

Bolsover District Council - Annual Accounts 2019/20

1 Accounting Policies

Notes to the Core Financial Statements

a) General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2019/20 financial year and its position at the year end of 31st March 2020. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which require them to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily consist of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

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

The Council does not have any transactions that are reclassifiable to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. As such we have not grouped the items in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure into amounts that may be reclassifiable and amounts that are not.

b) Accounting Concepts

The concepts used in selecting and applying the most appropriate policies and estimation techniques are as follows:

- The qualitative characteristics of financial information - relevance, reliability, comparability and understanding;
- Materiality (all major transactions and events are included);
- The accounting concepts of accruals, going concern and the primacy of legislative requirements.

c) Accruals of Income and Expenditure

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

- Revenue from contracts with service recipients, whether for services or the provision of goods, is recognised when (or as) the goods or services are transferred to the service recipient in accordance with the performance obligations in the contract. An exception to this principle is planning fee income. This is included in the year it is received without an adjustment for a proportion of applications where the final decision is given in the new year, based on the grounds of materiality.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed - where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption, they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet;
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract;
 - Where revenue or expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

An exception to this principle relates to electricity and other similar periodic payments which are charged at the date of meter reading rather than being apportioned between financial years. Rental income from HRA dwellings is included without an adjustment for the over lap between financial years on the grounds of materiality. This policy is consistently applied each year and therefore does not have a material effect on the year's accounts.

Income and expenditure are credited and debited to the relevant service revenue account unless they properly represent capital receipts or capital expenditure.

Grant claims are submitted on an actual basis wherever possible. However if the information required is not available then a best estimate basis is adopted.

d) 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 short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

The Council has a number of Call accounts to meet short-term cash flow requirements where no notice is required to access funds.

Call accounts held to make a gain from favourable rates of interest are classed as investments and not cash equivalents. This also applies to Money Market Funds and fixed term investments.

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

e) Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

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

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

The Council is not required to raise council tax to cover depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisations. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Council in accordance with statutory guidance. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses and amortisation costs are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund of a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

The Council's policy for the calculation of the statutory provision for the repayment of debt is determined each year by the Council. The Council has decided that for 2019/20 the outstanding general fund debt prior to 1 April 2007 will be repaid at a rate of 4% of outstanding debt per year until the debt is extinguished. Any prudential borrowing for the General Fund incurred after 1 April 2007 is repaid based on the life of the asset concerned.

f) Collection Fund

Billing authorities act as agents, collecting council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) on behalf of the major preceptors (including government for NDR) and, as principals, collecting council tax and NDR for themselves. Billing authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate fund (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 (CIES) 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 authority's General Fund. Therefore, the difference between the income included in the CIES 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.

All debtor balances for the above that are past due are impaired because payments due under the statutory arrangements have not been made (fixed or determinable payments). The asset is written down and a charge made to the Collection Fund. The impairment loss is measured as the difference between the carrying amount and the revised future cash flows.

Non-Domestic Rates Appeal

The Council will commission each year, an independent assessment at 31 March of the outstanding appeals lodged with the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The assessment will review every individual appeal and estimate the likelihood of the appeal succeeding based on the category of appeal and previous appeal determinations.

g) 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 accounting statements; they are disclosed by way of a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefit or service potential.

h) Contingent Liabilities

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

i) 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 and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. cars) 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 but which can be carried forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, as this is the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to the relevant service area of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement but then is reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that the annual leave is charged to revenue in the financial year in which the annual leave 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 or, where applicable, to the Non Distributed Costs line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

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

Post Employment Benefits

Employees of the Council are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), which is administered by Derbyshire County Council on behalf of Bolsover District Council. The scheme provides defined benefits to members (lump sums and pensions) earned as employees working for the Council.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

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

- The liabilities of the Derbyshire County Council pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc., and projections of projected earnings for current employees.
- Liabilities are measured using the projected unit method and discounted at the balance sheet date rate of return on high quality corporate bonds of equivalent term to the liabilities. The discount rate is the weighted average of 'spot yields' on AA rated corporate bonds.

The change in the net pension 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. This is 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. These costs are debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non Distributed Costs.
 - Interest Cost – the expected increase in the present value of liabilities during the year as they move one year closer to being paid. The cost is debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- Remeasurements comprising:

- The Return on Plan Assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) - charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- Actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions - debited to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- Contributions Paid to the County Pension Fund - cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities. These are not accounted for as an expense.

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

Discretionary Benefits

The Council 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.

j) Events After the Reporting Period

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

- Those that provide evidence of conditions that existed at the end of the reporting period - the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events.

