental to the operations of the Council's activities, its ability to continue to operate, or to avoid material penalties;
- involving management, or employees who have significant roles in internal controls, or others; or
- in relation to any allegations of fraud, suspected fraud or other non-compliance with laws and regulations communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.

### **C. Information Provided and Completeness of Information and Transactions**

1. We have provided you with:
  - Access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters as agreed in terms of the audit engagement.
  - Additional information that we have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
  - Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom we determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
2. That all material transactions, events and conditions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the Group and Council financial statements, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.
3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Council and its relevant committees (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the year to the most recent meeting on the following date: 26 September 2023.
4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Council's related parties and all related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware, including sales, purchases, loans, transfers of assets, liabilities and services, leasing arrangements, guarantees, non-monetary transactions and transactions for no consideration for the period ended, as well as related balances due to or from such parties at the year end. These transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the Council's financial statements.
5. We believe that the significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
6. We have disclosed to you, and the Council has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the Council's financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.
7. That from the date of our last management representation letter to you, through the date of this letter, we have disclosed to you any unauthorized access to our information technology systems that either occurred or to the best of our knowledge is reasonably likely to have occurred based on our investigation, including of reports submitted to us by third parties (including regulatory

agencies, law enforcement agencies and security consultants), to the extent that such unauthorized access to our information technology systems is reasonably likely to have a material impact to the financial statements, in each case or in the aggregate.

#### **D. Liabilities and Contingencies**

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to us and are appropriately reflected in the Council's financial statements.
2. We have informed you of all outstanding and possible litigation and claims, whether or not they have been discussed with legal counsel.
3. We have recorded and/or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities related litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in the Council's financial statements (at Note 41) all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

#### **E. Subsequent Events**

1. Other than the disclosure described in Note 43 (Events after the balance sheet date) to the Group and Council's financial statements, there have been no events, including events related to the COVID-19 pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus, subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

#### **F. Other information**

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information. The other information comprises the Narrative Report included in the Statement of Accounts 2021-22.
2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.

#### **G. Accounting Estimates**

1. We believe that the significant assumptions we used in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.
2. In respect of accounting estimates recognised or disclosed in the financial statements:
  - We believe the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, we used in determining accounting estimates is appropriate and the application of these processes is consistent.
  - The disclosures relating to accounting estimates are complete and appropriate in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework.
  - The assumptions we used in making accounting estimates appropriately reflects our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity, where relevant to the accounting estimates and disclosures.
  - No subsequent event requires an adjustment to the accounting estimates and disclosures included in the financial statements.

## **H. Expenditure Funding Analysis**

1. We confirm that the financial statements reflect the operating segments reported internally to the Council.

## **I. Going Concern**

1. The Council has prepared the financial statements on a going concern basis and that Note 42 – Going Concern to the financial statements discloses all of the matters of which you are aware that are relevant to the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, our future financial plans and the veracity of the associated future funding allocations from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the sufficiency of cash flows to support those financial plans.

## **J. Ownership of Assets**

1. Except for assets recognised as right-of-use assets in accordance with IFRS 16 Leases, the Council has satisfactory title to all assets appearing in the balance sheet, and there are no liens or encumbrances on the Council's assets, nor has any asset been pledged as collateral. All assets to which the Council has satisfactory title appear in the balance sheet.

## **K. Reserves**

1. We have properly recorded or disclosed in the Council's financial statements the useable and unusable reserves.

## **L. Valuation of Property, Plant and Equipment Assets**

1. We agree with the findings of the experts engaged to evaluate the valuation of the Council's Property, Plant and Equipment and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included within the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. That we did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the experts with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and that we are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the experts.
2. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
3. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of Property, Plant and Equipment appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
4. We confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on Property, Plant and Equipment valuations and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.



5. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.
6. We confirm that we have performed a desktop review of all assets not subject to revaluation as part of the 5-year rolling programme for valuations and that each asset category is not materially misstated.
7. We confirm that for assets carried at historic cost, that no impairment is required.

#### **M. Retirement benefits**

1. On the basis of the process established by us and having made appropriate enquiries, we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the pension scheme liabilities are consistent with our knowledge of the business. All significant retirement benefits and all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for.
2. We agree with the findings of the specialists that we engaged to evaluate the Valuation of Pension Liabilities and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. We did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and you are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.
3. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
4. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of the pension scheme liability appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
5. We confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Pension Scheme Liability and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
6. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

#### **N. Other Estimates – NDR Appeals provision.**

1. On the basis of the process established by us and having made appropriate enquiries, we are satisfied that the assumptions underlying the NDR Appeals provision are consistent with our knowledge of the business.

2. We agree with the findings of the specialists that we engaged to evaluate the NDR Appeals provision and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. We did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and we are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.
3. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
4. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of the NDR Appeals provision appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
5. We confirm that the disclosures made in the Council's financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, on the NDR Appeals Provision and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
6. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council's financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

#### **O. Other Estimates – Expected Credit Losses**

1. On the basis of the process established by us and having made appropriate enquiries, we are satisfied that the assumptions underlying the Expected Credit Losses are consistent with our knowledge of the business.
2. We agree with the findings of the specialists that you engaged to evaluate the Expected Credit Losses and have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the Council's financial statements and the underlying accounting records. We did not give or cause any instructions to be given to the specialists with respect to the values or amounts derived in an attempt to bias their work, and we are not otherwise aware of any matters that have had an effect on the independence or objectivity of the specialists.
3. We believe that the measurement processes, including related assumptions and models, used to determine the accounting estimate(s) have been consistently applied and are appropriate in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
4. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the valuation of the Expected Credit Losses appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.

- 5. We confirm that the disclosures made in the Council’s financial statements with respect to the accounting estimate(s) are complete, including the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Expected Credit losses and made in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2021/22.
- 6. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimate(s) and disclosures in the Council’s financial statements due to subsequent events, including due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, or related to the conflict and related sanctions in Ukraine, Russia and/or Belarus.

**P. Specific Representations**

You do not require any specific representations in addition to those above.

As approved by the Audit & Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 26 September 2023.

**Signed on behalf of Fenland District Council:**

**Peter Catchpole**  
**(Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer)**

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**Councillor Kim French**  
**(Chairman of Audit & Risk Management Committee)**

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Agenda Item No:	<b>8</b>	
Committee:	<b>Audit and Risk Management</b>	
Date:	<b>26 September 2023</b>	
Report Title:	<b>Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy</b>	

## 1 Purpose / Summary

The Council requires an updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, and the attached policy provides the structure and processes that should be adopted by the Council against fraud & corruption.

The Policy was last reviewed in February 2017 (Minute CGC30/17).

## 2 Key issues

- The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy has been reviewed against the CIPFA Code of Practice on “Managing the risk of fraud and corruption 2014”, and
- Aligned to the format of the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy of Cambridgeshire County Council.

## 3 Recommendations

The Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) should review and approve the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	David Thacker – Interim Internal Audit Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Amy Brown – Assistant Director, Deputy Monitoring Officer & Data Protection Officer
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	“Managing the risk of fraud” – CIPFA Code of Practice 2014 “Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally” – CIPFA Counter Fraud Centre “UK Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-22” – HM Government “SFIS / Counter Fraud” – Cabinet report C7/15

## 4 Background / Introduction

- 4.1 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy supports the Council's Local Code of Governance, in particular theme 3 "Promotion and demonstration of good governance values". The Policy is necessary to convey the commitment of the Council to its officers and members.
- 4.2 The Policy states that the Council is committed to sound corporate governance and is determined to prevent and eradicate fraud and corruption. It helps management, with oversight from the ARMC, maintain a culture of ethical behaviour with a strong control environment that both deters and prevents fraud.
- 4.3 Management has an ongoing responsibility to prevent and detect fraud. Internal controls, designed to mitigate fraud risk, are built into our systems and processes.
- 4.4 Internal controls are reviewed for effectiveness as part of the Internal Audit Plan, and fraud and error risk are determining factors in prioritising work.
- 4.5 There is a fraud team, as part of the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP), which continually reviews high fraud risk areas of housing, council tax and business rates.
- 4.6 External Audit considers potential for fraud and error when assessing financial statement risk. Review of accounting estimates, accounting journals, revenue and expenditure, provides assurance that the financial statements give a true and fair view.
- 4.7 The Policy has been reviewed to ensure that it remains effective.

## 5 Policy Update

- 5.1 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy states the practices and activities that the Council undertakes to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.
- 5.2 Guidance and best practice is issued periodically from counter fraud agencies, such as the National Crime Agency, CIPFA, and the Cabinet Office. The Council is keen to maintain an effective policy by implementing good practice and controls as they develop.
- 5.3 CIPFA have produced a voluntary code of practice on managing the risk of fraud and corruption in public service organisations. The code illustrates good governance and operational arrangements to help counter fraud and corruption.
- 5.4 Assessment by the external auditors, and the self-assessment review, provide assurance that the Council has adequate arrangements in place for deterring fraud and responding to allegations of fraud. The Council has recognised the threats posed by the current economic conditions, and has balanced the resources that it has access to in order to mitigate and control the risk.
- 5.5 The Policy has been reviewed and is appended to this report. It continues to enable the Council to deliver and maintain best practice in its arrangements for managing fraud risk.
- 5.6 The table below summarises, and provides information on, how the Council has delivered each aim of the strategy.

Strategic aims	Progress
Aim to identify fraud being perpetrated against this organisation and prevent it.	Fraud risk is recorded on the Corporate Risk register. Management are responsible for identifying risks to their processes and systems. The Internal Audit plan considers fraud risk. The plan is agreed with the Corporate Management Team, Team Managers and the ARMC. Resources are prioritised and the internal controls are evaluated for effectiveness.

<p>Continually appraise our systems and policies for new fraud risks.</p>	<p>Fraud and error risk, and effective internal controls, are considered as part of project management when designing a new system.</p> <p>A cross cutting review of fraud also ensures we can highlight emerging and current risks.</p> <p>Professional networks, such as NAFN, CIPFA, are used to gain intelligence of emerging fraud risks.</p>
<p>Work with partners on tackling fraud that affects us and support the national agenda of fighting fraud.</p>	<p>The Council has approved that a dedicated fraud resource be retained as part of the ARP.</p> <p>The Council works with other public sector bodies in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk, and shares intelligence of emerging fraud risks.</p> <p>The Council participates in the National Fraud Initiative data matching exercise which supports the national agenda of fighting fraud.</p>
<p>Account for the effectiveness of our counter fraud arrangements to the public, partners and national stakeholders.</p>	<p>The Council publicly reports on its anti-fraud and corruption policy and strategy, and accounts for effectiveness of internal controls through the Annual Governance Statement. Where appropriate the Council works with partners and stakeholders, such as the externally appointed auditor.</p>

## **6 Anti-Fraud and Corruption Performance and Developments**

- 6.1 The Council joined the ARP in April 2014 as part of the Council's service transformation. This included counter fraud staff that investigate fraud of council tax discounts and benefits, national non domestic rate discounts, and housing benefits. The Benefit Fraud teams at five ARP partner authorities were combined and have worked as a single team since April 2014. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 led to the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS) to combine benefit fraud investigators from Councils, the Department of Works and Pensions and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs into a single welfare benefits fraud investigation service. ARP investigators transferred in September 2015. The ARP Joint Committee agreed that a permanent fraud team should be retained, to review non-benefit related fraud, subject to the approval of ARP Partner Councils. This was agreed by Cabinet in June 2015 (C7/15). The fraud investigation service re-affirms the partnerships stance on fraud, with the capability to investigate Council Tax / Business Rate discounts, reliefs and exemptions, Council Tax Support, Housing applications and Tenancy fraud on behalf of social housing providers.
- 6.2 The Local Audit and Accountability Bill contained provision for the closedown of the Audit Commission. Consequently their counter fraud staff and functions transferred to other public bodies such as the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and the Cabinet Office. The Councils Internal Audit team extract data from Council systems, so that it can be processed through a national data matching service known as the National Fraud Initiative (NFI). It flags up inconsistencies in data that may indicate fraud and error, helping Councils to complete proactive investigation. Data is matched nationally and this work has identified £1.17 billion of local authority fraud, errors and overpayments since 1996. The NFI data matching exercises transferred to the Cabinet Office on 1 April 2015, enabling both ARP and Internal Audit to continue investigating potential matches. The Council has carried out the current exercise to the deadlines set by the Cabinet Office, and is currently working through the matches. This is a good achievement and the process continues to provide positive assurance that internal controls continue to operate effectively.
- 6.3 The Council is a member of the National Anti-Fraud Network, a public sector service which provides data and intelligence on fraud. There has been an increase in reports of corporate fraud attempts against Councils, such as "mandate fraud", "whaling" and "social engineering". Increased attempts suggest that fraudsters are hoping to take advantage of Councils, where reductions in resources could have weakened internal controls. No frauds of this type have been detected, which provides assurance that controls continue to operate effectively.
- 6.4 The Council maintains an Intranet page which provides guidance on managing fraud and corruption risks. This has been updated so that topical risks can be effectively communicated to employees. Internal Audit have considered fraud risks as part of the Audit Plan, proactively shared intelligence, and developed awareness so that all employees can be prepared as possible.
- 6.5 The Home Office conducted a pilot programme to explore the threat from Serious and Organised Crime to publicly procured services in Local Government. From this report some intervention strategies have been suggested to help reduce vulnerabilities identified in the pilot which will be adopted by the Internal Audit team. These include, establishing a Police contact, which is being done in collaboration with the Cambridgeshire Auditing Group, utilising a new auditing tool and checklist to scrutinise business operations to establish where there may be vulnerabilities and the creation of a non-involvement in Serious & Organised Crime Statement for use in invitations to tender as part of the public procurement process.



