

Governance, Risk and Audit Committee



Please contact: Democratic Services

Please email: democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Please direct dial on: 01263 516047

17 February 2025

An Extraordinary meeting of the **Governance, Risk and Audit Committee** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the **Council Chamber - Council Offices** on **Tuesday, 25 February 2025** at **2.00 pm**.

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to notify the committee clerk 24 hours in advance of the meeting and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel: 01263 516047, Email: democraticservices@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

Anyone attending this meeting may take photographs, film or audio-record the proceedings and report on the meeting. Anyone wishing to do so must inform the Chairman. If you are a member of the public and you wish to speak on an item on the agenda, please be aware that you may be filmed or photographed.

Please note that Committee members will be given priority to speak during the debate of agenda items

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Cllr S Bütikofer, Cllr J Boyle, Cllr C Cushing, Cllr A Fletcher, Cllr S Penfold and Cllr L Vickers

All other Members of the Council for information.

Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance

If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

Chief Executive: Steve Blatch

Tel 01263 513811 **Fax** 01263 515042 **Minicom** 01263 516005

Email districtcouncil@north-norfolk.gov.uk **Web site** www.north-norfolk.gov.uk

A G E N D A

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTES

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The code of conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest.

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. DRAFT STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2023 /2024

7 - 162

Executive Summary	This report presents to the Committee the Draft Statement of Accounts for the 2023/24 financial years. These are for the Committee to note and approve.
Options considered	No options are applicable as these have to be approved by 28 February 2025 (the statutory deadline).
Consultation(s)	Internal and External Audit Section 151 Officer
Recommendations	The Committee review and note the accounts and approve that the Chair sign off the 2023/24 accounts as approved on its behalf.
Reasons for recommendations	To enable effective Member scrutiny of the Council's financial performance.
Background papers	None

Wards affected	All
Cabinet member(s)	Cllr Lucy Shires
Contact Officer	Tina Stankley – Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution, if necessary:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of

business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph _ of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

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Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
 - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
 - c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:
 - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must make sure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of your interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	<p>councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land and Property	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
Licenses	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</p>

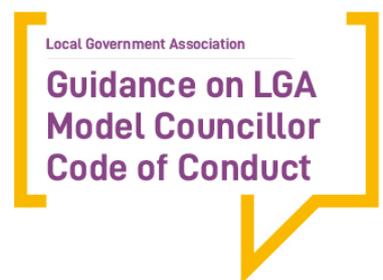
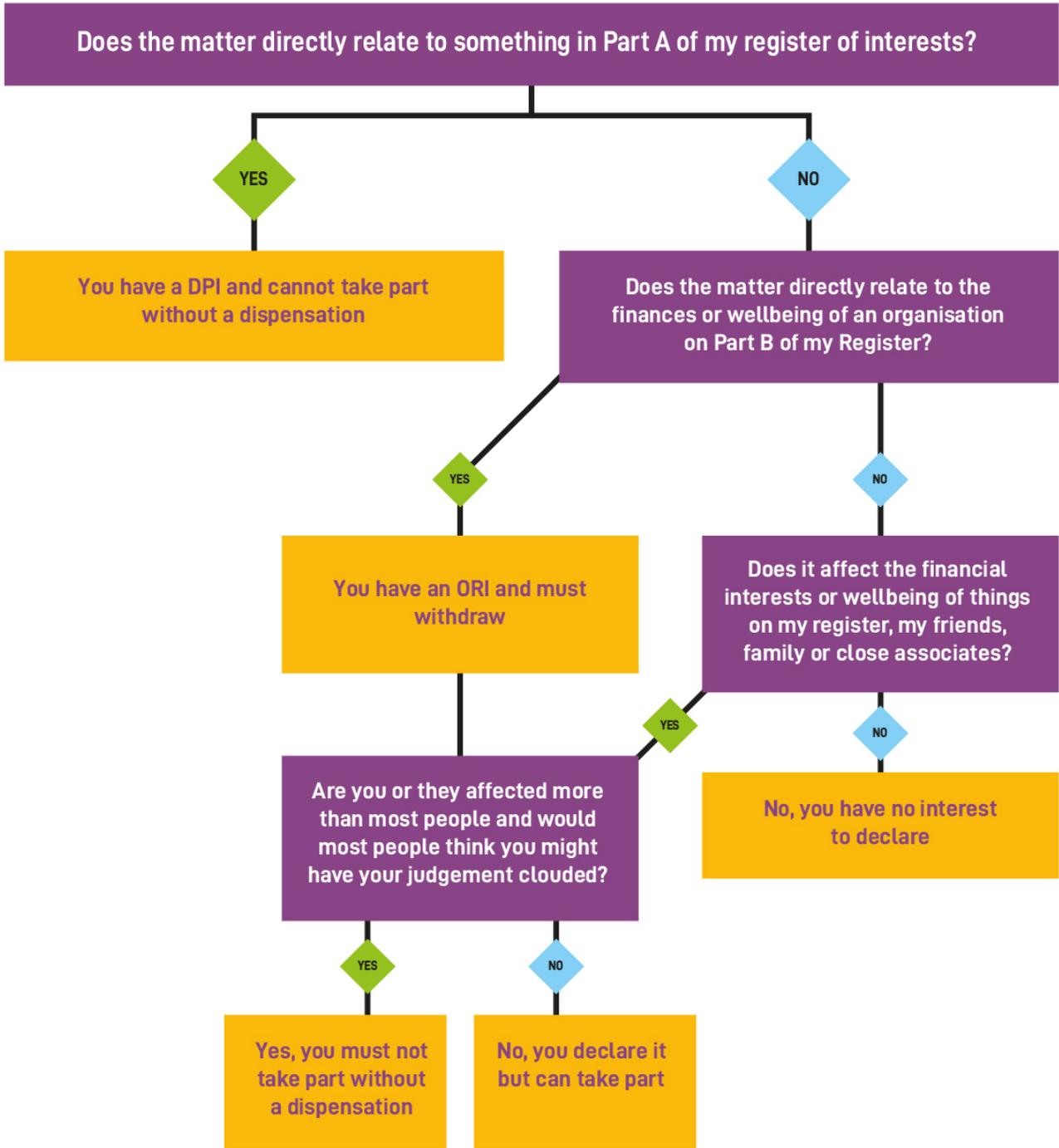
	spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

<p>You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authorityb) any body<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) exercising functions of a public nature(ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)



Agenda Item 5

Draft Statements of Accounts 2023/24	
Executive Summary	This report presents to the Committee the Draft Statement of Accounts for the 2023/24 financial years. These are for the Committee to note and approve.
Options considered	No options are applicable as these have to be approved by 28 February 2025 (the statutory deadline).
Consultation(s)	Internal and External Audit Section 151 Officer
Recommendations	The Committee review and note the accounts and approve that the Chair sign off the 2023/24 accounts as approved on its behalf.
Reasons for recommendations	To enable effective Member scrutiny of the Council's financial performance.
Background papers	None

Wards affected	All
Cabinet member(s)	Cllr Lucy Shires
Contact Officer	Tina Stankley – Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

Links to key documents:	
Corporate Plan:	<p>A STRONG, RESPONSIBLE & ACCOUNTABLE COUNCIL</p> <p>We will ensure the Council maintains a financially sound position, seeking to make best use of its assets and staff resources, effective partnership working and maximising the opportunities of external funding and income.</p> <p>EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT DELIVERY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing our finances and contracts robustly to ensure best value for money • Providing services that are value for money and meet the needs of our residents • Ensuring that strong governance is at the heart of all we do
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	The accounts are intrinsically linked to the MTFS
Council Policies & Strategies	<p>Accounting Policies</p> <p>Council Tax Policies</p> <p>Business Rates Policies</p> <p>Constitution</p>

Corporate Governance:	
Is this a key decision	No
Has the public interest test been applied	The item is not exempt
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	Statement of Accounts 2022/23

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. This report presents the draft Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 for the Committee to note and approval.

2. Introduction & Background

- 2.1. There is a requirement for all Councils to publish their Statement of Accounts each financial year. The accounts are a key financial document and give a detailed overview of the Council's income and expenditure during the financial year as well as providing a record of the assets and liabilities at the year end.
- 2.2. The Accounts are prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom issued by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- 2.3. The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 came into force on 30 September 2024 and set out the revised dates for publication and audit of the Statement of Accounts for local authorities for the years 2016/17 to 2027/28. These Regulations have been issued to address the audit backlog that we have seen across local government nationally. This is intended to reset the system to close the legacy years for all local authorities. For the 2023/24 accounts the statutory back stop date is 28 February 2025.
- 2.4. For the 2024/25 accounts the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 have allowed an extension to the deadline for publishing the draft accounts from 31 May 2025 to 30 June 2025. Then also for the account to be audited by 27 February 2026 instead of 30 September 2025.
- 2.5. The 2024/25 audit will be seen as the key year to allow the assurance to be rebuilt that has been lost from those previous years, but even with this reset the auditors will still have to issue disclaimed opinions for the next two or three years until they have gained full assurance again in the figures making up the accounts.