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

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

k) Exceptional Items

Exceptional items are included in the cost of the service to which they relate or on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement if that degree of prominence is necessary in order to give a fair presentation of the accounts. An adequate description of each exceptional item is given within the notes to the accounts.

l) 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 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 by adjusting the 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 period.

m) Financial Instruments

The Council is required to recognise, measure, present and disclose information about any financial instruments. A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Typical financial assets include bank deposits, trade receivables and other receivables, loans receivable and advances. Typical financial liabilities include trade payables and other payables, borrowings and financial guarantees. Non-exchange transactions, such as those relating to taxes and government grants, do not give rise to financial instruments.

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. 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). Interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Financial Assets

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

There are three main classes of financial assets measured at:

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

The Council's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost, except for those whose contractual payments are not solely payment of principal and interest.

Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

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

When loans are made at less than market rates (a soft loan), a loss is recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (debited to the appropriate service) for the present value of the interest that will be foregone over the life of the instrument, resulting in a lower amortised cost than the outstanding principal. Interest is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at a marginally higher effective rate of interest than the rate receivable from the organisation, 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.

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

Expected Credit Loss Model

The Council recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost, either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. The expected credit loss model also applies to lease receivables and contract assets.

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.

A simplified approach can be used for certain financial assets under which impairment losses are automatically based on lifetime expected credit losses, removing the need to consider changes in credit risk since initial recognition and the possibility that the appropriate measure should be 12-month expected credit losses. The Council uses the simplified approach for trade receivables (debtors) held by the Council.

The Council is not allowed to recognise a loss allowance for expected credit loss where the counterparty for a financial asset is central government or a local authority (including parish) for which relevant statutory provisions prevent default.

Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss

Financial assets that are measured as 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.
- other instruments with fixed and determinable payments - discounted cash flow analysis.
- equity shares with no quoted market prices - an estimate based on what the Council would receive if it redeemed the shares.

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

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

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

n) Government Grants and Contributions

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

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

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

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

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

o) Heritage Assets

Heritage assets are a distinct class of asset which are reported separately from property, plant and equipment and intangible assets.

There is a de-minimis level of £10,000 applied to Heritage Assets in line with the accounting policy on Property, Plant and Equipment. The Heritage Assets held by the Council are currently below the de-minimis level.

p) Intangible Assets

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

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

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Amounts are only re-valued where the fair value of the assets held by the Council can be determined by reference to an active market. In practice no intangible asset, held by the Council meets this criterion and they are therefore carried at amortised cost.

The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Each intangible asset is tested for impairment each year to see if there is an indication that the asset may be impaired. Any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising from the disposal of an intangible fixed 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 in excess of £10,000, the Capital Receipts Reserve.

q) Interests in Companies and Other Entities

The Council has no material interests in any companies or other entities that have the nature of subsidiaries, associates or jointly controlled entities that would require it to prepare group accounts.

However, the Council has a joint venture in Dragonfly Developments Limited. This is being accounted for as a fair value through profit and loss financial asset. Group accounts are not being prepared based on materiality.

r) Jointly Controlled Operations and Jointly Controlled Assets

Jointly controlled operations are activities undertaken by the Council in conjunction with other operators that involve the use of assets and resources of the operators rather than the establishment of a separate entity. The Council recognises on its Balance Sheet the assets that it controls and the liabilities that it incurs and debits and credits the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement with the share of expenditure it incurs and the share of income it earns from the operation.

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

The Council has the following jointly controlled operations:

Internal Audit Services - with North East Derbyshire District Council and Chesterfield Borough Council

ICT Services - with North East Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire Dales District Council

Environmental Health Services - with North East Derbyshire District Council as part of the Strategic Alliance

The Council has jointly controlled assets with Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council regarding the operation of a crematorium. The Council holds a share of the joint crematorium committee. The Council's share of the crematorium's assets and income and expenditure for 2019/20 is 15%, (2018/19 15%). On the basis of materiality, Bolsover District Council does not include any figures for the joint crematorium within the Statement of Accounts.

s) Inventories

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

t) 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 sale proceeds in excess of £10,000, to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

u) 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 (The Council). All other leases are classified as operating leases.

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

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

The Council as Lessee

Finance Leases

Property, plant and equipment held under finance leases are recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the lease inception. The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

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

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

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

Operating Leases

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

The Council as Lessor

Finance Leases

The Council currently has no finance leases for property.

Operating Leases

Where the Council grants an operating lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the asset is retained on 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 start of the lease. Initial direct costs incurred in negotiating and arranging the lease are added to the carrying amount of the asset and charged as an expense over the lease term on the same basis as rental income.

v) Overheads and Support Services

The costs of overheads and support services are charged to directorates in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in accordance with the Council's arrangements for accountability and financial performance.

w) Property, Plant and Equipment

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

Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an 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 reliably measured. 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. A general de-minimis limit of £10,000 is applied to non-current assets.