- 6.6 Following on from the Serious Organised Crime pilot programme the Home Office has introduced the 'UK Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-22'. This strategy works towards achieving three long term goals of;
- Reduced threat to our national security, including from instability caused by corruption overseas
  - Increased prosperity at home and abroad, including for UK businesses
  - Enhanced public confidence in our domestic and international institutions

This strategy has been reviewed and considered in the Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy.

## **7 Outcomes**

- 7.1 The Council completes both proactive and responsive work in managing the risk of fraud. We have participated in data matching exercises, plus used data and intelligence from partners and professional bodies, to proactively identify any potential cases of fraud and error.
- 7.2 Fraud risks have been routinely considered as part of the Council's Risk Management framework.
- 7.3 The Internal Audit Plan has evaluated fraud risks, to focus resources effectively on the most important internal control systems.
- 7.4 The outcome of this work provides assurance for the Annual Governance Statement.

## **8 Effect on corporate objectives**

- 8.1 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy is part of the Council's Local Code of Governance which supports the Quality Organisation corporate objective.

## **9 Conclusions**

- 9.1 The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out the Council's approach to managing the risk of fraud and error. This supports good governance and demonstrates effective financial stewardship and strong public financial management.

## Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy



## Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

### FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO A ZERO-TOLERANCE STANCE ON FRAUD AND CORRUPTION.

#### ANTI-FRAUD & CORRUPTION POLICY STATEMENT

This statement sets out Fenland District Council's (the Council's) policy in relation to fraud and corruption. It has the full support of both the Council's Senior Management, in the form of the Chief Officers, and elected members.

The Council takes its responsibilities to protect the public purse very seriously and is fully committed to the highest ethical standards, to ensure the proper use and protection of public funds and assets. To achieve the objectives set out within the Council's Business Plan 2023-24, the Council needs to maximise the financial resources available to it. In order to do this, the Council has an ongoing commitment to continue to improve its resilience to fraud, corruption and other forms of financial irregularity.

The Council advocates **strict adherence** to its anti-fraud framework and associated policies. In many cases this would be a **zero-tolerance** approach to all forms of fraud, corruption and theft, arising both from within the Council and externally. The Council recognises that fraud and other forms of financial irregularity can:

- Undermine the standards of public service that the Council seeks to achieve.
- Reduce the level of resources and services available for the residents of Fenland; and
- Result in major consequences which reduce confidence in the Council.

This policy defines both the proactive and reactive components of a good practice response to fraud risk management. It sets out the key responsibilities within the Council with regards to fraud prevention, what to do if fraud is suspected and the action that will be taken by management.

The policy provides overarching governance to the Council's suite of counter fraud policies and procedures which include:

- Employee Whistleblowing Policy
- Gifts & Hospitality Policy
- Declaration of Personal Interests
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Risk Management Policy & Strategy
- Information Security & Acceptable Use Policy

This policy adheres to the CIPFA Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption 2014 (The Code). The Code requires leaders of public sector organisations to embed effective standards for countering fraud and corruption in their organisations in order to support good governance and demonstrate effective financial stewardship and strong public financial management.

The five key elements of CIPFA Code are to:

- Acknowledge the responsibility of the governing body – in the Council's case Elected Members and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) – for countering fraud and corruption.
- Identify the fraud and corruption risks.
- Develop an appropriate anti-fraud and corruption policy.
- Provide resources to implement the policy.
- Take action in response to fraud and corruption.

## Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

The five elements link to five key themes: **Govern, Acknowledge, Prevent, Pursue and Protect**, contained within the Local Government Fraud Strategy: Fighting Fraud Locally (2020):

**Govern** – Having robust arrangements and executive support to ensure anti-fraud, bribery and corruption measures are embedded throughout the organisation.

**Acknowledge** – Accessing and understanding fraud risks. Committing the right support and tackling fraud and corruption. Demonstrating that it has a robust anti-fraud response. Communicating the risks to those charged with Governance.

**Prevent** – Making the best use of information and technology. Enhancing fraud controls and processes. Developing a more effective anti-fraud culture. Communicating its activity and successes.

**Pursue** – Prioritising fraud recovery and use of civil sanctions. Developing capability and capacity to punish offenders. Collaborating across geographical and sectoral boundaries. Learning lessons and closing the gaps.

**Protect** – Protecting itself and its residents. Recognising the harm that fraud can cause in the community. Protecting itself and its residents from fraud.

The aims of this policy are to:

- Help Council staff identify when there are reasons to suspect fraud or corruption.
- Enable and encourage everyone to raise concerns relating to fraud, corruption, bribery, or theft by contacting the Internal Audit Manager.
- Provide a variety of alternative contacts with whom concerns can be raised.
- Give confidence to anybody raising concerns that they will be investigated seriously and in line with this policy.
- Show how concerns raised will be dealt with and escalated.
- Set out the Council's commitment to a zero-tolerance stance on fraud and corruption.
- Reinforce an anti-fraud culture across its employees and members.
- Outline measures already in place to prevent and detect fraud.

This policy has been developed in line with to the Council's core values, CIPFA best practice, and the statutory requirements set out by the Fraud Act 2006 and the Bribery Act 2010. The Council expects all its employees, members and associated persons to act legally, with integrity, and in accordance with the Council's values and policies at all times. Any concerns raised regarding possible instances of fraud or corruption will be investigated seriously.

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# Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

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# Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out the Council's corporate approach to suspected fraud, theft, corruption and bribery. It explains how the Council seeks to maintain an anti-fraud culture, with zero tolerance for fraud and corruption.
- 1.2. The Council recognises that most people are honest and would never intentionally defraud the Council. This policy provides a safeguard against the risk of fraud as well as guiding staff, Members and service users on what to do if fraud or corruption is suspected.
- 1.3. This policy covers both internal and external fraud against the Council. As such, it applies to:
  - All members and employees of FDC.
  - Any person working for, or on behalf of, the Council. This includes contractors, consultants, or subsidiary agents who work for the Council.
  - All users of FDC services. This includes Fenland residents; those in receipt of money, goods or services from the Council; and those who communicate with the Council.
- 1.4. Please see Appendix 1 for a detailed breakdown of how this policy is relevant to different roles across the Council. This includes Council officers and members, and contractors.

## 2. What is fraud and corruption?

### 2.1. What does fraud and corruption look like?

- 2.1.1 Fraud, corruption, and bribery can appear in many forms. These offences may be committed by individuals external to the Council, such as suppliers. Or they could be committed by individuals internal to the Council, such as Council staff. Technical legal definitions of these offences are included in Appendix 2. This policy covers:

## Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

- **Theft** of Council assets, including money.
- **Bribery** i.e., offering or accepting money (or other forms of advantage) to influence the actions of someone in charge of a public duty. Bribery can include inappropriate gifts and hospitality.
- **Fraud** i.e., a deception committed for financial or personal gain. For example, internal fraud could include a member of staff falsifying timesheets in order to get paid for overtime that was not worked. External fraud could involve an organisation submitting false information in order to get a grant payment.
- **Corruption** i.e., someone abusing their position to obtain any type of financial or personal advantage for themselves or others.

### 2.2. What are the warning signs of possible fraud or corruption?

2.2.1 To identify fraud and corruption taking place, staff and members should be alert for suspicious behaviour. This could include anything that just 'doesn't seem right'.

2.2.2 In the context of FDC, examples of some warning signs that might suggest possible internal fraud or corruption include:

- Individuals who refuse to follow Council policies and procedures. This is especially concerning with regards to policies which require financial approval, or where multiple people are supposed to be involved in a process, but one person insists on doing everything instead.
- Individuals applying pressure to staff to make decisions they would not normally make, or to cut corners.
- Individuals who have a very close relationship with a particular supplier or partner.
- Senior staff members becoming involved in low-level operational decision making.
- Cash or IT equipment going missing.
- Individuals submitting false information or documentation with the intent to gain from this. For example, this could include submitting false overtime or expenses claims. It would also include individuals lying about or falsifying their qualifications.
- Officers who repeatedly request to work extra hours or to work in the office outside normal business hours. Individuals who refuse to take holiday.

## **Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy**

- Individuals who deliberately conceal information required by the Council. For example, staff who do not disclose convictions or outside interests which conflict with their role at the Council.

2.2.2 Examples of some warning signs to look out for that might suggest possible external fraud or corruption include:

- Contractors submitting false performance or financial information. This might be done to obtain payments or keep a contract.
- Service users, grant recipients or suppliers who refuse to engage with the Council. This could manifest as refusing or avoiding providing documentation when it is requested.
- Individuals providing false or misleading documentation in order to access services or advantages to which they are not entitled. For example, obtaining a direct payment, school place, or a disabled blue badge when they are not eligible.
- Cybercrime such as 'phishing'. For example, officers may receive fake emails which appear to be from real suppliers requesting payment.

### **2.3. What should I do to prevent fraud and corruption?**

2.3.1 Everyone can play a vital role in identifying and reporting any possible instances of theft, fraud or corruption. If you suspect theft, fraud or corruption, you must report it via the procedure set out at Section 3, below.

2.3.2 It's important to ensure you are familiar with the Council's policies and procedures, and that you follow them in the course of your work. Many different Council policies include requirements which are there to prevent fraud and corruption. You should also ensure that other staff you work with are following policies and procedures as well. If you work with contractors or partners who deliver services on behalf of the Council, you should ensure that they meet the same high standards of ethical conduct expected of Council staff.

2.3.3 Appendix 1 gives full details of the roles and responsibilities placed on different groups of staff, Members and partners in preventing and detecting fraud and corruption.



## Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

### 3. How can I raise concerns?

- 3.1. All staff and Members of the council **must** report concerns if they have any suspicion that theft, fraud or corruption may have occurred. If fraud or corruption is suspected, staff must not undertake an investigation themselves. This is because ad-hoc investigations risk accidentally compromising evidence (and making it inadmissible if the case did go to court). They also run the risk of tipping off the individual(s) under suspicion.
- 3.2. Concerns about theft, fraud or corruption should be reported to the Council's Internal Audit team.

Internal Audit	Whistleblowing Service
Internal Audit: amybrown@fenland.gov.uk	Head of HR: santhony@fenland.gov.uk
You can also contact the Internal Audit Manager or the Chief Finance Officer directly.	More information on reporting concerns via the Whistleblowing service can be found in the FDC Whistleblowing Policy.

- 3.3. If you do not feel able to raise concerns through Internal Audit, any of the named contacts in the Council's Whistleblowing Policy can be contacted instead. Members of the public can also report any concerns they have via the Internal Audit department or Whistleblowing service.
- 3.4. Internal Audit lead the corporate response to all whistleblowing referrals relating to theft, fraud, corruption and financial impropriety. They can ensure that an appropriate investigation will be undertaken. This reduces the risk of evidence being compromised or destroyed. Internal Audit also maintain records of suspected theft and fraud for the Council's transparency data.
- 3.5. Anybody who suspects that a crime is being committed in respect of FDC property or against/by FDC staff or members should contact their line manager or Internal Audit initially. Internal Audit will refer reports to the police only when required. If theft is suspected, officers should also alert the Council's Insurance team.