3. Corporate Priorities

- 3.1. The Council needs to produce the accounts each year so that it can demonstrate how resources have been used and so the Council maintains an accurate record of the resources it has available for future use.
- 3.2. Strong, Responsible & Accountable Council - The Council needs to maintain a financially sound position, seeking to make best use of its assets and staff

resources, effective partnership working and maximising the opportunities of external funding and income.

- 3.3. Finances and contracts should be robustly managed to ensure best value for money.
- 3.4. Services should be provided that are value for money and meet the needs of our residents
- 3.5. Ensure that strong governance is at the heart of all we do

4. Financial and Resource Implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications surrounding the publication of the Statement of Accounts.

Comments from the S151 Officer:

The report is providing an update on the audit of the financial accounts for 2023/24. The plan for the reset is contained in the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024. The S151 Officer can now say that with the approval of these accounts and the auditor completing the audit of the accounts before 28 February 2025 that the council will have met all the revised statutory deadlines that have been set in the September 2024 legislation.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1. The Council did not meet the statutory deadline that existed prior to September 2024. It should be noted that this was not a unique position of this council as many councils across the country did not meet this deadline. This being a national issue revised legislation was enacted in September 2025 to put in place revised deadlines so that there could be a reset at a national level and enable councils and auditors to revert to the previous deadlines over the course of the next 2-3 years.

Comments from the Monitoring Officer

The Monitoring Officer can confirm Council will have met the statutory requirement to publish the Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 set in the September 2024 legislation.

6. Risks

- 6.1. None as a direct consequence of this report.

7. Net Zero Target

- 7.1. None as a direct consequence of this report.

8. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- 8.1. None as a direct consequence of this report.

9. Community Safety issues

9.1. None as a direct consequence of this report.

10. Conclusion and Recommendations

10.1 It is recommended the Committee review and note the accounts, and the Committee approve that the Chair sign off the 2023/24 accounts as approved on its behalf.

**North Norfolk District Council
Completion Report for Those Charged with
Governance**

Year ended 31 March 2024

Report issued - 15 February 2025

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Governance, Risk and Audit Committee
North Norfolk District Council
Council Offices
Holt Road
Cromer
NR27 9EN

15 February 2025

Dear Governance, Risk and Audit Committee

2023/24 Audit completion report

We are pleased to attach our audit results report, summarising the status of our audit for the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee.

The audit is designed to express an opinion on the 2023/24 financial statements and address current statutory and regulatory requirements. This report contains our findings related to the areas of audit emphasis, our views on North Norfolk District Council accounting policies and judgements and material internal control findings.

This report considers the impact of Government proposals, which have now been enacted through secondary legislation, to clear the backlog in local audit and put the local audit system on a sustainable footing. The proposals recognise that timely, high-quality financial reporting and audit of local bodies is a vital part of our democratic system. Not only does it support good decision making by local bodies, by enabling them to plan effectively, make informed decisions and manage their services, it ensures transparency and accountability to local taxpayers. All stakeholders have a critical role to play in addressing the audit backlog.

The Governance, Risk and Audit Committee, as the (Council's) body charged with governance, has an essential role in ensuring that it has assurance over both the quality of the draft financial statements prepared by management and the Council's wider arrangements to support the delivery of a timely and efficient audit. We will consider and report on the adequacy of the Council's external financial reporting arrangements and the effectiveness of the audit committee in fulfilling its role in those arrangements as part of our assessment of Value for Money arrangements, and consider the use of other statutory reporting powers to draw attention to weaknesses in those arrangements where we consider it necessary to do so.

Given that Statutory Instrument 2024/907 "The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 ("SI 2024/907") imposes a backstop date of 28 February 2025 by which date we are required to issue our opinion on the financial statements, we have considered whether the time constraints imposed by the backstop date mean that we cannot complete all necessary procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate audit evidence to support the opinion and fulfil all the objectives of all relevant ISAs (UK).

We have also taken into account SI 2024/907 and Local Authority Reset and Recovery Implementation Guidance Notes issued by the National Audit Office and endorsed by the Financial Reporting Council, together with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the National Audit Office's 2020 Code of Audit Practice, the Statement of Responsibilities issued by Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) Ltd, auditing standards and other professional requirements.

As reported in our 2021/23 Audit Completion Report, we issued a disclaimed audit report on the Council's financial statements for 2022/23, and 2021/22 under these arrangements to reset and recover local government audit. The Council were unable to publish draft unaudited financial statements and provide full supporting records by 29 October 2024, we therefore did not undertake our planned procedures on the 2023/24 financial statements and have not been able to start rebuilding assurance ahead of the planned backstop date of 28 February 2025. We are therefore unable to conclude that the 2023/24 financial statements are free from material and pervasive misstatements and anticipate issuing a disclaimed 2023/24 audit opinion.

We draw the attention of Governance, Risk and Audit Committee members and officers to the Public Sector Audit Appointment Limited's Statement of Responsibilities (paragraphs 26-28) which clearly set out what is expected of audited bodies in preparing their financial statements (see Appendix F).

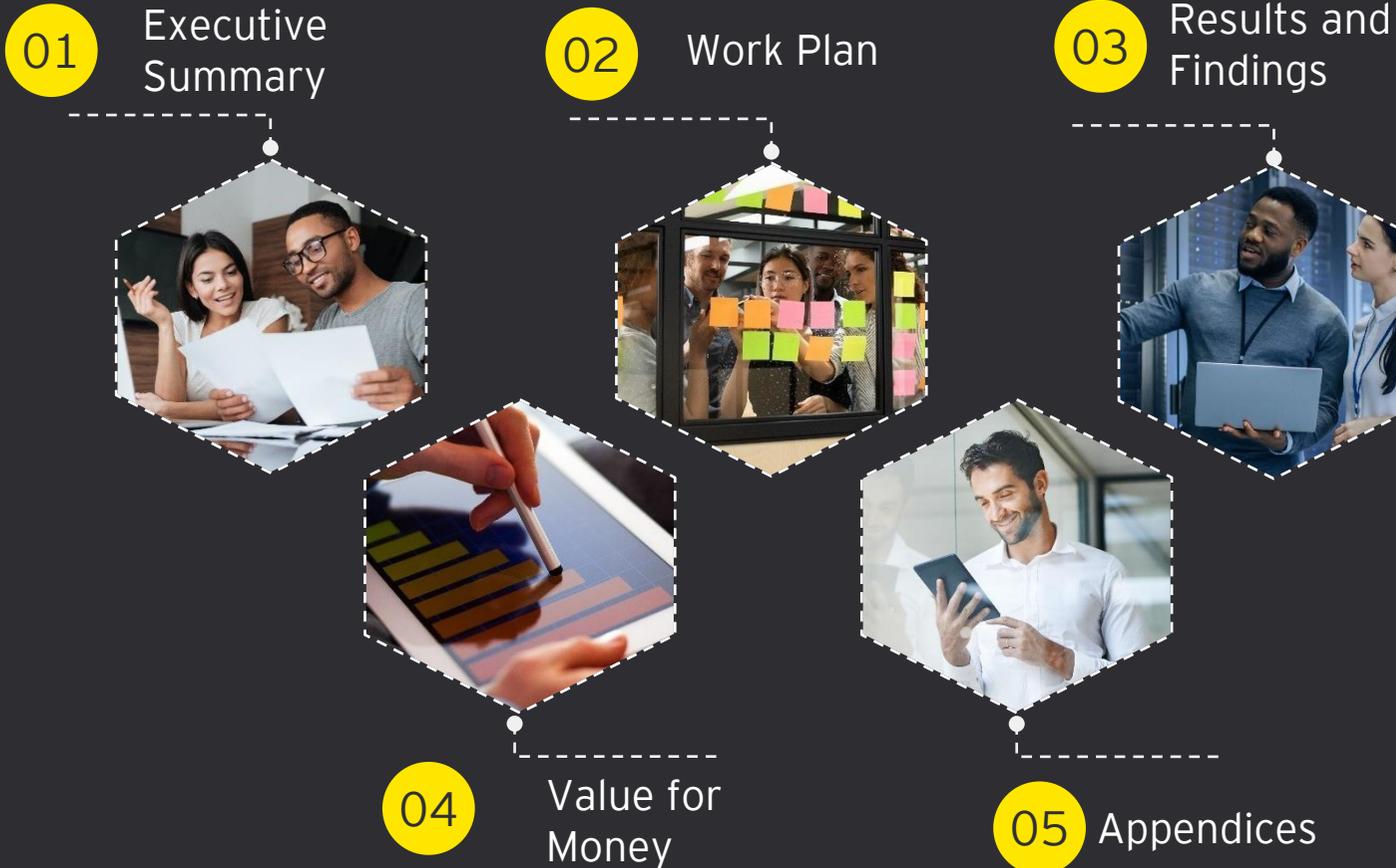
This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee, and management, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Yours faithfully

David Riglar
Partner
For and on behalf of Ernst & Young LLP

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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/managing-audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies-from-2023-24-audits>). 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 July 2021)” 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 Governance, Risk and Audit Committee of North Norfolk District Council in accordance with the statement of responsibilities. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee of North Norfolk 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 Governance, Risk and Audit Committee of North Norfolk 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 - Context for the audit

Context for the audit - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Financial Reporting Council (FRC) measures to address local audit delays

Timely, high-quality financial reporting and audit of local bodies is a vital part of our democratic system. It supports good decision making by local bodies and ensures transparency and accountability to local taxpayers. There is general agreement that the backlog in the publication of audited financial statements by local bodies has grown to an unacceptable level and there is a clear recognition that all stakeholders in the sector need to work together to address this. Reasons for the backlog across the system have been widely reported and include:

- ▶ Lack of capacity within the local authority financial accounting profession
- ▶ Increased complexity of reporting requirements within the sector
- ▶ Lack of capacity within audit firms with public sector experience
- ▶ Increased regulatory pressure on auditors, which in turn has increased the scope and extent of audit procedures performed.