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising purchase price and any costs directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

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

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

Donated assets are initially measured at fair value. The difference between fair value and any consideration paid is credited to the Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, unless the donated asset has been made conditionally. Until all conditions are met the gain is held in the Donated Assets Account. Gains that are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are reversed out of the General Fund balance to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

- Infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – historic cost;
- Dwellings – current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing;
- Surplus assets – 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.

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

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at current value are re-valued where there have been material changes in the value, but as a minimum every five years. Valuations are undertaken by a professionally qualified valuer.

Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the Revaluation Reserve to recognise unrealised gains.

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for as follows:

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

The Revaluation Reserve contains gains recognised since 1 April 2007, 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. If there is an indication of impairment, and it is deemed material, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated to determine the impairment loss.

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

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

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

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

Depreciation

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

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Land: Not depreciated;
- Buildings: Straight-line allocation over the life of the property;
- Vehicles, plant and equipment: Straight line allocation over the life of the asset;
- Infrastructure: Straight-line allocation over life of asset;
- Council dwellings: Straight-line allocation over the life of the property;
- Community assets (subject to exceptions): Not depreciated.

Items of property, plant and equipment are not depreciated until they become available for use (i.e. when the asset is in the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management). Depreciation ceases at the earlier of the date that items of property, plant and equipment are classified as held for sale and the date they are derecognised.

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

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment has major components whose costs are significant in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately. The Council deems “significant” to be 25% or more of the total cost of the asset. The Council also applies the following de minimis levels with regard to component accounting.

Components are not separately identified where:

- The useful life of the asset is less than 10 years
- The depreciation charge based on the life of the component would differ from that for the total asset by less than £10,000.
- The component life must be materially different to the main asset to be treated as a component.

For grouped assets such as Council Dwellings a practical level of componentisation has been applied which links to the work programmes carried out within the capital programme. An appropriate component life has been assigned to each of these components.

Disposals and Non-current Assets Held for Sale

When it becomes probable that an asset is to be sold it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less costs to sell. Where there is a subsequent decrease to the fair value less costs to sell, the loss is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previous recognised losses in the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

To be classified as held for sale an asset must meet the following criteria:

- The asset must be available for immediate sale in its present condition subject to terms that are usual and customary for sales of such assets;
- The sale must be highly probable, the appropriate level of management must be committed to a plan to sell the asset and an active programme to locate a buyer and complete the plan must have been initiated;
- The asset must be actively marketed for sale at a price that is reasonable in relation to its current value;

- The sale should be expected to qualify for recognition as a completed sale within one year of the date of classification and action required to complete the plan should indicate that it is unlikely that significant changes to the plan will be made or that the plan will be withdrawn.

If assets no longer meet the criteria to be classed 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 assets held for sale. They are adjusted for depreciation, amortisation or revaluations that would have been recognised had they not been classified as Held for Sale.

Assets that are abandoned or scrapped are not classified as Assets Held for Sale.

When an asset is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the asset on the Balance Sheet is written off to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, as part of the gain or loss on the sale of assets. Receipts from disposals are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Amounts received for disposals, in excess of £10,000 are treated as capital receipts. A proportion of Housing receipts is payable to central government. The balance of receipts is credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve and can only be used for new capital investment or set aside to reduce the Council's underlying need to borrow. Receipts are appropriated to the Reserve from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The gain or loss on the sale of assets is not a charge against Council Tax. Amounts are appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

x) 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.

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 available at the balance sheet date, 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 the financial year - where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefit will now be required (or lower settlement anticipated) the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service revenue account.

y) Reserves

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

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

z) Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. 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 amount charged so there is no impact on the level of Council Tax.

aa) 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. Where the Council is unable to recover VAT it is charged to the appropriate service.

ab) Foreign Currency Translation

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

ac) Fair Value Measurement

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

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

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

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the 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 valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data is available, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

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

- Level 1 - quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the Council can access at the measurement date

- Level 2 - inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly
- Level 3 - unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

ad) Segmental Analysis

The Council operates with two directorates. All services of the Council fall into one of these directorates. The main service areas within each directorate are as follows:

People - Chief Executive (50%); Partnership team; Legal; Governance and Elections and Scrutiny; Procurement; Finance; Revenues and Benefits; Audit (client); Streetscene; ICT (client); Customer Services; Improvement Team; Leisure; Human Resources; Health and Safety; Payroll.

Place - Chief Executive (50%); Economic Development; Housing Strategy; Planning; Environmental Health; Community Safety; Housing Revenue Account; Property and Estates; Emergency Planning.