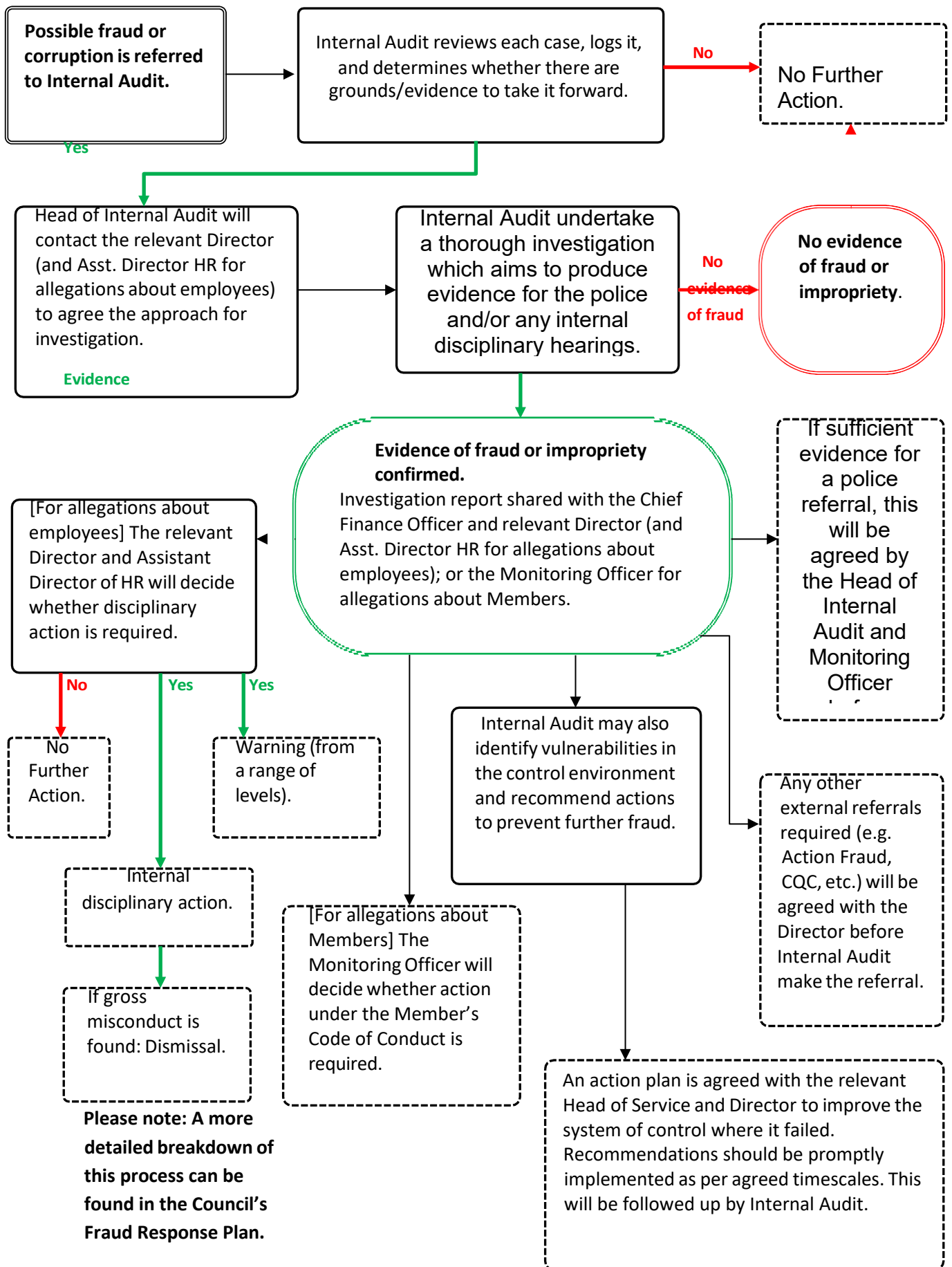
### 4. How will my concerns be dealt with?

- 4.1 The Fraud Investigation Flowchart at Section 4.4 below sets out how allegations of theft, fraud and corruption will be dealt with once a concern is raised. A more detailed breakdown of the process can be found in the Council's Fraud Response Plan. This is maintained by Internal Audit.

## **Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy**

- 4.2 Investigations may be carried out solely by Internal Audit, or by management with support and guidance from Internal Audit. In some instances, if a concern about theft, fraud or corruption is closely linked to other allegations (such as safeguarding or Respect at Work concerns) it may be agreed on a case-by-case basis that another service, such as HR, will take the lead on the investigation with Internal Audit supporting and contributing to the process. suspicions of fraud, corruption or bribery relating to elected Members will be referred for investigation under the Member's Code of Conduct.
- 4.3 Concerns raised in good faith that turn out to be unfounded or cannot be proved will never result in any negative consequences for those who reported them. However, unfounded allegations made by Council officers for malicious purposes may be referred to HR. Malicious allegations may constitute misconduct and have potential disciplinary consequences.

## 4.4 High-Level Fraud Investigation Flowchart



## **5. How does the Council prevent fraud and corruption from occurring?**

### **5.1. Zero-tolerance for fraud and corruption:**

5.1.1 FDC is committed to taking a zero-tolerance stand against theft, fraud, bribery and corruption. The Council commits to the following key principles in responding to fraud and corruption:

- Police referral wherever appropriate.
- Prosecution, including prosecution through civil and criminal courts in the Council's name or through the police.
- Seeking full recovery of stolen or fraudulently obtained public funds by all legal means.
- Disciplinary action and termination of employment where employees are proven to have defrauded or to have attempted to defraud the Council. This includes where employees are complicit with another person's attempts to defraud the Council., or any involvement in bribery or corruption.
- Referring concerns about fraud, corruption, theft or bribery relating to an elected Member for investigation in line with the Member's Code of Conduct.
- Taking action against Members or employees shown to be involved in fraud, theft or corruption under the relevant Code of Conduct, even if the incident does not involve the Council or its finances.
- Termination of contracts with partners and contractors.
- Referring the case to other external agencies, partners or licensing bodies.
- Settlements between the Council and employees/contractors may be deemed necessary as a way of dealing with a case of alleged fraud or corruption. This will only be undertaken following agreement by the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer and following an independent review by Counsel.

### **5.2 How the Council tries to prevent fraud and corruption:**

5.2.1 The Council seeks to maintain a culture of high ethical standards, probity and openness. The authority's culture supports its zero-tolerance stance on theft, fraud, bribery and corruption. The Council seeks to engage all staff, members, contractors and members of the public to raise concerns about fraud and corruption, in the knowledge that such concerns will be dealt with appropriately.

5.2.2 Internal control measures are embedded throughout all the Council's procedures and systems which aim to prevent or detect theft, fraud and corruption. The Council's

computer systems enforce many of these controls. This means staff cannot bypass controls, especially in relation to high-risk functions such as treasury management and payment of funds. Examples of the key internal controls within the Council include:

- Internal policies and procedures (including this Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy, the Whistleblowing Policy, the authority's Financial Procedures and Contract Procedure Rules, the Anti-Money Laundering Policy, and Officer/Member Codes of Conduct).
- Declarations of Interest, Gifts & Hospitality and Related Parties processes. These require members and staff to declare their outside interests.
- Separation of duties and access controls in financial functions.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for all staff, Members, partners and contractors in preventing and detecting fraud, bribery and corruption (see Appendix 1).
- The role of the Audit & Risk Management Committee. The Committee has oversight of the Council's governance arrangements and control systems to prevent and detect fraud.
- External audit of the Council's financial statements.
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption e-learning is available to all Council staff.
- Regular awareness-raising exercises about the risk of fraud and corruption, led by Internal Audit.

5.2.3 Internal Audit conduct regular reviews across the Council's system of internal control. These aim to highlight weaknesses in the control environment and identify any instances where the system of internal control has been breached. If an audit investigation concludes that fraud or corruption has occurred, the Council will identify the vulnerabilities in the system of internal control which allowed the misconduct to occur and rectify them.

## **6 How is this policy reviewed and monitored?**

6.1 FDC Internal Audit is responsible for oversight and maintenance of this Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy. The Audit & Risk Management Committee is the body responsible for approving any changes made to the policy.

6.2 Internal Audit will review and update this policy at least every three years to ensure it remains up to date. More frequent updates will be undertaken if required by a change in legislation or the risk environment. Outcomes of reviews will be reported to the Audit & Risk Management Committee.

## Appendix 1

### • Roles and Responsibilities for Countering Fraud

#### 1. All employees

- 1.1 All employees are responsible for complying with this policy, the Authority's Constitution and Financial Regulations, the Anti-Money Laundering Policy and other Codes of Conduct and policies pertaining to their job role. These include guidance on personal conduct, declaring any possible conflicts of interest, and receiving gifts or hospitality. In addition, all employees must follow instructions given to them by management, particularly surrounding the safekeeping of Council assets.
- 1.2 All employees must ensure that they avoid situations where there is a potential for a conflict of interest and disclose any possible conflicts of interest via the procedure set out in the Code of Conduct.
- 1.3 Employees should always be vigilant to the possibility of fraud, theft or corruption occurring in their workplace and be able to share their concerns with management. Employees may raise concerns with their line manager, who should report concerns on to Internal Audit, or they can raise concerns directly with Internal Audit. Employees can also raise concerns via the Whistleblowing Service, which can be used to make reports anonymously.

#### 2. Elected Members:

- 2.1 As elected representatives, all members of the authority have a duty to protect the Council from all forms of abuse, including fraud and financial impropriety. Members must comply with core Council policies which seek to prevent fraud and corruption, including the Code of Conduct for Members, the Council's Financial Regulations, Constitution, and the relevant legislation.
- 2.2 In addition, Members must lead by example in demonstrating the highest standards of probity and conduct to champion the culture of zero tolerance on fraud throughout FDC. Conduct and ethical matters are specifically brought to the attention of members during induction and include the declaration and registration of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests, declaring the potential for a conflict of interest, and recording the receipt of all gifts and hospitality. The Monitoring Officer advises members of new legislative or procedural requirements.

### **3. Audit & Risk Management Committee:**

- 3.1 The Audit & Risk Management Committee and its members have specific responsibility regarding the oversight of the Council's governance arrangements and the adequacy of control systems to prevent and detect fraud. The Audit & Risk Management Committee receives periodic reports from Internal Audit on suspected and proven incidents of theft, fraud and corruption.

### **4. CMT and Directors:**

- 4.1 CMT and Directors must lead by example in demonstrating the highest standards of probity and conduct to champion the culture of zero tolerance on fraud throughout FDC. They are expected to strive to create an environment in which their staff feel able to approach them with any concerns they may have about suspected irregularities.
- 4.2 CMT and Directors are responsible for the communication and implementation of this policy in their work area, ensuring that their employees are aware of the Financial Regulations and other policies, and that the requirements of each are being met in their everyday business activities. They are also responsible for ensuring that the Council's expectations around the ethical conduct of contractors, partners and anyone else acting on behalf of the Council is communicated, and the conduct of contractors and partners is monitored.
- 4.3 CMT and Directors also have the responsibility for ensuring that effective systems of control are in place corporately and within their directorate to prevent and detect fraud, and that those systems operate properly. CMT and Directors submit an annual self-assessment of these processes, to be included in the Council's Annual Governance Statement.

### **5. Heads of Service/Managers:**

- 5.1 All managers (including Heads of Service) are responsible for the communication and implementation of this policy in their work area, ensuring that their employees are aware of the Financial Regulations and other policies, and that the requirements of each are being met in their everyday business activities. Managers must lead by example in demonstrating the highest standards of probity and conduct to champion the culture of zero tolerance on fraud throughout FDC. They are expected to strive to create an environment in which their staff feel able to

approach them with any concerns they may have about suspected irregularities.