MHCLG (formerly Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities) has worked collaboratively with the FRC, as incoming shadow system leader, and other system partners, to develop and implement measures to clear the backlog. SI 2024/907, together with the updated National Audit Office Code of Audit Practice 2024 and the Local Authority Reset and Recovery Implementation Guidance, have all been developed to ensure auditor compliance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)). The approach to addressing the backlog consists of three phases:

Phase 1: Reset involving clearing the backlog of historic audit opinions up to and including financial year 2022/23 by 13 December 2024.

Phase 2: Recovery from Phase 1, starting from 2023/24, in a way that does not cause a recurrence of the backlog by using backstop dates to allow assurance to be rebuilt over multiple audit cycles. The backstop date for audit of the 2023/24 financial statements is 28 February 2025.

- ▶ Phase 3: Reform involving addressing systemic challenges in the system and embedding timely financial reporting and audit.

As reported in our 20/11/2024 Audit Completion Report to the **Governance, Risk and Audit Committee** we issued a disclaimed audit report on the Council's financial statements for 2022/23, and 2021/22 years of account under these arrangements to reset and recover local government audit.

EY's Head of UK Government and Public Sector Audit wrote to the Section 151 officer at the Council on 21 August 2024 to set out that we would be prioritising those 2023/24 audits that we considered met the following criteria:

- ▶ draft unaudited financial statements were published by 29 October 2024;
- ▶ there was evidence that finance teams could effectively and efficiently support the audit process; and
- ▶ have high-quality audit evidence and supporting information that is delivered in accordance with our agreed timetable and in advance of the commencement of the audit.

We concluded that the Council had not met these requirements. We therefore did not undertake our planned procedures on the 2023/24 financial statements and have not been able to start rebuilding assurance ahead of the planned backstop date of 28 February 2025.



Executive Summary

Scope update

In our Audit Plan presented at the 11 June 2024 **Governance, Risk and Audit** Committee meeting, 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 exception:

- **Changes in materiality:** In our Audit Plan, we communicated that our audit procedures would be performed using a materiality of £1.375 million. We updated our planning materiality assessment using the draft statement of accounts. Based on our materiality measure of gross expenditure, we have updated our overall materiality assessment to £1.5 million. This results in updated performance materiality, at 50% of overall materiality, of £0.75 million (Audit Plan - £0.688 million), and an updated threshold for reporting misstatements of £0.075 million.



BOARDROOM



02 Work Plan

Work Plan – Audit Scope

Audit scope

This Completion report covers the work that we performed in relation to:

- ▶ Our audit opinion on whether the financial statements of the Council give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 31 March 2024 and of the income and expenditure for the year then ended; and
- ▶ Our commentary on your arrangements to secure value for money in your use of resources for the relevant period. We include further details on VFM in Section 4.

We will also review and report to the National Audit Office (NAO), to the extent and in the form required by them, on the Council's Whole of Government Accounts return.

Our audit will also include the mandatory procedures that we are required to perform in accordance with applicable laws and auditing standards.

When planning the audit we take into account several key inputs:

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- Strategic, operational and financial risks relevant to the financial statements;
- Developments in financial reporting and auditing standards;
- The quality of systems and processes;
- ▶ Changes in the business and regulatory environment; and,
- ▶ Management's views on all of the above.

Given that SI 2024/907 imposes a backstop date of 28 February 2025 by which date we are required to issue our opinion on the financial statements, we have considered whether the time constraints imposed by the backstop date mean that we cannot complete all necessary procedures to obtain sufficient, appropriate audit evidence to support the opinion and fulfil all the objectives of all relevant ISAs (UK).

This decision is in line with ISA 200: Failure to Achieve an Objective 24.

If an objective in a relevant ISA (UK) cannot be achieved, the auditor shall evaluate whether this prevents the auditor from achieving the overall objectives of the auditor and thereby requires the auditor, in accordance with the ISAs (UK), to modify the auditor's opinion or withdraw from the engagement (where withdrawal is possible under applicable law or regulation). Failure to achieve an objective represents a significant matter requiring documentation in accordance with ISA (UK) 230 (Revised June 2016).4 (Ref: Para. A77&A78)

Taking the above into account, for the year ended 31 March 2024 we have determined that we cannot meet the objectives of the ISAs(UK) and we anticipate issuing a disclaimed audit report.

Work Plan - Materiality

Materiality

Planning materiality

£1.5m

Materiality for y/e 31 March 2024 has been set at £1.5m, which represents 2% of 2024 gross expenditure on provision of services.

Performance materiality

£0.75m

Performance materiality for y/e 31 March 2024 has been set at £1.125m, which represents 50% of planning materiality.

Audit differences

£0.075m

We will report all uncorrected misstatements relating to the primary statements greater than £0.075m for y/e 31 March 2024;. Other misstatements identified will be communicated to the extent that they merit the attention of the Audit Committee.

In order to ascertain the significance of issues in the draft financial statements we have set materiality based on the draft 2023/24 accounts. We have considered updating this materiality for any key changes or known factors from that year.. We determined that our audit procedures would be performed using a materiality of £1.5m. This level of materiality remains appropriate for the actual results for the financial year.

These materiality levels have been set based on the main Authority financial statements. These levels are being used to assess our response to any issues identified in the Authority's financial statements.

Work Plan – Significant, inherent and other risk areas

The following 'dashboard' summarises the significant accounting and auditing matters identified as part of our planning work. It seeks to provide Those Charged with Governance with an overview of our initial risk identification for the year.

Audit risks and areas of focus

Risk/area of focus	Risk identified	Change from PY audit	Details
Misstatement due to fraud or error	Fraud risk	No change in risk or focus	There is a risk that the financial statements as a whole are not free from material misstatement whether caused by fraud or error. We perform mandatory procedures regardless of specifically identified fraud risks.
Inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure including Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute (REFCUS)	Fraud risk	No change in risk or focus	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 assessed the risk is most likely to occur through the inappropriate capitalisation of revenue expenditure.
Pension Valuation	Inherent risk	No change in risk or focus	The Local Authority Accounting Code of Practice and IAS19 require the Council to make extensive disclosures within its financial statements regarding its membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Accounting for this scheme involves significant estimation and judgement and therefore management engages an actuary to undertake the calculations on their behalf. ISAs (UK) 500 and 540 require us to undertake procedures on the use of management experts and the assumptions underlying fair value estimates.
Valuation of Other Land and Buildings (Including Investment Property)	Inherent risk	No change in risk or focus	The value of Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE) and Investment Property represents a significant balance in the Council's accounts and is subject to valuation changes, impairment reviews and depreciation charges. Management is required to make material judgemental inputs and apply estimation techniques to calculate the year-end balances recorded in the Balance Sheet. ISAs (UK and Ireland) 500 and 540 require us to undertake procedures on the use of management experts and the assumptions underlying fair value estimates.

Work Plan – Significant, inherent and other risk areas

The following ‘dashboard’ summarises the significant accounting and auditing matters identified as part of our planning work. It seeks to provide Those Charged with Governance with an overview of our initial risk identification for the year.

Audit risks and areas of focus

Risk/area of focus	Risk identified	Change from PY audit	Details
General Ledger system change	Area of focus	New risk	<p>The Council implemented a new main finance system during late 2022/23 (December 2022). The finance system contains the financial data that forms the basis of the accounting records and entries used to create the Council's Statement of Accounts.</p> <p>We have assessed the risk is most likely to occur through the inaccurate or incomplete migration of client data between the old and new system resulting in materially incorrect records and entries in the financial statements.</p>
Production and publishing of the Statement of Accounts	Area of focus	New risk	<p>The last published and audited set of accounts was 20/21. The Council has a challenging timetable to produce three sets of accounts for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 by 30 September 2024.</p> <p>Therefore, we have assessed that there is a risk to the timeliness and quality of the published 2023/24 statement of accounts, which could have a knock-on impact on our timetable to deliver the audit by the 30 November 2024.</p>

Work Plan - Independence

The FRC Ethical Standard 2019 and ISA (UK) 260 'Communication of audit matters with those charged with governance', requires us to communicate with you on a timely basis on all significant facts and matters that bear upon our integrity, objectivity and independence. The Ethical Standard, as revised in December 2019, requires that we communicate formally both at the planning stage and at the conclusion of the audit, as well as during the course of the audit if appropriate. The aim of these communications is to ensure full and fair disclosure by us to those charged with your governance on matters in which you have an interest.

Required communications

Planning stage

- ▶ The principal threats, if any, to objectivity and independence identified by Ernst & Young (EY) including consideration of all relationships between you, your affiliates and directors and us;
- ▶ The safeguards adopted and the reasons why they are considered to be effective, including any Engagement Quality review;
- ▶ The overall assessment of threats and safeguards;
- ▶ Information about the general policies and process within EY to maintain objectivity and independence

Final stage

- ▶ In order for you to assess the integrity, objectivity and independence of the firm and each covered person, we are required to provide a written disclosure of relationships (including the provision of non-audit services) that may bear on our integrity, objectivity and independence. This is required to have regard to relationships with the entity, its directors and senior management, its affiliates, and its connected parties and the threats to integrity or objectivity, including those that could compromise independence that these create. We are also required to disclose any safeguards that we have put in place and why they address such threats, together with any other information necessary to enable our objectivity and independence to be assessed;
- ▶ Details of non-audit/additional services provided and the fees charged in relation thereto;
- ▶ Written confirmation that the firm and each covered person is independent and, if applicable, that any non-EY firms used in the group audit or external experts used have confirmed their independence to us;
- ▶ Details of any non-audit/additional services to a UK PIE audit client where there are differences of professional opinion concerning the engagement between the Ethics Partner and Engagement Partner and where the final conclusion differs from the professional opinion of the Ethics Partner
- ▶ Details of any inconsistencies between FRC Ethical Standard and your policy for the supply of non-audit services by EY and any apparent breach of that policy;
- ▶ Details of all breaches of the IESBA Code of Ethics, the FRC Ethical Standard and professional standards, and of any safeguards applied and actions taken by EY to address any threats to independence; and
- ▶ An opportunity to discuss auditor independence issues.

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In addition, during the course of the audit, we are required to communicate with you whenever any significant judgements are made about threats to objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place, for example, when accepting an engagement to provide non-audit services.

We ensure that the total amount of fees that EY and our network firms have charged to you and your affiliates for the provision of services during the reporting period, analysed in appropriate categories, are disclosed.

Work Plan - Independence

Overall Assessment

Overall, we consider that the safeguards that have been adopted appropriately mitigate the principal threats identified and we therefore confirm that EY is independent and the objectivity and independence of David Riglar, your Audit Engagement Partner and the audit engagement team have not been compromised.

Self interest threats

A self interest threat arises when EY has financial or other interests in your authority. Examples include where we have an investment in your authority; where we receive significant fees in respect of non-audit services; where we need to recover long outstanding fees; or where we enter into a business relationship with you. At the time of writing, there are no long outstanding fees.

We believe that it is appropriate for us to undertake those permitted non-audit/additional services set out in Section 5.40 of the FRC Ethical Standard 2019 (FRC ES), and we will comply with the policies that you have approved.

None of the services are prohibited under the FRC's ES and the services have been approved in accordance with your policy on pre-approval. In addition, when the ratio of non-audit fees to audit fees exceeds 1:1, we are required to discuss this with our Ethics Partner, as set out by the FRC ES, and if necessary agree additional safeguards or not accept the non-audit engagement. We will also discuss this with you.

At the time of writing, there are no non-audit fees that require additional safeguards.

Self review threats

A self-interest threat may also arise if members of our audit engagement team have objectives or are rewarded in relation to sales of non-audit services to you. We confirm that no member of our audit engagement team, including those from other service lines, has objectives or is rewarded in relation to sales to you, in compliance with Ethical Standard part 4. There are no other self-interest threats at the date of this report.

Management threats

Partners and employees of EY are prohibited from taking decisions on behalf of management of your authority. Management threats may also arise during the provision of a non-audit service in relation to which management is required to make judgements or decision based on that work.

There are no management threats at the date of this report.

Other threats

Other threats, such as advocacy, familiarity or intimidation, may arise.

There are no other threats at the date of this report.

EY Transparency Report 2024

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 period ended 28 June 2024 and can be found here: [EY UK 2024 Transparency Report | EY - UK](#).



03 Results and findings

Results and findings

Status of the audit

Our audit work in respect of the North Norfolk District Council opinion is substantially complete. The following items relating to the completion of our audit procedures were outstanding at the date of this report.

- ▶ Completion of subsequent events procedures;
- ▶ Receipt of signed financial statements and a signed management representation letter.

Given that the audit process is still ongoing, we will continue to consider existing and new information which could influence our final audit opinion.

Value for Money

Our value for money (VFM) work is complete and reported in Section 04 of this report. We identified significant weaknesses in arrangements. See Section 04 of the report for further details.

Audit differences

We have not identified any audit differences from our work, either adjusted or unadjusted by 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 no matters to report as a result of this work.

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.

We will perform the procedures required by the National Audit Office (NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts submission following the completion of the financial statements audit. We expect a delay in the audit certificate in respect of this work as NAO reserve the right to ask for further assurances. Until we have confirmation from the NAO that no further work is required, we will be unable to issue the audit certificate.

We did not receive any questions or objections to the Council's financial statements from any member of the public following the inspection period.

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 Council to consider it or to bring it to the attention of the public (i.e. "a report in the public interest").

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



Results and findings

Areas of audit focus

In our Audit Plan we identified a number of key areas of focus for our audit of the financial report of North Norfolk District Council. We concluded we would disclaim the audit and therefore have not completed detailed audit testing on these areas but instead have reported any matters that came to light from the work we did complete.

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

- ▶ There are no 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 Governance, Risk and Audit Committee or Management.

Control observations

During the audit, we identified the following significant deficiencies in internal control:

As reported in our 2021/23 Audit Completion Report, we identified that improvements are required in the preparation of Statement of Accounts. The Authority has been unable to publish its statement of accounts by the target dates required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. As outlined in Governance, Risk and Audit Committee the delays were caused by staff shortages and the need to prioritise closing the budget gap. This demonstrates the associated risk of non-compliance with key financial controls and the consequence of not having a fully resourced Finance Team to be able to provide services needed by the Council. The Council have taken action and increased resources in the Finance, they published financial statements for 2023/24 in January 2025.

Independence

Further to our review of independence in section 2 of this report we have not identified any issues to bring to your attention..



Results and findings

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;

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- ▶ Any other matters significant to overseeing the financial reporting process;
 - ▶ Findings and issues around the opening balance on initial audits (if applicable);
 - ▶ Related parties;
 - ▶ External confirmations;
 - ▶ Going concern;
 - ▶ Consideration of laws and regulations; and
 - ▶ Group audits

We have no other matters to report.

Results and findings

Detailed matters identified

Description of work completed	Finding	Conclusion	Recommendation
Financial statement Review	We noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 63 casting errors,• 26 internal inconsistencies errors, and• Material Variances observed in overall analytical procedures.	The findings indicate potential inaccuracies in the financial records.	Action is required to reconcile the opening balances and to determine the reasons for the material differences. Adjustments should be made to correct any errors, and the accounting records should be updated accordingly. Furthermore, the authority should review its closing and opening balance procedures to ensure accuracy and to prevent such discrepancies in the future.

Audit Report Section of ARR

Expected modification to the audit report

As reported in our 2021/23 Audit Completion Report dated 20 November 2024, we issued a disclaimed audit report on the Authority's financial statements for 2022/23 and 2021/22 under the arrangements to reset and recover local government audit.

As a result of the 2022/23 disclaimed audit report, we do not have assurance over the brought forward balances from 2022/23 (the opening balances). This means we do not have assurance over 2023/24 in-year movements and some closing balances. We also do not have assurance over the 2022/23 comparative amounts disclosed in the 2023/24 financial statements. We did not plan to rebuild this assurance in our 2023/24 audit.

As set out within this report we have also not been able to complete our planned programme of work to obtain sufficient evidence to have reasonable assurance over closing balances and in-year transactions.

Taken together with the requirement to conclude our work by the 2023/24 back stop date, the lack of evidence over these movements and balances mean we are unable to conclude that the 2023/24 financial statements are free from material and pervasive misstatement of the financial statements.