- 5.2 A key preventative measure against fraud and corruption relies on managers taking effective steps during recruitment processes to establish, as far as possible, the honesty and integrity of all employees. Managers must comply with the Authority's formal recruitment procedures during this process. After employment, managers are responsible for ensuring that relevant training is provided and special arrangements implemented, when necessary, where staff are dealing with cash or financial systems that generate payments. Checks must be carried out at least annually to ensure that proper procedures are being followed, in order to inform the directorate annual self- assessment.
- 5.3 Similarly, managers must ensure that any contractors, partners or other organisations or individuals acting on behalf of the Council commit to the Council's requirement to act with honesty and integrity at all times. Managers must ensure that contractors, partners and anyone else working on behalf of the Council do not give or offer any inducement, advantage or bribe to any other individual or organisation with the intention of using this to obtain or retain business, or to obtain or retain an advantage in the conduct of business. This applies whether the intention is to obtain or retain business/advantage for themselves, or on behalf of the Council.
- 5.4 Managers must report any suspicions of possible fraud or corruption to Internal Audit. No action should be taken which may alert those suspected of involvement. The handling of evidence at the early stages of an investigation can be critical to the outcome, so managers should seek advice from Internal Audit before trying to investigate any allegations.

## **6. Internal Audit and Risk Management:**

- 6.1 The Head of Internal Audit (in consultation with the Assistant Director of HR) shall determine whether a concern or suspicion regarding fraud requires investigation by Internal Audit as opposed to management or HR. In all cases where employees are involved, Audit will work with HR and appropriate senior management to ensure that correct procedures are followed and that this policy and the Council's Fraud Response Plan are adhered to.
- 6.2 Internal Audit shall ensure all cases of suspected irregularity are investigated in accordance with the requirements of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984,



Human Rights Act 1998, Fraud Act 2006, Bribery Act 2010 and other relevant legislation. Internal Audit also plays a vital preventative role in ensuring that effective systems and procedures are in place to prevent and detect fraud and corruption. Internal Audit liaise with management to recommend changes in procedures to prevent losses to the Authority.

- 6.3 Internal Audit shall report to CMT and the Audit & Risk Management Committee regarding the application of the zero-tolerance statement within this policy. Additionally, Internal Audit maintains records of all reported cases of suspected theft, fraud, corruption or irregularity and report on these as required by the Transparency Code, Central Government and External Audit.

## **7. External Audit:**

- 7.1 Independent External Audit is an essential safeguard in the stewardship of public money. This role is delivered through carrying out specific reviews that are designed to test (amongst other things) the adequacy of the authority's financial systems, and arrangements for preventing and detecting fraud and corruption. It is not the external auditor's function to prevent fraud and irregularity, but the integrity of public funds is always a matter of general concern. External auditors are always alert to the possibility of fraud and irregularity and will act without undue delay if grounds for suspicion come to their notice.

## **8. Contractors and Partners:**

- 8.1 Contractors and partners are expected to create an environment in which their staff feel able to approach them (or the Council directly) with any concerns they may have about suspected irregularities including fraud and corruption or other whistleblowing concerns. Where they are unsure of the procedures, they should refer to the relevant Director for that area or may approach the Head of Internal Audit & Risk Management directly on any Whistleblowing issue.
- 8.2 Contractors, partners and anyone else working on behalf of the Council must operate to the same standards of ethical conduct expected from Council staff. Contractors, partners and anyone else working on behalf of the Council must not give or offer any inducement, advantage or bribe to any other individual or organisation with the intention of using this to obtain or retain business, or to obtain or retain an advantage in the conduct of business. This applies whether the intention is to obtain or retain business/advantage for themselves, or on behalf of the Council.

**9. External Bodies:**

9.1 Internal Audit has arranged, and will keep under review, procedures and arrangements to develop and encourage the exchange of information on national and local fraud and corruption activity, in relation to Local Authorities with external agencies such as: police, county, unitary and district council groups, the external audit service, Department of Work and Pensions and other government departments.

**10. Stakeholders and Customers:**

10.1 Whilst this policy is primarily aimed at implementing an anti-fraud culture and processes within the Council, its stakeholders and customers may become aware of issues that they feel may indicate fraud or corruption. All stakeholders and customers can report any concerns about theft, fraud or irregularity involving the Council via the Whistleblowing Policy.

## Appendix 2

### • Legal Definitions of Relevant Offences

This appendix seeks to provide a summary of the main criminal offences relating to fraud, theft, bribery and/or corruption which are likely to be relevant to a public authority such as FDC.

#### 1. Fraud:

1.0.1 The Fraud Act 2006 introduced one general offence of fraud, which could be committed in three ways, as set out below:

- Fraud by false representation
- Fraud by failing to disclose information
- Fraud by abuse of position

#### 1.1 Fraud by false representation:

1.1.1 A person commits fraud by false representation if they dishonestly make a false representation and intend in doing so to make a gain for themselves, cause loss to another, or expose another to a risk of loss.

1.1.2 Representations may be express or implied. A representation is false if it is either untrue or misleading, and the person making the representation knows it might be untrue or misleading. Under the Fraud Act 2006, a representation may be regarded as made if it (or anything implying it) is submitted in any form to any system or device designed to receive, convey or respond to communications (with or without human intervention).

#### 1.2 Fraud by failing to disclose information:

1.2.1 A person commits fraud by failing to disclose information if they dishonestly fail to disclose information which they are under a legal duty to disclose and intend in doing so to make a gain for themselves, cause a loss to another, or expose another to a risk of loss.

#### 1.3 Fraud by abuse of position:

1.3.1 A person commits fraud by abuse of position if they occupy a position in which they are expected to safeguard, or not to act against, the financial interests of another person; they dishonestly abuse that position, and intend in abusing that position to make a gain for themselves, cause a loss to another, or expose another to a risk of

loss. A person can be regarded as having abused their position where their conduct consisted of an omission rather than an act.

## **2. Theft:**

2.1 The Theft Act 1968 outlines that a person is guilty of theft if they dishonestly appropriate property belonging to another, with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it.

## **3. Bribery:**

3.0.1 The Bribery Act 2010 provides offences for bribing another person and offences relating to being bribed:

### **3.1 Offences of bribing another person:**

3.1.1 A person is guilty of an offence if they offer, promise, or give a financial or other type of advantage to another person, and:

- The person providing the advantage intends it to either induce or reward any person for the improper performance of a relevant function or activity; or
- The person providing the advantage knows or believes that the acceptance of the advantage would itself constitute the improper performance of a relevant function or activity.

### **3.2 Offences relating to being bribed:**

3.2.1 A person is guilty of an offence if they request, agree to receive or accept a financial or other type of advantage, and:

- The person on the receiving end of the advantage intends that, in consequence, a relevant function or activity should be performed improperly (whether by them or another person); or
- The request, agreement or acceptance itself constitutes the improper performance of a relevant function or activity.

3.2.2 Similarly, an offence is committed if a person requests, agrees to receive or accepts a financial or other type of advantage as a reward for the improper performance of a relevant function or activity, or if a relevant function or activity is performed improperly by anybody in anticipation of a person requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a financial or other type of advantage.

### **3.3 Offences relating to failure to prevent bribery:**

- 3.3.1 The Bribery Act created the offence, under Section 7, which can be committed by commercial organisations failing to prevent persons associated with them from bribing another person on their behalf. Note that it is not an offence for an organisation to fail to prevent persons associated with them from receiving bribes.
- 3.3.2 The definition of a commercial organisation may include public organisations involved solely or jointly in commercial activities. In 2015, CIPFA and the NCA issued an alert stating that “a local authority may be liable to prosecution under Section 7 of the Act if a person ‘associated’ with it bribes another person, intending to obtain or retain business or a business advantage for the local authority. An ‘associated’ person may be an employee, agent or subsidiary of the local authority”. (Local Authorities and the UK Bribery Act, National Crime Agency Amber Alert Reference A0186-ECC.)
- 3.3.3 This broad scope means that contractors could be seen as associated persons if they are performing services for, or on behalf of, a local authority. A supplier may also be an associated person if they are performing services for a local authority rather than simply acting as a seller of goods. See Appendix 3 for a summary of how the Council demonstrates that it has adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery taking place.

### **4. Corruption:**

- 4.1 Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. The UK Government’s 2017-2022 Anti-Corruption Strategy states that corruption involves “the abuse of office and position to benefit a third party (an individual, business or other organisation), in return for payment or other reward”. Offences in the UK relating to corruption are contained across multiple pieces of legislation, including but not limited to the Fraud Act 2006 and the Bribery Act 2010.

### **5. Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing:**

- 5.1 See FDC’s Anti-Money Laundering Policy, Appendix 1 for details of these offences.

## Appendix 3

### • **The Six Principles of Anti-Bribery**

Secretary of State guidance around the Bribery Act 2010 advises that organisations wishing to prevent bribery being committed on their behalf should build their anti-bribery procedures based on six principles. These are listed below, along with high-level summaries of how FDC ensures that it has met the requirements of each principle.

Please note that while the guidance refers to ‘commercial organisations’, CIPFA and NCA guidance confirms that in this context the definition of a commercial organisation may include public organisations involved solely or jointly in commercial activities.

- 1) Proportionate procedures** – *An organisation’s procedures to prevent bribery by persons associated with it are proportionate to the bribery risks it faces and to the nature, scale and complexity of the commercial organisation’s activities. They are also clear, practical, accessible, effectively implemented and enforced.*

This Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out FDC’s corporate anti-fraud policy framework, which seeks to prevent bribery along with other forms of corruption and fraud. The policy framework includes a range of key policies such as the Council’s procedures for gifts and hospitality, declaration of interests, and the Financial Regulations.

- 2) Top-level commitment** – *The top-level management of a commercial organisation (be it a board of directors, the owners or any other equivalent body or person) are committed to preventing bribery by persons associated with it.*

FDC’s Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy sets out this commitment of zero tolerance to all forms of fraud, bribery and corruption.

- 3) Risk assessment** – *The commercial organisation assesses the nature and extent of its exposure to potential external and internal risks of bribery on its behalf by persons associated with it. The assessment is periodic, informed and documented.*

FDC conducts regular reviews of its exposure to the risk of internal and external bribery, fraud, corruption and theft, and the risk of money laundering, as part of its ongoing risk management process.

- 4) Due diligence** – *The commercial organisation applies due diligence procedures, taking a proportionate and risk-based approach, in respect of persons who perform or will perform services for or on behalf of the organisation, in order to mitigate identified bribery risks.*

FDC's corporate due diligence procedure is set out in Section 6 of its Anti Money Laundering Policy.

- 5) Communication (including training)** – *The commercial organisation seeks to ensure that its bribery prevention policies and procedures are embedded and understood throughout the organisation through internal and external communication, including training, that is proportionate to the risks it faces.*

FDC's Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Whistleblowing Policy are available to staff on the Council's intranet, and periodic awareness-raising campaigns are conducted by the Internal Audit and Risk Management team. The Council's Fraud Prevention e-learning module is also available to all staff and includes training on identifying and responding to bribery and corruption, fraud and money laundering.

- 6) Monitoring and review** – *The commercial organisation monitors, and reviews procedures designed to prevent bribery by persons associated with it and makes improvements where necessary.*

The Council's Anti-Fraud and Corruption policy and associated policies and procedures are owned by the Internal Audit service. These policies will be reviewed and updated at least every three years by Internal Audit, or more frequently if required.

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Agenda Item No:	9	
Committee:	Audit and Risk Management	
Date:	26 September 2023	
Report Title:	Annual Governance Statement 2022/23	

## 1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 Regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, requires the Council to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The CIPFA Finance Advisory Network has issued detailed practical guidance for meeting the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

## 2 Key issues

- 2.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations have been updated to bring them closer to corporate governance requirements in the private sector, and elsewhere in the public sector. The latest version applies to the financial year beginning on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. Within the regulations, there is still a requirement to produce an AGS which should be approved in advance of the statement of accounts. The AGS should be prepared in accordance with proper practices, which reflects the approach already adopted by this Council.
- 2.2 The principles of good governance contained within the CIPFA Guidance on Delivering Good Governance (2016 Edition) have been reflected in the AGS. The guidance outlines the following principles for achieving good governance:
- Behaving with integrity;
  - Demonstrating a strong commitment to ethical values and respecting the rule of law;
  - Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement;
  - Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits;
  - Determining the interventions necessary to achieve the intended outcomes;
  - Developing the entities capacity;
  - Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management; and
  - Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.
- 2.3 The Corporate Governance Committee<sup>1</sup> approved a Local Code of Governance for the Council (minute CG22/06). This sets out the Policy within which a framework for governance of the Council is monitored.

<sup>1</sup> Now the Audit & Risk Management Committee.