We therefore anticipate issuing a disclaimed 2023/24 audit opinion.

The form and content of the Audit Report will be shared with the Section 151 officer to enable you to formally authorise the 2023/24 financial statements for issue.



04 Value for Money



Executive Summary

Purpose

Auditors are required to be satisfied that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We do not issue a 'conclusion' or 'opinion', but where significant weaknesses are identified we will report by exception in the auditor's opinion on the financial statements. In addition, auditor's provide an annual commentary on arrangements published as part of the Auditor's Annual Report. In doing so, we comply with the requirements of the 2020 Code of Audit Practice (the Code) and Auditor Guidance Note 3 (AGN 03).

Appendix B sets out the Council responsibilities for value for money, and the Auditor's responsibilities.

The purpose of this interim commentary is to explain the work we have undertaken during the period 01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024 and highlight any significant weaknesses identified along with recommendations for improvement. The commentary covers our interim findings for audit year 2023/24.

The report sets out the following areas which have been assessed up to the point of issuing this interim report:

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- Any identified risks of significant weakness, having regard to the three specified reporting criteria;
- Findings to date from our planned procedures; and
- Summary of arrangements over the period covered by this report (Appendix A).

We will summarise our final view of the value for money arrangements as part of the Auditor's Annual Report once the audit report has been issued for 2023/24.

Executive Summary (continued)

Risks of Significant Weakness

In undertaking our procedures to understand the body's arrangements against the specified reporting criteria, we identify whether there are risks of significant weakness which require us to complete additional risk-based procedures. AGN 03 sets out considerations for auditors in completing and documenting their work and includes consideration of:

- our cumulative audit knowledge and experience as your auditor;
- reports from internal audit which may provide an indication of arrangements that are not operating effectively;
- our review of Council committee reports;
- meetings with management and key officers;
- information from external sources; and
- evaluation of associated documentation through our regular engagement with Council management and the finance team.

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We identified a significant risk related to 'How the body ensures effective processes and systems are in place to ensure budgetary control; to communicate relevant, accurate and timely management information (including non-financial information where appropriate); supports its statutory financial reporting requirements; and ensures corrective action is taken where needed'.

Description of risk identified

In the 2021/22 to 2023/24 financial years the Authority has been unable to publish its statement of accounts by the target dates required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The unaudited statements were not published at the date of this report except for 2021/22. The issues have been discussed by the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee where it was reported the delays were caused by staff shortages and the need to prioritise closing the budget gap. This demonstrates the associated risk of non-compliance with key financial controls and the consequence of not having a fully resourced Finance Team to be able to provide services needed by the Council.

The issue above is evidence of a risk in proper arrangements in how the Council ensures effective processes and systems are in place to ensure accurate and timely management information (including non-financial information where appropriate); supports its statutory financial reporting requirements.

Work planned to address the risk of significant weakness

- Reviewing the Council's financial statement closedown arrangements and plans to publish statement of accounts.
- Review Internal Audit reports and council committee papers to determine whether the staff shortages have impacted wider finance team responsibilities.

Executive Summary (continued)

Reporting

Our interim commentary for 2023/24 is set out over pages 25 to 28. The interim commentary on these pages summarises our conclusions and our understanding of the arrangements at the Council based on our evaluation of the evidence obtained in relation to the three reporting criteria (see table below) throughout 2023/24.

Appendix E includes the detailed arrangements and processes underpinning the reporting criteria. These were reported in our 2021/22 and 2022/23 Auditor's Annual Report and have been updated for 2023/24.

In accordance with the NAO's 2020 Code, we are required to report a commentary against three specified reporting criteria. The table below sets out the three reporting criteria, whether we identified a risk of significant weakness as part of our planning procedures, and whether, at the time of this interim report, we have concluded that there is a significant weakness in the body's arrangements.

Reporting Criteria	Risks of significant weaknesses in arrangements identified?	Actual significant weaknesses in arrangements identified?
Financial sustainability: How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services	No significant risks identified	No significant weakness identified
Governance: How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks	Significant risks identified	Significant weakness identified
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	No significant risks identified	No significant weakness identified

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Value for Money Commentary

Financial Sustainability: How the Council plans and manages its resources to ensure it can continue to deliver its services

No significant weakness identified

The Council is required to have arrangements in place to ensure proper resource management and the primary responsibility for these arrangements and reporting on the design and operation of these arrangements via the annual governance statement, rests with management. In accordance with the NAO's Code of Audit Practice, the focus of our work should be on the arrangements that the Council is expected to have in place during the years ended 31 March 2024. Our risk assessment did not identify any risk of significant weakness in arrangements to secure financial sustainability.

During 2023/24 the Council continued to manage the impact on finances of a number of issues such as general inflation, pay increases and uncertainties in relation to the amount of funding to be received in the future.

The final outturn position for general fund income and expenditure for the 2023/24 financial year was an overspend of £0.937 million. The overspend was caused by increased running costs and contractor costs. The deficit be funded from the General Reserve and the Treasury Management Reserve.

During the year, the Council have continued to revisit and monitor financial plans to ensure they have sufficient resources to deliver services through budget monitoring reports taken to Cabinet meetings. The Council recognises the financial challenges ahead. The Council has budgeted a balanced budget in 2024/25, with the following years having a total budget gap of £8.159m (2025/26 to 2027/28). The savings plan presented to the Council in February 2024 suggests total savings of £3.426m until 2027-28, leaving net projected deficit of £4.733m. In order to deliver a balanced budget in the medium term, the Council needs to identify savings. Service managers must identify savings within their budgets. A budget gap will exist without these savings. The Council has sufficient reserves to ensure financial resilience, however these balances will continue to reduce as significant budget gaps in the Medium Term Financial Plan.

The budget estimates have been produced on a prudent basis, with an emphasis on identifying the existing cost pressures the Council faces and a realistic level of savings and efficiencies. The budget has been constructed so that all known costs are budgeted for, and income budgets are based on realistic projections. The budget is therefore constructed on a prudent basis, and we are satisfied with the robustness of the estimates.

Conclusion: Based on the work performed, the Council had proper arrangements in place in 2023/24 to enable it to plan and manage its resources to ensure that it can continue to deliver its services.

Value for Money Commentary (continued)

Governance: How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks

Significant weakness identified

The Council is required to have arrangements in place to ensure proper risk management. The primary responsibility for these arrangements and reporting on the design and operation of these arrangements, rests with management. In accordance with the NAO's Code, the focus of our work should be on the arrangements that the Council is expected to have in place during the years ended 31 March 2024. Our risk assessment identified one risk of significant weakness in arrangements in respect of governance.

The Council has continued to manage governance considerations. The Council reviewed the 2023/24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy in February 2023, with further quarterly tracking and updates during 2023/24. The documents were taken to the Cabinet Committee for approval, which ensures that all Members are kept well informed of the process and financial performance of the Council.

The Council's Annual Governance Statement sets out the core governance arrangements for the year. This demonstrates how the Council's code of governance arrangements reflect the principles of good governance. The Head of Internal Audit concluded that for the 2023/24 financial year, reasonable assurance may be awarded over the framework of governance, risk management and controls at the Council.

The risk register and risk management policy were also updated in 2023/24. The risk register focuses on service, corporate and strategic risks. Risks on the register are reviewed quarterly at Governance, Risk and Audit Committee meeting, with elevation to Cabinet meetings for significant risks or issues identified to agree a programme of risk reduction.

Internal Audit issued a limited assurance regarding key financial controls for the 2022/23 financial year. Non-compliance with key financial controls represents a significant risk of weakness in the Council's governance arrangements. Based on the latest Internal Audit Reports, they have provided reasonable assurance on Key Financial Controls in 2023/24. Further in 2023/24 financial year. Internal Audit issued limited assurance over the controls related to post implementation of the new finance system and risk management. The Council agreed with recommendations raised and set out a response and timeframe to improve arrangements.

We further identified that improvements are required in the preparation of Statement of Accounts. The Authority has been unable to publish its statement of accounts by the target dates required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. As outlined in Governance, Risk and Audit Committee, the delays were caused by staff shortages and the need to prioritise closing the budget gap. This demonstrates the associated risk of non-compliance with key financial controls previously and the consequence of not having a fully resourced Finance Team to be able to provide services needed by the Council. The Council have taken action and increased resources in the Finance, they published financial statements for 2023/24 on 14 January 2025.

Value for Money Commentary (continued)

Governance: How the Council ensures that it makes informed decisions and properly manages its risks (continued)

Significant weakness identified

The issue above is evidence of weaknesses in proper arrangements for supporting its statutory reporting requirements and effective processes and systems for accurate and timely management and financial information - Governance 'How the body ensures effective processes and systems are in place to ensure budgetary control; to communicate relevant, accurate and timely management information (including non-financial information where appropriate); supports its statutory financial reporting requirements; and ensures corrective action is taken where needed' and 'How the body ensures it makes properly informed decisions, supported by appropriate evidence and allowing for challenge and transparency. This includes arrangements for effective challenge from those charged with governance/audit committee.'

Based on the work performed, we have identified a significant weakness in the arrangements in 2023/24 that we will be reporting by exception in relation to Governance.

Recommendation: To assess the responsibilities and resource requirement of the finance function to ensure the Council has effective processes and systems to support its statutory financial reporting requirements and implement Internal Audit key financial control recommendations.

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Value for Money Commentary (continued)

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

No significant weakness identified

The Council is required to have arrangements in place to ensure economy, efficiency and effectiveness, and the responsibility for these arrangements and reporting on the design and operation of these arrangements via the annual governance statement, rests with management. In accordance with the NAO's Code, the focus of our work should be on the arrangements that the Council is expected to have in place during the year ended 31 March 2024. Our risk assessment did not identify any risk of significant weakness in arrangements in respect to Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Council prepares the Medium-Term Financial Strategy covering a 4 year period. It sets the vision, priorities, and strategic objectives for the Council. Priorities are based on the Council's Corporate Plan, which is tracked through an online Performance Portal which is available for general public access. The budget process incorporates the review of other strategies such as the capital and investment and treasury management, ensuring they are consistent.

The Performance Management Framework setting priorities that are relevant to Corporate Plan themes, taking account of stakeholders' needs and expectations. Performance reporting is maintained against the identified priorities and delivery measures, with quarterly reporting to the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee throughout the year to continuously monitor performance and take prompt action as needed.

The Council has a procurement strategy to ensure services are procured in line with relevant legislation, professional standards and internal policies. Contract management arrangements monitor the delivery of services.

Conclusion: Based on the work performed, the Council had proper arrangements in place in 2023/24 to enable it to use information about its costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers services.



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05 Appendices

Appendix A - Management representation letter

DRAFT Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

David Riglar
Ernst & Young
One Cambridge Square
Cambridge
CB4 0AE

This letter of representations is provided in connection with your audit of the financial statements of North Norfolk District Council ("the Authority") for the year ended 31 March 2024. 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 Authority financial position of North Norfolk District Council as of 31 March 2024 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 2023/24.

We understand that the purpose of your audit of our financial statements is to express an opinion thereon and that your audit was conducted in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), 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 the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.

2. We acknowledge, as members of management of the Authority, our responsibility for the fair presentation of the financial statements. We believe the 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 Authority in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24, and are free of material misstatements, including omissions. We have approved the financial statements.
3. The significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are appropriately described in the financial statements.
4. As members of management of the Authority, we believe that the Authority 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 2023/24, that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
5. There are no unadjusted audit differences identified during the current audit and pertaining to the latest period presented.
6. We confirm the Authority does not have securities (debt or equity) listed on a recognized exchange.

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

1. We acknowledge that we are responsible to determine that the Authority's activities are conducted in accordance with laws and regulations and that we are responsible to identify and address any non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

Appendix A – Management representation letter (continued)

DRAFT Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

2. We acknowledge that we are responsible for the design, implementation and maintenance of a system of internal control to prevent and detect fraud and that we believe we have appropriately fulfilled those responsibilities.
3. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
4. We have disclosed to you, and provided you full access to information and any internal investigations relating to, all instances of identified or suspected non-compliance with law and regulations, including fraud, known to us that may have affected the Authority (regardless of the source or form and including, without limitation, allegations by “whistleblowers”) including non-compliance matters:
 - ▶ involving financial improprieties;
 - ▶ related to laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Authority’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 Authority’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;

- ▶ Additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of the audit; and
- ▶ Unrestricted access to persons within the entity from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.

2. All material transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
3. We have made available to you all minutes of the meetings of the Authority and committees (or summaries of actions of recent meetings for which minutes have not yet been prepared) held through the 2023/24 to the most recent meeting on the following date: **[list date]**.
4. We confirm the completeness of information provided regarding the identification of related parties. We have disclosed to you the identity of the Authority’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 financial statements.
5. We believe that the methods, significant assumptions and the data we used in making accounting estimates and related disclosures are appropriate and consistently applied to achieve recognition, measurement and disclosure that is in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24.
6. We have disclosed to you, and the Authority has complied with, all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance, including all covenants, conditions or other requirements of all outstanding debt.

Appendix A – Management representation letter (continued)

DRAFT Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

7. From the date of our last management representation letter through the date of this letter we have disclosed to you, to the extent that we are aware, any (1) 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, and (2) ransomware attacks when we paid or are contemplating paying a ransom, regardless of the amount.

D. Contingent Liabilities

1. We are unaware of any violations or possible violations of laws or regulations the effects of which should be considered for disclosure in the financial statements or as the basis of recording a contingent loss (other than those disclosed or accrued in the financial statements).
2. We are unaware of any known or probable instances of non-compliance with the requirements of regulatory or governmental authorities, including their financial reporting requirements, and there have been no communications from regulatory agencies or government representatives concerning investigations or allegations of non-compliance.

E. Ownership of Assets

1. Except for assets capitalised under finance leases, the Authority has satisfactory title to all assets appearing in the balance sheet, and there are no liens or encumbrances on the Authority's assets, nor has any asset been pledged as collateral, other than those that are disclosed in Note 51 to the financial statements. All assets to which the Authority has satisfactory title appear in the balance sheet.

2. All agreements and options to buy back assets previously sold have been properly recorded and adequately disclosed in the financial statements.
3. We have no plans to abandon lines of product or other plans or intentions that will result in any excess or obsolete inventory, and no inventory is stated at an amount in excess of net realisable value.
4. There are no formal or informal compensating balance arrangements with any of our cash and investment accounts. Except as disclosed in the financial statements, we have no other line of credit arrangements.

F. Use of the Work of a Specialist

1. We agree with the findings of the specialists that we engaged to evaluate the IAS 19 Pension disclosures, Property, Plant and Equipment valuations have adequately considered the qualifications of the specialists in determining the amounts and disclosures included in the 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.

G. Estimates

1. We confirm that the significant judgments made in making the Property, Plant and Equipment valuations, and IAS 19 pension valuations have taken into account all relevant information of which we are aware.
2. We believe that the selection or application of the methods, assumptions and data used by us have been consistently and appropriately applied or used in making the Property, Plant and Equipment valuations, and IAS 19 pension valuations.

Appendix A – Management representation letter (continued)

DRAFT Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

3. We confirm that the significant assumptions used in making the Property, Plant and Equipment valuations, and IAS 19 pension valuations appropriately reflect our intent and ability to carry out the assessments and valuations, and any specific courses of action on behalf of the entity.
4. We confirm that the disclosures made in the financial statements with respect to the accounting estimates, including those describing estimation uncertainty, are complete and are reasonable in the context of the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24.
5. We confirm that appropriate specialized skills or expertise has been applied in making the Property, Plant and Equipment valuations, and IAS 19 pension valuations .
6. We confirm that no adjustments are required to the accounting estimates and disclosures in the financial statements.

H. 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 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.

I. Reserves

1. We have properly recorded or disclosed in the financial statements the useable and unusable reserves.

J. Liabilities and Contingencies

1. All liabilities and contingencies, including those associated with guarantees, whether written or oral, have been disclosed to you and are appropriately reflected in the consolidated and Council 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 to litigation and claims, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in Note [X] to the consolidated and Council financial statements all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

K. Going Concern

1. Note [X] to the financial statements discloses all the matters of which we are aware that are relevant to the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, including significant conditions and events, our plans for future action, and the feasibility of those plans.

L. Subsequent Events

1. Other than the events described in Note [X] to the financial statements, there have been no events subsequent to period end which require adjustment of or disclosure in the financial statements or notes thereto.

Appendix A – Management representation letter (continued)

DRAFT Management representation letter

Management Rep Letter

M. Other information

1. We acknowledge our responsibility for the preparation of the other information. The other information comprises the Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Statement.
2. We confirm that the content contained within the other information is consistent with the financial statements.
3. We confirm that the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 is a true reflection, in all material respects, of the governance arrangements and the effectiveness of those arrangements in 2023/24 and includes disclosure of all significant governance issues and findings relating to that financial year, through to the date of this letter.

N. Climate-related matters

1. We confirm that to the best of our knowledge all information that is relevant to the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of climate-related matters has been considered including the impact resulting from the commitments made by the Authority and reflected in the financial statements.

Yours faithfully,

(Director of Resources)

(Chair of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee)

Appendix B – Fees

The duty to prescribe fees is a statutory function delegated to Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

This is defined as the fee required by auditors to meet statutory responsibilities under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice and supporting guidance published by the National Audit Office, the financial reporting requirements set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting published by CIPFA/LASAAC, and the professional standards applicable to auditors' work.

A breakdown of our fees is shown in the table to the right.