- 2.4 Each year a statement is produced which assesses compliance of the Council’s actual governance arrangements with the themes within the Local Code of Governance. This statement is commonly referred to as the Annual Governance Statement, which itself includes “Governance Issues” arising in the year to which it refers and an action plan to address those issues.
- 2.5 An AGS has been produced for the year 2022/23, which summarises the position for the year in respect of governance and internal control, and again highlights any “Governance Issues”.
- 2.6 The statement is signed by the Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer and Leader of the Council as further assurance of the standard of governance that has been achieved by the Council. The statement must accompany the Council’s financial statements.

### 3 Recommendations

The Committee considers the content of the AGS and approves its content for inclusion in the Council’s published statement of accounts 2021/22.

Wards Affected	All
Forward Plan Reference	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	N/A
Report Originator(s)	David Thacker – Interim Internal Audit Manager
Contact Officer(s)	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Amy Brown – Head of Governance and Legal Services
Background Paper(s)	CIPFA Delivering Good Governance in Local Government CIPFA Addendum to Good Governance in Local Government CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 FDC Local Code of Governance

# FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

## 2022-23 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

### 1. **Scope of Responsibility**

Fenland District Council (FDC) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively, providing value for money. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, FDC is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, and for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

FDC has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. A copy of the code is on our website at [www.fenland.gov.uk](http://www.fenland.gov.uk) or can be obtained from the Chief Finance Officer. This statement explains how FDC has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of regulation 6 (1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of an Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

### 2. **Definition of Corporate Governance**

Corporate Governance generally refers to the processes by which an organisation is directed, controlled, led, and held to account.

Good Governance in the public sector means “achieving the intended outcomes while acting in the public interest at all times”.

In undertaking all Council work, and exercising community leadership responsibilities, the Council will have regard for the four principles of good corporate governance.

- Openness
- Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Accountability

### 3. The Governance Framework

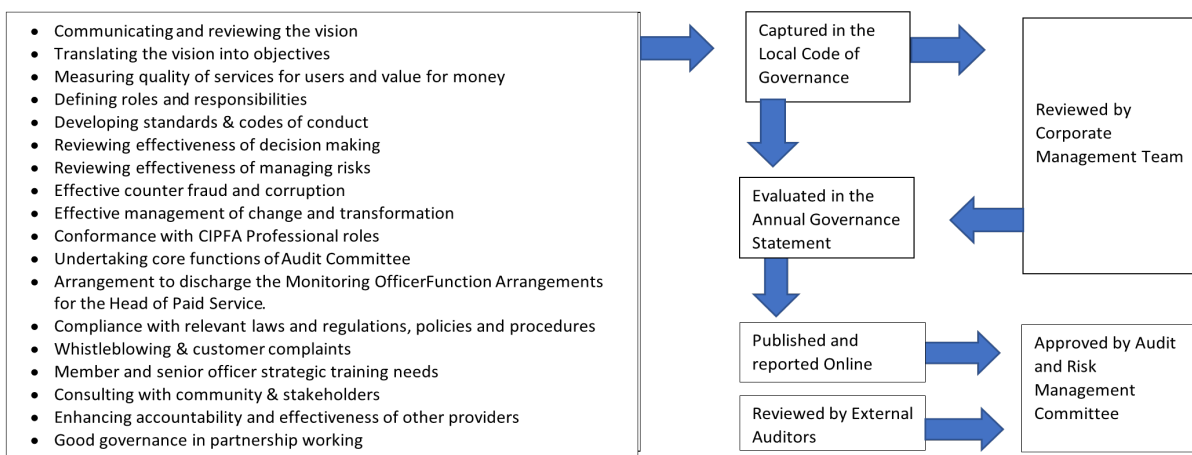
Our governance framework comprises the culture, values, systems, and processes by which the Council is directed and controlled. It brings together an underlying set of legislative and regulatory requirements, good practice, and management processes.

The Council has a responsibility for ensuring a sound system of governance to meet statutory requirements requiring public authorities to adhere to proper practices in reviewing the effectiveness of their system of internal control and preparing an AGS.

This AGS meets that requirement and sets out brief details of the arrangements that the Council has in place regarding the key systems and processes comprising the Council’s governance framework, which incorporates the Local Code of Governance adopted by the Council covering six themes, underpinned by the supporting principles contained within the “CIPFA/SOLACE Framework for delivering good governance in Local Government (2016 Edition)”.

#### Elements of the Framework

The key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the authority’s governance arrangements are as follows:



The Governance Framework for 2022-23 supports the Council’s aims and objectives. which are published on our website in the Business Plan. The vision states:

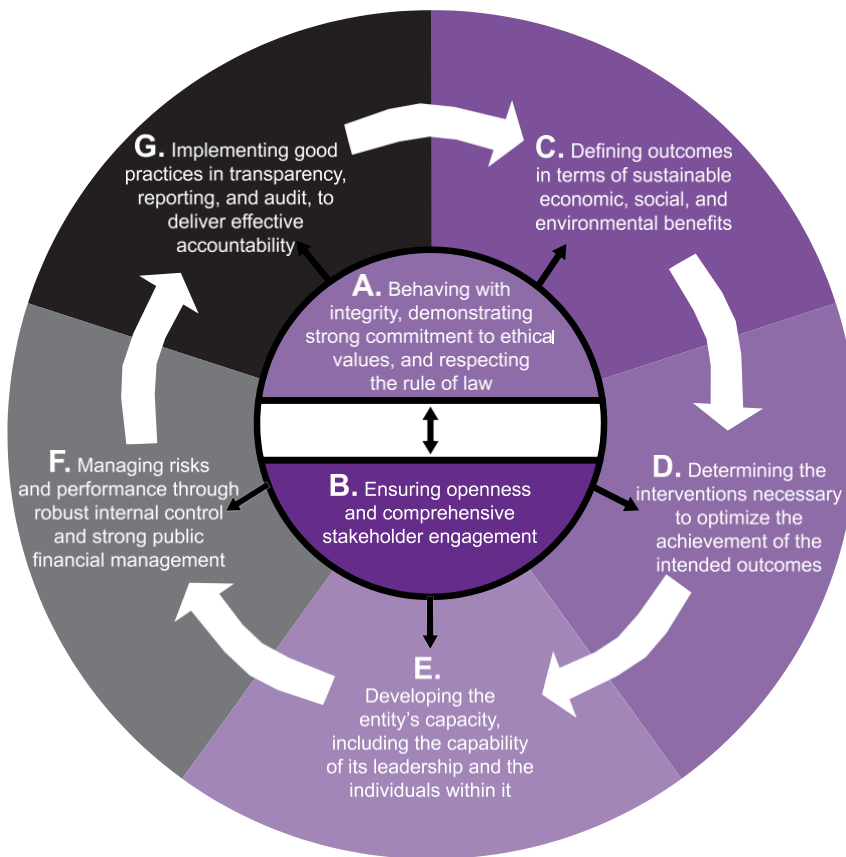
*“The outcomes we focus on, the actions we’ll deliver through working collaboratively with our partners and communities are what change people’s lives for the better and for the long-term. They help to improve opportunities for everyone and make Fenland an even better place to live, work and raise a family.”*

The Business Plan sets outs our Priority Areas with specific and measurable actions. Performance against the Business Plan is published in the Annual report and is available on the website.

## Local Code of Governance

We are responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance which incorporates the systems of internal control.

The governance framework is recorded in our Local Code of Governance, which is underpinned by the 7 principles of good governance as set out in CIPFA / SOLACE publication 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016'. The principles are:



## Roles and Responsibilities

Governance Structures	Roles and Responsibilities
Council	The Council agrees the budget and policy framework, such as the Business Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy, including the General Fund Budget and Council Tax levels and the Commercial and Investment Strategy. Further details are published on our website.
Cabinet	The Cabinet is the Council’s principal decision-making body, charged with implementing the budget and policy framework agreed by the Council. Further details are published on our website.
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	<p>The management team structure includes a CMT of a Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors and is supported by an operational Management Team. Both teams consider policy formulation and future planning.</p> <p>In 2022-23 it was decided to support the three statutory roles, Head of Paid Service, Chief Financial &amp; s151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, with three Assistant Directors. Previously, the Assistant Directors had been appointed in an acting capacity pending review.</p>
Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC)	<p>The ARMC plays a vital role in overseeing and promoting good governance, ensuring accountability, and reviewing how things are done. It provides an assurance role to the council by examining areas such as audit, risk, internal control, anti-fraud, and financial accountability.</p> <p>The ARMC exists to challenge the way things are being done, making sure the right processes are in place. It works closely with Internal Audit and Senior Management to continually improve the governance, risk, and control environment. Meeting details and minutes are published on the website.</p>
Conduct Committee	The Conduct Committee is in place to promote and maintain high standards of conduct by all members. It reviews formal complaints, ensures compliance with requirements for ethical standards, provides advice on conduct matters and maintains a framework for identifying and implementing new legislative requirements upon the Council.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	The Overview and Scrutiny committee monitors the performance of the Leader and Cabinet and scrutinises services and policies throughout the district. This may be services directly provided by the Council or services provided through partnership working arrangements and makes recommendations for improvement. Meeting details and minutes are published on the website.

## **Other Review and Assurance Mechanisms**

Management have helped to review the Local Code of Governance and inform the AGS. In addition, assurances can be provided from other sources, as detailed below:

### **Head of Internal Audit Opinion**

The Head of Internal Audit provides an independent opinion on the overall adequacy of the effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and control (GRC) arrangements and the extent to which the Council can rely on it. This has been considered in the development of the AGS.

The Internal Audit Annual Report was presented to the Audit and Risk Management Committee in July 2023. This report outlined the key findings of the audit work undertaken during 2022-23 and other sources of assurance that were used to support the Annual Audit opinion, including any areas of significant weakness in the control environment.

From the audit reviews undertaken, no areas were identified where it was considered that, if the risks highlighted materialised, would have a major impact on the organisation. In each instance where it has been identified that the control environment was not strong enough or was not complied with sufficiently to prevent risks to the organisation, recommendations have been issued to further improve the system of internal control and compliance. The implementation of the actions is followed up by Internal Audit and is reported to the ARMC.

It is the opinion of the Head of Internal Audit that, considering all available evidence, adequate assurance can be given over the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's overall internal control risk and governance arrangements during the financial year 2022-23.

### **External Audit**

The externally appointed auditors, Ernst & Young, issued their annual audit results report in September 2023 which provided an unqualified opinion on the 2021-22 statement of accounts and the Council's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources. The report praised the management and staff of the Council, and reflected positively on the co-operation, quality of working papers and timeliness of provision of information.

The Council continues to demonstrate compliance against the Customer Service Excellence standard, the UK Government's national standard for excellence in customer service. The standard demonstrates our culture and behaviours, and that we engage with customers and partners, and deliver effective use of resources.