The original fees for these years were based on the following assumptions:

- ▶ Officers meeting the agreed timetable of deliverables;
- ▶ Our accounts opinion and value for money conclusion being unqualified;
- ▶ Appropriate quality of documentation is provided by the Council;
- ▶ The Council has an effective control environment; and
- ▶ The Council complies with PSAA's Statement of Responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies. See <https://www.psa.co.uk/managing-audit-quality/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies/statement-of-responsibilities-of-auditors-and-audited-bodies-from-2023-24-audits/>. In particular the Council should have regard to paragraphs 26 - 28 of the Statement of Responsibilities which clearly sets out what is expected of audited bodies in preparing their financial statements. These are set out in full in Appendix E.

Due to the reset, the above clearly will not be achieved and we will be liaising with PSAA Ltd to discuss and agree fees.

	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22
	£'s	£'s	£'s
Scale Fee - Code Work	149,591	41,667	41,667
Determined Scale Fee Variation	Note 1	Note 1	Note 1
Total audit	Note 1	Note 1	Note 1
Other non-audit services not covered above (Housing Benefits)	Note 2	Note 2	Note 2
Total other non-audit services		TBC	TBC
Total fees		TBC	TBC

All fees exclude VAT

Note 1 - As set out in the joint statement on update to proposals to clear the backlog and embed timely audit issued by DHLUC, PSAA will use its fee variation process to determine the final fee the Council have to pay for the 2023/24, 2022/23, 2022/21, and 2020/21 audits.

In doing so, PSAA Ltd will apply the principles that where auditors have worked in good faith to meet the requirements of the Code of Audit Practice in place at the time the work was conducted (and have reported on work that is no longer required), then they are due the appropriate fee for the work done, including where their procedures were necessary to conclude the audit by the legislatively imposed backstop date by way of a modified or disclaimed opinion and the body is due to pay the applicable fee.

Note 2 - The 2021/22 Housing Benefit non-audit service has commenced and fees are yet to be determined. The 2022/23 Housing Benefit non-audit service has not started

Appendix C – Required communications with the Audit Committee

We have detailed the communications that we must provide to the audit committee.

Our Reporting to you

Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
Terms of engagement	Confirmation by the audit 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	The statement of responsibilities serves as the formal terms of engagement between the PSAA's appointed auditors and audited bodies.
Planning and audit approach	Communication of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The planned scope and timing of the audit ▶ Any limitations on the planned work to be undertaken ▶ The planned use of internal audit ▶ The significant risks identified 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Significant findings from the audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Our view about the significant qualitative aspects of accounting practices including accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures ▶ Significant difficulties, if any, encountered during the audit ▶ Significant matters, if any, arising from the audit that were discussed with management ▶ Written representations that we are seeking ▶ Expected modifications to the audit report ▶ Other matters if any, significant to the oversight of the financial reporting process ▶ Findings and issues regarding the opening balance on initial audits (delete if not an initial audit) 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance

Appendix C – Required communications with the Audit Committee (cont'd)

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"> ▶ Whether the events or conditions constitute a material uncertainty ▶ Whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements ▶ The adequacy of related disclosures in the financial statements 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Misstatements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Uncorrected misstatements and their effect on our audit opinion, unless prohibited by law or regulation ▶ The effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods ▶ A request that any uncorrected misstatement be corrected ▶ Material misstatements corrected by management 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Enquiries of the audit committee to determine whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud affecting the entity ▶ Any fraud that we have identified or information we have obtained that indicates that a fraud may exist ▶ Unless all of those charged with governance are involved in managing the entity, any identified or suspected fraud involving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management; b. Employees who have significant roles in internal control; or c. Others where the fraud results in a material misstatement in the financial statements ▶ The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures necessary to complete the audit when fraud involving management is suspected ▶ Matters, if any, to communicate regarding management's process for identifying and responding to the risks of fraud in the entity and our assessment of the risks of material misstatement due to fraud ▶ Any other matters related to fraud, relevant to Audit Committee responsibility 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance

Appendix C – Required communications with the Audit Committee (cont'd)

Our Reporting to you

Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
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"> ▶ Non-disclosure by management ▶ Inappropriate authorisation and approval of transactions ▶ Disagreement over disclosures ▶ Non-compliance with laws and regulations ▶ Difficulty in identifying the party that ultimately controls the entity 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Communication of all significant facts and matters that bear on EY's, and all individuals involved in the audit, integrity, objectivity and independence ▶ Communication of key elements of the audit engagement partner's consideration of independence and objectivity such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The principal threats ▶ Safeguards adopted and their effectiveness ▶ An overall assessment of threats and safeguards ▶ Information about the general policies and process within the firm to maintain objectivity and independence ▶ Communication whenever significant judgements are made about threats to integrity, objectivity and independence and the appropriateness of safeguards put in place. 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance

Appendix C – Required communications with the Audit Committee (cont'd)

Our Reporting to you

Required communications	What is reported?	When and where
External confirmations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Management's refusal for us to request confirmations ▶ Inability to obtain relevant and reliable audit evidence from other procedures 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Consideration of laws and regulations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 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 ▶ Enquiry of the audit 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 committee may be aware of 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Internal controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Significant deficiencies in internal controls identified during the audit 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Representations	Written representations we are requesting from management and/or those charged with governance	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
System of quality management	How the system of quality management (SQM) supports the consistent performance of a quality audit	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Material inconsistencies and misstatements	Material inconsistencies or misstatements of fact identified in other information which management has refused to revise	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance
Auditors report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Any circumstances identified that affect the form and content of our auditor's report 	This Completion report for Those Charged with Governance

Appendix D - Non-Compliance with Laws and Regulations (NOCLAR)

Non-Compliance with Laws and Regulations includes:

Any act or suspected act of omission or commission (intentional or otherwise) by the entity (including any third parties under the control of the entity such as subsidiaries, those charged with governance or management or an employee acting on behalf of the company), either intentional or unintentional, which are contrary to the prevailing laws or regulations

Management Responsibilities:

"It is the responsibility of management, with the oversight of those charged with governance, to ensure that the entity's operations are conducted in accordance with the provisions of laws and regulations, including compliance with the provisions of laws and regulations that determine the reported amounts and disclosures in an entity's financial statements."

ISA 250A, para 3

"The directors' report must contain a statement to the effect that... so far as the director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditor is unaware, and he has taken all the steps that he ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditor is aware of that information."

ISA 250A, para 3

"Management is responsible for communicating to us on a timely basis, to the extent that management or those charged with governance are aware, all instances of identified or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations ..."

Audit Engagement Letter

Management's responsibilities are also set out in the International Ethics Standard Board of Accountants' International Code of Ethics (IESBA Code) Para 360.08

Auditor Responsibilities

[The International Ethics Standard Board of Accountants' International Code of Ethics \(IESBA Code\)](#) section 360 sets out the scope and procedures in relation to responding to actual or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations.

Professional accountancy organisations who are members of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) are required to adopt the IESBA Code of Ethics.

We as your auditor are required to comply with the Code by virtue of our registration with ICAEW.

"If the auditor becomes aware of information concerning an instance of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations, the auditor shall obtain:

An understanding of the nature of the act and the circumstances in which it has occurred; and Further information to evaluate the possible effect on the financial statements

The auditor shall evaluate the implications of the identified or suspected non-compliance in relation to other aspects of the audit, including the auditor's risk assessment and the reliability of written representations, and take appropriate action."

ISA 250A, paras 19 and 22

Examples of Non-Compliance with Laws and Regulations (NOCLAR)

Matter

- ▶ Suspected or known fraud or bribery
- ▶ Health and Safety incident
- ▶ Payment of an unlawful dividend
- ▶ Loss of personal data
- ▶ Allegation of discrimination in dismissal
- ▶ HMRC or other regulatory investigation
- ▶ Deliberate journal mis-posting or allegations of financial impropriety
- ▶ Transacting business with sanctioned individuals

Implication

- ▶ Potential fraud/breach of anti-bribery legislation
- ▶ Potential breach of section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- ▶ Potential breach of Companies Act 2006
- ▶ Potential GDPR breach
- ▶ Potential non-compliance with employment laws
- ▶ Suspicion of non-compliance with laws/regulations
- ▶ Potential fraud / breach of Companies Act 2006
- ▶ Potential breach of sanctions regulations

Appendix D - Non-Compliance with Laws and Regulations (NOCLAR) (cont'd)

What are the implications of NOCLAR matters arising?

Depending on the nature and significance of the NOCLAR matter the following steps are likely to be required, involving additional input from both management and audit.

This can have an impact on overall achievability of audit timeline and fees.

Across our portfolio of audits we have seen a steady increase in NOCLAR matters that need to be addressed as part of the audit over the past 3 years



Management response:

Timely communication of the matter to auditors (within a couple of days)

Determine who will carry out any investigation into the matter - in-house or external specialists or mix of both

Scope the investigation, in discussion with the auditors

Evaluate findings and agree next steps

Determine effect on financial statements including disclosures

Prepare a paper, summarising the outcome of the investigation and management's conclusions

Communicate the outcome to Those Charged With Governance (TCWG) and to us as your auditors. Report to regulators where required.