#### **4. Review of effectiveness**

FDC has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its GRC arrangements. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the CMT and Management within the authority who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Internal Audit annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

As well as the annual review, the GRC arrangements are maintained and reviewed by a series of comprehensive processes throughout the year. The following actions and processes have been applied in maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control over the last twelve months:



Principle	Review of effectiveness for the 2022-23 Financial Year
<p>A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of the law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Codes of Conduct for Council Members, with revised guidance procedures in place. All members are required to sign and registration of interest with 28 days of acceptance of office and all Council meetings require a declaration of interest to be disclosed.</li> <li>• Staff codes of conduct, capability and disciplinary procedures, anti-fraud and corruption policies, Whistleblowing policy, Values statement, and competency framework.</li> <li>• Training is provided for Members to support them in their roles, and they are encouraged to attend training including on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.</li> <li>• Specific legal and regulatory requirements and/or Standards and Codes of Practice are maintained by staff for membership of relevant professional bodies, including continuing professional development.</li> <li>• Up to date register of gifts and hospitality</li> <li>• Complaints policy</li> <li>• The Constitution, including terms of reference for committees, and compliance requirements with relevant laws.</li> <li>• Compliance with CIPFA’s statement on the role of the Chief Finance Officer</li> <li>• Monitoring Officer provision</li> <li>• Recording of legal advice provided</li> <li>• Statutory guidance is followed.</li> <li>• The Overview and Scrutiny Panel established a Task and Finish group to undertake a comprehensive review of the Council’s key performance indicators with reference to the strategic priorities set out in the Business Plan. To date the group has reviewed the Environment, Economy and Quality Organisation priorities with Communities remaining.</li> </ul>
<p>B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s policies and governance framework are published on the Council’s website including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Constitution</li> <li>– The Council’s Business Plan</li> <li>– Annual Report</li> <li>– Agenda and reports for all meetings within the Council’s decision-making framework</li> <li>– Cabinet work programme</li> <li>– Annual budget &amp; Medium-Term Financial Forecast</li> <li>– Fees and Charges</li> <li>– Pay Policy and Gender Pay Gap Statements</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Record of Executive Decisions
- Information required under the Transparency Code
- Annual Statement of Accounts

- The Council regularly carry out consultations on major policy initiatives which is conducted in an open way with all consultations available on the Council's website.
- Equality position statement reinforces how we will publish information to demonstrate compliance with the equality duty.
- The Council has an up-to-date Freedom of Information Act 2000 publication scheme in place on its website with links to information and guidance for stakeholders.
- The Council publicised all news and events on our website and social media, shared with all local news outlets and with Town and Parish Councils, to inform the community and businesses of the work and services carried out by the Council.
- Contracts are managed with a partnership approach and decisions are made in an open and transparent way, including open book accounting processes
- The Council has a consultation strategy and a communications strategy and uses channels such as the website and community hubs to consult on activities relevant to the community including planning, licensing, policy, and development. Examples of significant consultation exercises carried out during 2022/23 included:
  - Draft Business Plan & Budget
  - Local Government Boundary Commission
  - Taxi Tarff Consultation
  - Housing Enforcement
  - March Railway Station Redevelopment
  - Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan
  - Draft Local Plan
  - Polling District Review
- The Council adopted the Local Plan on 8 May 2014, which involved participation from numerous stakeholders and is currently under review. Details are published on the Council's website.
- A scheme is in place within the Council's Constitution to have public participation at Member meeting. Therefore, meetings of the Council and its Committees are open to members of the public to attend, with agendas and minutes being publicly available on the Council's website. Also,

Committee meetings can now be viewed on You tube to engage with stakeholders via different mediums.

C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.

- The Corporate Planning Framework of the Council ensures the delivery of services and projects to improve quality of life for Fenland residents. Partners, through the Fenland Strategic Partnership, meet and establish priorities for delivery to address the statutory duty of promoting the well-being of the district.
- The Council, through its [Business Plan](#) establishes its objectives by consultation with its key partners and the public as well as with reference to statutory duties, local needs, and national priorities. The Business Plan communicates the Council’s vision of its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users.
- The Business Plan has corporate priorities which are then cascaded down to team priorities. Achievement of corporate priorities is monitored regularly via the performance monitoring framework and monitoring reports to Portfolio Holders, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Full Council. Progress against intended outcomes is reported in the Council’s Annual Report.
- Option appraisals are undertaken for all key decisions and are a standard part of the operations.
- An active review of Service Plans is carried out during the year by Senior Management.
  
- Service quality is measured via customer communication channels and by measurement of performance indicators.
  
- The Council also approved the Economic Growth Strategy Refresh for 2022-2025
  
- The Council has adopted and implemented the Local Plan 2014-2034. Details are published on the Council’s website. Consultation was undertaken, and a proactive role was undertaken to engage as many residents and stakeholders as possible. Feedback from the consultation informed the submission of the Local Plan. Social, environmental and economic evidence was obtained to inform the development of the Local Plan, which is being revised and should be completed by Spring 2024.
  
- The Council has a Carbon Reduction and Climate Adaptation Plan, which was approved by Cabinet and Council in December 2022. The key aims are:
  - Reducing the Council’s Energy & Fuel use - Projects relating to the internal day to day running of the Councils services. These contribute the 'Council for the Future' agenda by ensuring that service delivery processes are continually refined to reduce energy and fuel use and to ensure that the Council's operational accommodation is able to meet changing business and working needs.
  - Supporting homes to reduce energy use and encourage active travel - Ensuring homes are warm, cheap to heat, comfortable and healthy places in which to live, encouraging active travel and transport options across Fenland#.
  - Building resilience - Ensuring Communities remain resilient and thrive.
  - Protecting our Environment - Work closely with all sections of the community to maintain and enhance the district.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further monitoring and reporting.</li> </ul>
<p>D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although in a healthy financial position, the Council still faces continuing financial challenges over the medium term, resulting from changes to central government funding. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy presented to Council in February 2023 highlighted the need for further savings of £1,918k up to 2027/28.</li> <li>• The development of the Commercial and Investment Strategy has the potential to generate additional significant returns over the medium term, through the trading company Fenland Future Ltd (FFL).</li> <li>• Cabinet also considered reports and proposals regarding the council Transformation programme to ensure continued achievement of outcomes through the efficient use of resources and improvements to service delivery.</li> <li>• The Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee considers the effective delivery of Council priorities and recommends interventions and remedies as appropriate. O&amp;S are consulted on major issues pre- implementation e.g., budget, business plan, major policy changes (garden waste charging). It then provides a review role especially on major partnerships such as ARP, Freedom, Clarion. Other internal changes through portfolio holder updates that go to O&amp;S.</li> <li>• Consideration of alternative courses of action for all decision making is undertaken.</li> <li>• The Assistant Director of Legal &amp; Governance is engaged in wider discussions with client teams on options for resourcing larger legal projects and higher profile actions to ensure these are resourced as efficiently as possible e.g., making use of the EM Lawshare framework discounted rates; considering alternatives to prosecution; considering the terms of a Public Space Protection Order; resourcing and managing appropriate external legal support for the projects.</li> </ul>
<p>E. Developing the authority's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and individuals within it.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council appointed three Assistant Directors to support the two Corporate Directors to ensure sufficient leadership capacity within the organisation.</li> <li>• The Human Resource team lead on the development of the workforce planning and organisational development and training plan, supported by annual service planning.</li> <li>• The Council has a clear scheme of delegation contained within the standing orders and financial regulations which are reviewed by the Monitoring officer to ensure compliance. These are embodied in the Constitution.</li> <li>• Staff and members have access to induction programmes and training courses to support and develop their roles, which also include personal development plans that are reviewed at least annually.</li> <li>• The Council has approved practices and protocols for the management and processing of data ensuring that training is routinely updated to reflect current and evolving requirements.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both the Leader and the Chief Executive have clearly defined and distinctive leadership roles, who provide a check and balance for each other responsibility and have established an effective relationship to maintain effective communication.</li> <li>• The Council, where possible, collaborates with other authorities to share information and best practice and third parties, e.g., Hampshire &amp; Isle of Wight Chief Executive group and subsequent groups.</li> <li>• CMT actively carries out reviews of their services and plans during the year.</li> <li>• The Council regularly makes use of ‘benchmarking’ exercises and other research to support corporate priorities and work.</li> <li>• The Council’s constitution defines the statutory and distinctive roles of the Leader and other Councillors and sets out to whom decision making powers are delegated.</li> <li>• The Member Development Group maintains a programme for Member training and development and the Council has secured the Charter for Member Development.</li> </ul>
<p>F. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet and the Audit and Risk Committee considered the 2020/21 financial statements and the Council’s corporate objectives, performance indicators and Corporate Risk Register</li> <li>• The Council has a Risk Management Strategy that has enabled the monitoring of risk within projects, Service Plans, performance management, financial planning, policy setting and decision making. The Council has a balanced risk appetite that allows new ideas to be explored and encourages innovation. The Risk Management Framework enables risks to be escalated to an appropriate authority in the organisation to be managed. The Risk Management Strategy is reviewed annually by Audit and Risk Management Committee. The Council has a Risk Management Group who are responsible for highlighting, assessing risks and applying a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status to risks for consideration by the Corporate Management Team and ultimately by the Audit and Risk Management Committee, which is done three times a year.</li> <li>• The Council has a Port Marine Safety Code to manage potential major risks related to Marine Services. It is linked to the Council’s Business Continuity Plan as referenced above and is also regularly updated. A Port Management Group is responsible for monitoring and managing safety issues and a Duty Holder and Designated Person is appointed to review the safety management system and associated risks.</li> <li>• The Councils Overview and Scrutiny Committee received performance reports on Housing Enforcement Policy, Creativity &amp; Culture Strategy, Commercial Investment Strategy and Investment Board, Customer Complaints (3c’s) process, Business Plan, Budget Report, Fees &amp; Charges and Corporate Priorities of Communities, Planning and Transformation &amp; Communications. They also welcomed partnership updates from Public Health, Clarion Housing, Wisbech Rail update and CPCA Growth Service &amp; Impact on Economic Development in Fenland.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal Audit provides a risk-based audit plan and reports on the effectiveness of risk management to the Audit and Risk Management Committee. Internal Audit also provides an annual opinion on the effectiveness of the Council’s governance, risk management and internal control environment. This assurance is obtained from involvement with relevant governance, risk management and internal review groups and outcomes from audit reviews carried out within the year.</li> <li>• The Audit and Risk Management Committee adopted new terms of reference in 2020/21 and produce an annual report demonstrating compliance with best practice guidance.</li> <li>• IT Disaster Recovery and business continuity plans have been reviewed, updated and documented in the Service Plans.</li> <li>• IT follows End User Device (EUD) guidance issued by National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) when implementing security solutions and endpoint operating systems. Council IT infrastructure is audited annually, and results passed to NCSC for review and further guidance on actions to take to maintain compliance (including annual PSN assessment).</li> <li>• Effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data with other bodies, including processes to safeguard personal data in line with GDPR requirements. The Council has a Data Protection Officer with resilience provided via a s.113 Agreement with Peterborough City Council.</li> </ul>
<p>G. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council received an unqualified opinion on the Statement of Accounts for 2021/22, which were approved in September 2023.</li> <li>• Agendas and minutes of Committee meetings are publicly available on the Council’s website and Committee meetings, where possible, are open to the public for contribution and attendance.</li> <li>• An Overview and Scrutiny Committee is in place to monitor and review performance, review and/or scrutinise decisions proposed to be made, review policy and strategy with a view to securing continuous improvement.</li> <li>• The Council is mostly compliant with the Local Government Transparency Code. The Council has commenced a programme to ensure compliance with all the mandatory publication requirements of the code. The Corporate Management Team own the elements of the code which are specific to their services while the Corporate Governance group have oversight.</li> <li>• On the Council’s website there is a Freedom of Information Act page to enable members of the public to have access to all recorded information held by the Council.</li> <li>• Decisions are recorded and published on the Council’s website.</li> <li>• As part of the Councils transformation programme, more forms have become available on the website and an increase in use has demonstrated the success of this project.</li> <li>• The Annual report has been refreshed and is now more readable and understandable to our stakeholders. This report includes information on performance, value for money and the stewardship of resources.</li> </ul>

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Annual Governance Statement is discussed and owned by the Council's Management Team and is discussed with both officers and members periodically throughout the year.</li><li>• The Council has an effective Internal Audit function that provides assurance and makes recommendations to improve performance. The function conforms with the CIPFA statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.</li><li>• The Council has approved the Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd to appoint external auditors on our behalf for 2023/24 onwards.</li></ul> |
|---|





Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.	The Council's Transformation programme has placed the Council in a good position financially however, we will continue to look for more ways to become efficient and effective through looking at different service delivery models.  <i>Update: This action is continuous and can be closed for 2022-23</i>	Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer	31 March 2023  <i>Closed</i>
Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and <b>strong financial management</b> .	The Council has a Code of Procurement and Procurement Strategy which reflects current national practice. This is kept under regular review with significant changes expected in 2023 when a fuller and more detailed review will be performed before reporting the outcome formally to members for approval.  <i>Update: New legislation is expected in January 2024.</i>	Amy Brown, Assistant Director of Legal & Governance	31 March 2023  <i>31 March 2024</i>

Further Improvements from the AGS 2022-23:

Governance Issue	Action	Lead Officer	Target Date
Principle A: Behaving with integrity, <b>demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</b> , and respecting the rule of the law	The Council is undertaking a full review of internal policies to develop a Corporate Policy Register. All documents will be displayed on either the Intranet or Website. Decision to be made by CMT.	David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications	31 March 2024
Principle F: Managing risks and performance through <b>robust internal control</b> and strong financial management	ICT is arranging for a compliance review of NCSC Cyber Essentials Plus to be conducted by an accredited third-party provider. Results will be fed into a Cyber Treatment Plan, which will be reviewed by CMT.	Stephen Beacher, Head of ICT, Digital & Resilience	31 December 2023

**5. Conclusion**

Having completed the processes set out above to review the effectiveness of the Council’s governance framework, we are satisfied that we have sufficient assurance regarding the effectiveness of the framework in place and the governance issues identified are as set out above. We propose over the coming year to take steps to address the above matters to further enhance our governance arrangements. We are satisfied that these steps will address the need for improvements that were identified in our review of effectiveness and will monitor their implementation and operation as part of our next annual review.

**6. Certification**

As Leader, Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer, we have been advised on the implications of the results of the review of effectiveness of the Council’s governance framework, by the Audit and Risk Committee. Our overall assessment is that the Annual Governance Statement is a balanced reflection of the governance environment and that an adequate framework exists within Fenland District Council to ensure effective internal control is maintained. We are also satisfied that there are no significant governance issues during 2022/23.

Signed: .....


Peter Catchpole  
Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer

Signed: .....

Paul Medd  
Chief Executive

Signed: .....

Councillor Chris Boden  
Leader, Fenland District Council

Agenda Item No:	<b>10</b>	
Committee:	<b>Audit and Risk Management</b>	
Date:	<b>26/09/2023</b>	
Report Title:	<b>Risk Based Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 Revised</b>	

## 1 Purpose / Summary

In accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) the Interim Internal Audit Manager has prepared a revised Internal Audit Plan following recommendations from the External Quality Assessment (EQA) in December 2022 and guidance from the Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer and the Assistant Director of Legal & Governance.

## 2 Key issues

- The Council's Internal Audit work plan is produced on an annual basis and reviewed periodically. It is an estimate of the work that can be performed over the financial year and as such is subject to change. Potential areas of the Council for audit are prioritised based on a risk assessment, enabling the use of Internal Audit resources to be targeted at areas of emerging corporate importance and risk.
- The format of the Plan reflects the PSIAS which were introduced in April 2013. The PSIAS were revised and came into effect in April 2017. It also incorporates the governance and strategic management arrangements of Internal Audit resources.
- There are a total of 280 budgeted productive days for 2023/24.
  - 220 days are allocated to operational audit work. This resource is used to calculate the risk-based Audit Plan. This work contributes to the Annual Audit Opinion on the effectiveness of the system of internal control, which is reported to the Committee.
  - 60 days are allocated for other productive assurance work. This includes proactive anti-fraud and error work such as the National Fraud Initiative, project-based assurance, a contingency for responsive work and following up previous recommendations.
- The risk-based Plan assumes that the Internal Audit operational team comprises 1.6 FTE excluding the Interim Internal Audit Manager. There is a current vacancy for an Internal Auditor, without which the Audit Plan cannot be completed and would be insufficient to provide continued Internal Audit coverage of all key control systems / fundamental audits over a 3–5-year cycle.
- In the meantime, an interim Internal Auditor has been hired until the end of the financial year.
- The Plan will continue to be flexible to support ongoing and emerging risks that may arise throughout the year. However, the Interim Internal Audit Manager has

reviewed the Plan and has replaced some of the low-risk audits with higher, new or changing risks, subject to an ongoing risk evaluation, as well as altered the number of days to conduct each audit.

- The audit plan for 2023/24 is attached at Appendix A.
  - The Assurance rating classification is included at Appendix B.
  - The ‘fundamental / key systems’ audit reviews over the next 5 years are included at Appendix C.
- The Council has key financial systems, known as ‘Fundamental’ systems, due to their significance and materiality. Detailed testing provides assurance to the Council’s External Auditors in preparation for final accounts compliance. Following repeated years of positive assurance, the Committee and the External Auditors agreed an approach that would maximise assurance with the most effective use of resources. This approach will continue to be discussed with the External Auditors, reflecting any changes to the level of risk for these systems.
  - This is illustrated in Appendix C which shows that the auditing arrangements with ARP, the Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits are reviewed annually. The remaining key systems, primarily in Finance, will be audited over a three-year cycle.

### 3 Recommendations

The Committee is asked to acknowledge the Internal Audit resources and to consider and note the attached revised Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.

<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Forward Plan Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Portfolio Holder(s)</b>	Cllr Chris Boden Leader and Finance Portfolio holder
<b>Report Originator(s)</b>	David Thacker - Interim Internal Audit Manager
<b>Contact Officer(s)</b>	Peter Catchpole – Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer Amy Brown – Assistant Director of Legal & Governance
<b>Background Paper(s)</b>	Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 Public Sector Internal Audit Standards 2016 CIPFA Local Government Application Note 2019 Fenland District Council Business Plan Internal Audit Charter

Risk based Internal Audit Plan  
2023/2024  
Revised



## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This document sets out the Internal Audit risk-based Plan. It is intended to demonstrate how Internal Audit will support the overall aims and objectives of the Council by:
- providing the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and Audit and Risk Management Committee with an overall opinion each year on the Council's control environment to support the Annual Governance Statement requirements.
  - preparing audit plans that give suitable priority to the Council's priorities and key risks and concentrate resources on areas that have been identified as being the most vulnerable.
  - providing suggested actions to line management at the conclusion of each piece of audit work that will assist in continuous service improvement and reduce the risks identified.
  - identifying the audit resources required to deliver an audit service that meets required professional standards; and
  - complying with professional standards.
- 1.2 The Plan is risk-based and covers the Council's existing operations, while adding value by responding to emerging risks and promoting good governance.
- 1.3 The Plan will be reviewed at least annually to ensure its continued relevance, both in terms of supporting the Council's aims and corporate objectives, and in achieving a professional, modern audit service.
- 1.4 The strategic aims for Internal Audit in 2023/24 are to:
- prepare, maintain and deliver the risk based Internal Audit Plan.
  - proactively promote understanding of risk and control.
  - recommend actions that help systems meet at least adequate levels of control.
  - facilitate provision of assurance for the Annual Governance Statement.
- 1.5 The Plan is supported by the teams Service Plan, which is aligned to the Council's Corporate Priorities, and is agreed with the Internal Audit team through the Council's Springboard process.

## **2 Role of Internal Audit**

- 2.1 All local authorities must make proper provision for internal audit in line with the 1972 Local Government Act (S151) and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The latter states that authorities must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes, taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.
- 2.2 Fenland District Council has responsibility for ensuring that statutory Internal Audit arrangements are in place to the Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer and the Assistant Director of Legal & Governance. These arrangements form a key element of the Council's framework for corporate governance.
- 2.3 The Interim Internal Audit Manager will oversee Internal Audit provision to the Council on behalf of the Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer and Assistant Director of Legal & Governance.
- 2.4 The objectives, scope and definitions of Internal Audit are detailed in the Internal Audit Charter.

### 3 Risk assessment

3.1 The Council's Audit Plan is based on a risk assessment of all the Council's major systems and other auditable areas. This allows us to prioritise those areas and systems to be included within the plan. Key risk assessment factors include:

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Description</u>
Materiality – Value	The value of annual direct income / expenditure associated with the system / activities
Materiality – Volume	An estimate of the number of transactions processed by the systems / activities per annum
Significance / Profile	The significance of the system to the activities of the Council.
Complexity	The complexity of the systems / activities in terms of their operation and auditability
Change	Recent changes to the system or the likelihood of change to the systems in the audit period planned
Regulatory / Contractual	Extent to which the system / activity is subject to regulation or contractual obligation
External Monitoring	The extent to which a service / activity is monitored or audited by an external body
Prior Audits	Overall rating of last audit and result of follow up.
Susceptibility to fraud and corruption	Opportunity within the system / activity for fraud and corruption to occur.
Staff Turnover	The turnover of staff, especially with key skills.

3.2 The risk assessment, and update of the annual Audit Plan, is informed by consultation with key stakeholders, including:

- the Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer.
- the Corporate Director & Monitoring Officer.
- the Corporate Management Team.
- the Council's team managers.
- the Council's external auditors.
- the Audit and Risk Management Committee.

3.3 Consultation helps ensure that stakeholder's views and risks are reasonably identified and reflected within the Plan. Where possible External Audit will place reliance on the work of Internal Audit, and other external providers of assurance will be referred to help formulate the annual Audit Opinion. This helps ensure that resources are used to the best effect, and duplication is avoided.

3.4 The plan is also informed by key corporate documents such as:

- Business Plan.
- Medium Term Financial Strategy; and
- the Council's risk registers.

## 4 Key themes

The key themes, which have driven our assessment of risk and strategic aims are:

Area	Comment
Financial excellence	There is a continued need to ensure value for money is achieved, including financial resilience and the ability to prioritise resources within increasing financial constraints and a changing control environment.
Corporate Governance arrangements	The Internal Audit Manager will independently review and give an opinion on the Council's arrangements for both corporate governance and risk management, to support the production of an annual governance statement to accompany the statement of accounts. The team will maintain an awareness of emerging risks to help provide advice on effective internal controls.
Assurance mapping	Where other well-developed assurance processes exist (e.g., documented Control Risk Self-Assessment reviews, quality management audits, the work of other review or inspection teams) the internal audit team will quality assure these processes and consider how they can deliver a significant contribution to the overall audit opinion of internal control.
Improving information governance	As part of the planned audits the team will help to promote good information and data management practice throughout the organisation.
Risk management	Internal Audit will continue to assist teams identify business risks as part of audits. This will engage our customers in the management and maintenance of their risks and controls at an operational level and help identify and escalate concerns to the corporate risk register.
Minimising fraud and error	<p>The Internal Audit team will ensure that the Anti-fraud &amp; corruption policy &amp; strategy reflects best practice and will appraise fraud risks during audits.</p> <p>Internal controls will continue to be tested for effectiveness and the team will participate in data matching exercises, as provided by the National Fraud Initiative, to proactively identify fraud and error.</p>
Corporate priorities	The Corporate plan, and the Council priorities, informs the audit strategy. The annual plan is based on the risk profile of activities supporting the Corporate Plan and will continuously be revised to reflect any emerging changes to corporate risk.



## **5 Audit needs and resources**

- 5.1 The risk assessment process identifies auditable systems and helps to prioritise the audit plan in consultation with key stakeholders.
- 5.2 Systems assessed as below adequate assurance, during the previous financial year, which are not subject to a planned audit will be considered for a follow up review to assess the effective implementation by management of agreed audit recommendations.
- 5.3 Where common areas of risk are identified across several teams then the use of corporate themed reviews is considered to ensure an approach which is both consistent and makes effective use of resources.
- 5.4 Both the resources and capacity of the Internal Audit operational team is considered annually whilst setting the annual Plan. The Internal Audit operational team currently has 0.6 full time equivalent and vacant posts for an Internal Audit Manager and an Auditor.
- 5.5 Unproductive days, such as training and annual leave, are deducted from the total resource to calculate the total number of planned productive days.
- 5.6 Internal Audit operational team resources will enable all services of the Council to receive Audit coverage over a three-year period, although realistically some may be considered of such low priority in relation to other areas that they may only be covered in five years.
- 5.7 This Internal Audit Plan is produced and provides details for a 12-month period. The Interim Internal Audit Manager has reviewed and adjusted the plan in response to changes in the Council's business, risks, operations, programs, systems, and controls. Where work in progress occurs, it will be carried forward for completion within resources available in the next year.

## **6 Audit delivery**

- 6.1 The approach of Internal Audit is to use risk-based reviews, supplemented in some areas using system-based audits and themed reviews. All audits have regard to management's arrangements for:
- securing the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.
  - achieving key performance indicators, where appropriate.
  - preventing fraud and irregularity.
- 6.2 The internal control system contains key systems known as 'Fundamental' audits. A compliance approach is applied, as there is pre-existing confidence that controls are well designed, but the effective operation of the controls is a material concern. Testing for the effective operation of these controls is completed over a planned three-year cycle, although can be audited more frequently if assurance is required. The ARP auditing arrangements have allowed us to gain assurances on an annual basis for Council Tax, Business rates and Housing Benefits. A continuous auditing approach is adopted that spreads the testing throughout the year. This helps to ensure that the work is delivered and reduces the burden on the customer.
- 6.3 The remainder of the systems are prioritised by their risk-based assessment. The approach to each audit is agreed, with the customer, during the planning stage of the audit.
- 6.4 In addition to these planned audits the team will complete other assurance work which adds value to the organisation. Examples include proactive anti-fraud and error work such as fraud risk education and data matching, project-based assurance, contingency for responsive work, and following up previous audit recommendations
- 6.5 The PSIAS states that the Internal Audit Manager should consider accepting consulting engagements based on the potential to improve management of risks, add value and improve the organisation's operations. The team will participate in corporate projects that add value by improving governance and controls throughout the Council.
- 6.6 Requests for unplanned work will be considered against capacity to ensure internal audit's independence, and the resource required to provide the annual audit opinion, is not compromised. Any significant additional consulting activities, which impact delivery of the plan, will be communicated to the Committee.
- 6.7 The output of audits completed during the year will inform the annual audit opinion. The annual internal audit opinion will conclude on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control. This will be reported through the annual Internal Audit Outturn report which is a key source of assurance for the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

## **7 Quality and performance**

- 7.1 The Internal Audit Service maintains a manual, which sets out the standards to which all audit assignments are completed. It is reviewed and updated to reflect the best practice and professional standards.
- 7.2 The performance of Internal Audit is measured against targets and objectives set out in the team's Service Plan.
- 7.3 At a detailed level each audit assignment is monitored, and customer feedback sought.
- 7.4 There is ongoing performance appraisal and supervision for all Internal Audit staff during the year to support them in achieving their personal targets.
- 7.5 The Corporate Director & Chief Finance Officer shall in accordance with the Accounts and Audit regulations 2015 arrange for an assessment of quality independently of the Internal Audit service. Additionally, an external review of the Internal Audit Service is completed by external assessors every 5 years.
- 7.6 This was assessed in December 2022, where the team received the highest rating of "Generally Conforms" in all areas.
- 7.7 The Internal Audit Service will continue to liaise closely with other internal audit services through the Cambridgeshire Audit Group, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants, the Institute of Internal Auditors and the ARP shared audit partnership to share knowledge of best practice.

## Appendix A: Internal Audit plan 2023/24

Audit Title	Risk Rating	Last Audit	Last Audit results	Days
<b>2022/23 brought forward</b>				
Cash & Treasury Management (b/f 2021/22)	Medium	2016/17	Substantial	10
Housing Options	Medium	2016/17	Substantial	15
Licences – Animal Welfare	Medium	2018/19	Adequate	10
Licences – Other	Medium	2018/19	Limited	10
Corporate Assurance - Transparency	Medium	2018/19	Adequate	10
Freedom of Information	Medium	NEW		10
<b>Subtotal brought forward from 2022/23</b>				<b>65</b>
<b>Communities</b>				
Safeguarding – Follow Up	Medium	2021/22	Adequate	5
CCTV – Follow Up	Medium	2020/21	Adequate	5
<b>Subtotal Communities</b>				<b>10</b>
<b>Economy</b>				
Development - Fee Income	Medium	2018/19	Substantial	10
Trading Operations - Estates	Medium	2019/20	Adequate	15
Development – Planning	Medium	NEW		10
<b>Subtotal Economy</b>				<b>35</b>
<b>Environment</b>				
Trading Operations - Cemetery Income	Medium	2019/20	Limited	10
Public Health Funerals	Medium	NEW		10
<b>Subtotal Environment</b>				<b>20</b>
<b>Quality Organisation</b>				
ARP Enforcement	Medium	2020/21	Substantial	1*
Council Tax (Fundamental)	Medium	2020/21	Adequate	1*
Housing Benefits (Fundamental)	Medium	2020/21	Adequate	1*
Housing Benefits – Overpayments	Medium	2020/21	Adequate	1*
Business Rates (Fundamental)	Medium	2020/21	Adequate	1*
Corporate Projects	Medium		Ongoing	10
Corporate Assurance – Anti-Fraud and Corruption	Medium	2020/21	Ongoing	5
Corporate Assurance - Information & Data Management	Medium	2019/20	Substantial	15
Capital Finance Planning & Assets Register	Medium	2018/19	Substantial	15
Debtors & Collection Agency	Medium	2018/19	Substantial	10
ICT Cyber Security	High	2022/23	Substantial	10
Business Continuity Planning	Medium	NEW		10
Contracts Register	High	NEW		10

<b>Subtotal Quality Organisation</b>				<b>90</b>
<b>Total Risk Based Audits</b>				<b>220</b>
<b>External Audits and Other Work</b>				
Local Authority Trading Company / FFL	High	NEW	Ongoing	10
Follow Up / Recommendations			N/A	10
Fraud Work – Investigations and NFI			N/A	15
Contingency			N/A	25
<b>Subtotal External and Other Work</b>				<b>60</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>280</b>

\* These audits are conducted by our ARP partner authorities, which will be reviewed by the Interim Internal Audit Manager of FDC before final reports are issued.

## Appendix B: Assurance Ratings:

An assurance rating is applied, when a system or process is reviewed, which reflects the effectiveness of the control environment. The text below is an indication of the different assurance ratings used:

Assurance Opinion	Definition
<b>Full Assurance</b>	In our opinion, there is a <b>sound</b> system of internal control that is likely to achieve the system objectives, and which is operating effectively in practice.
<b>Substantial Assurance</b>	In our opinion, there is a sound system of internal control operating, but there are a <b>few minor weaknesses</b> which could put the achievement of system objectives at risk.
<b>Adequate Assurance</b>	In our opinion, there is a sound system of internal control operating, but there are <b>some weaknesses</b> which could put the achievement of system objectives at risk.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	In our opinion, there is a system of internal control with a number of weaknesses likely to <b>undermine</b> achievement of system objectives, and which is vulnerable to abuse or error.
<b>No Assurance</b>	In our opinion, there is a <b>fundamentally flawed</b> system of internal control that is unlikely to achieve system objectives and is vulnerable to serious abuse or error.

## Appendix C: Fundamental audit plan

This is the proposed plan for internal audit reviews of controls considered fundamental to the Council

System Name	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	Current Overall assurance rating
Housing Benefits *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate
Council Tax *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate
Business Rates *	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Adequate
Capital Finance Planning & Asset Register	✓			✓		Substantial
Debtors and Collection Agency	✓			✓		Substantial
Creditors			✓			Substantial
Corporate Finance - Budgetary Control			✓			Substantial
Cash & Treasury Management	✓			✓		Substantial
Corporate Finance - Management Accounting System		✓			✓	Substantial

\* ARP Auditing arrangements in place allow for an audit to be undertaken every year on these services by our ARP Partner authorities.

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## DRAFT AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	TITLE	TYPE OF REPORT	LEAD OFFICER	OBJECTIVES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES
<b>26 September 2023</b>	Audit Results Report 2021/22 (ISA260)	Annual	External Audit	To consider and note the external audit results report ( <i>deferred from July</i> )
	Statement of Accounts 2021/22	Annual	Mark Saunders	To review and approve the Statement of Accounts 2021/22 ( <i>deferred from July</i> )
	Letter of Representation 2021/22	Annual	Mark Saunders	To agree the format and content of the Letter of Representation provided to the External Auditors at the conclusion of the 21-22 Statement of Accounts audit. To be signed by the Chair of AMRC and s.151 Officer ( <i>deferred from July</i> )
	Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy	4-yearly	Audit	To agree the new Anti-Fraud Policy ( <i>deferred from July</i> )
	Annual Governance Statement 2022 - 23	Annual	Audit	Regulation 6(1) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, require the Council to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control and publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The CIPFA Finance Advisory Network has issued detailed practical guidance for meeting the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations
	Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 – Update	Annual	Audit	To consider and discuss the revised Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24.
	Audit and Risk Management Committee Work Programme	Quarterly	Peter Catchpole	Information purposes

## DRAFT AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	TITLE	TYPE OF REPORT	LEAD OFFICER	OBJECTIVES AND DESIRED OUTCOMES
<b>20 November 2023</b>				
	Annual Audit Letter 2021/22	Annual	External Audit	To note the independent external auditors, Ernst & Young (EY), Annual Audit Letter
	External Audit Plan 2022-23	Annual	External Audit	To discuss the External Audit Plan for 2022-23
	Draft Statement of Accounts 2022-23	Annual	Mark Saunders	Review the draft Statement of Accounts 2022-23
	Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year review	6 monthly	Mark Saunders	To review the activity for first 6 months of the year and to provide members a update on matters pertinent to the Councils Treasury Management Strategy
	Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 Progress report Q2	Quarterly	Audit	To consider and note the activity and performance of the Internal Audit function.
	Anti-Money Laundering Policy	4-Yearly	Audit	To agree proposed changes/updates to the Anti-Money Laundering Policy
	Corporate Risk Register - Quarterly update	Quarterly	Stephen Beacher	To review and approve the quarterly risk register (Training to be provided before the meeting).
	Audit and Risk Management Committee Work Programme	Quarterly	Peter Catchpole	Information Purposes
<b>12 February 2024</b>				
	Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Capital Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24	Annual	Mark Saunders	To endorse the strategy to be included in the final budget report

## DRAFT AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

	Internal Audit Plan 2023/24 Progress report Q3	Quarterly	Audit	To consider and note the activity and performance of the Internal Audit function
	Corporate Debt Policy	4 Yearly	Audit	To agree proposed changes/updates to the Corporate Debt Policy
	Risk Register – Quarterly update	Quarterly	Stephen Beacher	To review and approve the quarterly risk register.
	Audit and Risk Management Committee Work Programme	Quarterly	Peter Catchpole	Information Purposes
<b>25 March 2024</b>	Risk Based Internal Audit Plan 2024/25	Quarterly	Audit	To approve the internal audit plan and resources for the forthcoming year
	Audit Results Report 2022/23 (ISA 260)	Annual	Audit	To consider and note the external audit results report.
	Final Statement of Accounts 2022-23	Annual	Mark Saunders	Review and approve the final Statement of Accounts 2022-23
	Letter of Representation 2022/23	Annual	Mark Saunders	To agree the format and content of the Letter of Representation provided to the External Auditors at the conclusion of the 22-23 Statement of Accounts audit.
	Annual Governance Statement Update 2022/23		Audit	To review and note the progress on the Annual Governance Statement action plan arising from 2022/23.
	Audit and Risk Management Committee Work Programme	Quarterly	Peter Catchpole	Information Purposes

## DRAFT AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Future items *(when to be brought to the committee in 2023/24 to be determined)*

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy and Strategy (4 Years) – September 2023
- Anti-Money Laundering Policy (4 Years) – November 2023
- Corporate Debt Policy (4 Years) – February 2024

Cyclical Items not due this year *(unless policy or legislation changes require amendments prior to review date)*

- Whistleblowing Policy June 2024
- ARMC Terms of Reference December 2024
- Risk management Strategy March 2025
- External Auditor Appointment Process Dec – Feb 2027

### Audit and Risk Management Committee Training sessions 2023/24

- Introduction to ARMC – External Training 24th July 2023
- Statement of Accounts – Mark Saunders 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023
- Risk Register – Stephen Beacher 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### Audit and Risk Management Committee Action Plan

Title	Comments	Due by	RAG
Independent Member appointment	A report was presented to the committee in July 2022, with the committee agreeing in principle to progress with an independent member appointment to ARMC. Further report outlining skills analysis and job description to be brought back to ARMC for recommendation to Council.	December 2023	Not due yet
Committee Training	Committee Members to discuss training requirements and provide officers with suggested training topics for future meetings.	Ongoing	

## AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

### Abbreviations Used in Audit & Risk Management Committee

AGS	Annual Governance Statement
ARG	Additional Restrictions Grant
ARP	Anglia Revenue Partnerships
BCP	Business Continuity Planning
BEIS	The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
CFR	Capital Financing Requirement
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
CIS	Commercial Investment Strategy
CMT	Corporate Management Team
CNC	CNC Building Control
CPCA	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
CPE	Civil Parking Enforcement
CPLRF	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Local Resilience Forum
CTS	Council Tax Support
DFG	Disabled Facilities Grants
DPA	Data Protection Act
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
FFL	Fenland Future Ltd
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
IAS	International Accounting Standards
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standard
LGA	Local Government Association
LGSS	Local Government Shared Services
LRSG	Local Restrictions Support Grants
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision
MTFP	Medium Term Financial Plan
MTSP	Management, Trade Union & Staff Partnership
NFI	National Fraud Initiative
NNDR	National Non-Domestic Rates
OIB	Operational Improvement Board (ARP)
OLTL	Other Long-Term Liabilities
PPA	Post Payment Assurance
PSAA	Public Sector Auditor Appointments
PSIAS	Public Sector Internal Audit Standards
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board
RIPA	Regulation of Investigative Powers

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