Key Reminders:

- ▶ Make sure that all areas of the business are aware of what constitutes actual or potential non-compliance and associated requirements
- ▶ Communicate with us as your auditors on a timely basis - do not wait for scheduled audit catch-ups
- ▶ Engage external specialists where needed
- ▶ Ensure that your investigation assesses any wider potential impacts arising from the matter, not just the matter itself.
- ▶ Plan upfront and consider any impact on overall accounts preparation and audit timeline - discuss the implications with us as your auditor

Audit response:

Initial assessment of the NOCLAR matter and its potential impact

Initial consultation with risk team to determine responsive procedures and the involvement of specialists

Understand and agree scope of management's investigation with support from specialists as needed

Evaluate findings and undertake appropriate audit procedures

Determine audit related impact including accounting and disclosure and audit opinion implications

Document and consult on the outcome of our procedures

Communicate the outcome with management, TCWG and where necessary other auditors within the group or regulators

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements

Financial Sustainability

We set out below the arrangements for the financial sustainability criteria covering the financial year 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria

Findings

How the body ensures that it identifies all the significant financial pressures that are relevant to its short and medium-term plans and builds these into them

The budget monitoring process where financial services meet with the budget managers and discuss spend to date and forecast for the remainder of the year identifies any financial pressures and additional income. This provides an essential tool for ensuring the current years budget is achievable and is also fundamental in ensuring the most up to date information is included in future budgets. These are reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny through the quarterly Budget Monitoring Reporting and to the Corporate Leadership Team, along with recommended action plans (if required) to ensure the overall budget can be met.

Through the budget setting process budget managers identify changes to budgets and report these to finance for inclusion in the new draft budgets. The budgets are collated by finance and show the net budget and funding and where required resources are re-allocated to ensure the budget remains affordable in the medium term.

The Council has the responsibility to provide strategic direction, which includes formulating the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The MTFS is designed to ensure that adequate resources are available to meet the Council's objectives. It projects the current financial situation and includes a three-year financial projection for the Council. The annual budget setting process also informs the MTFS, which is subsequently reviewed annually.

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements (continue)

Financial Sustainability

We set out below the arrangements for the financial sustainability criteria covering the financial years 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria	Findings
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How the body plans to bridge its funding gaps and identifies achievable savings

The budgets for 2023/24 are in a balanced position; however, there is a forecasted deficit for the following three years. The Council does hold sufficient reserves, based on their budget, to remain above the minimum level for the foreseeable future. As a result of the cost-of-living crisis and the potential impact it could have on the Council's resources, the budget has been revisited through Budget Monitoring Outturn reports. The Council continues to look for potential areas of savings as part of the budget-setting process, especially in light of ongoing wider economic challenges.

The Council's plan is to stimulate innovation, expand existing services, develop new business, and adopt an efficient, sustainable approach that generates greater financial and social returns. This assists the Council's financial resilience and sustainability, enabling it to safeguard and deliver the services that people need, and more effectively achieve its corporate aims and objectives while demonstrating the delivery of value for money (VFM). The Council has a Corporate Plan for 2023-27, the previous plan covered 2019-2023, to ensure they have clear aims and actions for the future, which helps the Council allocate resources to deliver services.

During the year, the Council have continued to revisit and monitor financial plans to ensure they have sufficient resources to deliver services through budget monitoring reports taken to Cabinet meetings. The Council recognises the financial challenges ahead. The Council has budgeted a balanced budget in 2024/25, with the following years having a total budget gap of £8.159m (2025/26 to 2027/28). The savings plan presented to the Council in February 2024 suggests total savings of £3.426m until 2027-28, leaving net projected deficit of £4.733m. In order to deliver a balanced budget in the medium term, the Council needs to identify savings. The deficit will be funded from the General Reserve and the Treasury Management Reserve.

During the year, the Council has continued to revisit and monitor financial plans to ensure they have sufficient resources to deliver services, with quarterly budget monitoring reports taken to Cabinet meetings. The Council recognizes the financial challenges ahead and has budgeted a balanced budget for 2024/25, with the following years showing a budget gap (2025/26 to 2027/28). To deliver a balanced budget in the medium term, the Council needs to identify savings of £4.7 million. The Council has sufficient reserves to ensure financial resilience; however the Council must identify savings over the medium-term financial plan to mitigate the need to use available reserve balances.

A savings exercise was undertaken with officers and members, which identified several potential savings and initiatives to produce extra income, as reflected in the outturn report for 2023/24. The Council has a good track record of delivering savings, with greater scrutiny of savings having taken place since 2016/17 through the revenue monitoring process. The Council also identifies a risk that anticipated savings/efficiencies may not be achieved, with a possible significant impact and high likelihood. Regular monitoring and reporting take place, but the size of the funding cuts increases the likelihood of this risk.

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements (continue)

Financial Sustainability

We set out below the arrangements for the financial sustainability criteria covering the financial years 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria	Findings
How the body plans finances to support the sustainable delivery of services in accordance with strategic and statutory priorities	As part of the budget setting process each year, the Council looks to align the demands on the budget with the strategic priorities of the Council. These priorities are based on the Council's Corporate Plan, which is tracked through an online Performance Portal that is available for general public access. A Delivery Plan reserve has been established in the year to support future progress against these plans
How the body ensures that its financial plan is consistent with other plans such as workforce, capital, investment, and other operational planning which may include working with other local public bodies as part of a wider system	The budget process incorporates the review of other strategies, such as capital investment and treasury management, to ensure consistency. The budgeting exercise ensures that the Medium-Term Financial Plan aligns with the priorities identified in the Corporate Plan. The financial plan considers shared service arrangements and recognizes the need to achieve efficiencies through these arrangements.
How the body identifies and manages risks to financial resilience, e.g. unplanned changes in demand, including challenge of the assumptions underlying its plans	Risks are identified through regular budget monitoring carried out between finance and budget managers. When action is required to manage identified risks, recommendations are made by finance to the Corporate Leadership Team, and if necessary, they are then reported to the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees (and the Full Council if significant). Initially identified savings would be utilized to cover pressures. Where the Council identify additional income (windfall income), the Cabinet is responsible for considering how additional monies can be used; therefore, these funds cannot simply be used by the service that generated them. In the event that these measures are not sufficient to cover the pressures, the Council has reserves that it could draw upon as a one-off to fund the pressures, thereby creating time while additional savings are identified.

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements

Governance

We set out below the arrangements for the governance criteria covering the financial year years 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria

Findings

How the body monitors and assesses risk and how the body gains assurance over the effective operation of internal controls, including arrangements to prevent and detect fraud

The Risk Management Framework is regularly reviewed. Risk Reviews take place every quarter at the service, corporate, and strategic levels. Service risks that are significant enough are escalated for consideration to be added as corporate risks. The risk register is presented to the Governance, Risk, and Audit Committee on a quarterly basis. The Council has a Counter Fraud, Corruption, and Bribery Policy, as well as a Whistleblowing Policy. The Council seeks to deter and prevent fraud, corruption, and theft to ensure that all risks in these areas are reduced to the lowest level possible.

Internal Audit issued a limited assurance opinion on risk management in October 2024. The Council agreed with recommendations raised and set out a response and timeframe to improve arrangements concerning the risk management policy and framework.

The Council has an established internal audit function through the Norfolk Internal Audit Consortium. The Internal Audit plan is based on a risk-based approach, and the plan is approved by the Governance, Risk, and Audit Committee. Audit reports are presented to the Committee throughout the year, reporting on audit results and progress against recommendations.

How the body approaches and carries out its annual budget setting process

Each year, the finance department produces a budget timetable that identifies the tasks and key dates. Finance staff meet with budget holders to create a new budget for both revenue and capital, this considers changes in legislation, demand, and local and national factors. Once a draft budget and the proposed levels of fees and charges have been created, they are considered by the Corporate Leadership Team and the Cabinet. A final budget, with all changes considered and included where necessary, is taken back through the committees to the Full Council alongside the formal setting of the Council Tax, precepts, and other strategies. The budget from the previous year is used as the base to build upon, adjusting for known changes and forecasts.

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements (continue)

Governance

We set out below the arrangements for the governance criteria covering the financial year 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria	Findings
How the body ensures effective processes and systems are in place to ensure budgetary control; to communicate relevant, accurate and timely management information (including non-financial information where appropriate); supports its statutory financial reporting requirements; and ensures corrective action is taken where needed	<p>The budget monitoring process, wherein financial services meet with budget managers to discuss spending to date and forecasts for the remainder of the year, identifies any financial pressures and additional income. This process provides assurances that the current year's budget is achievable and ensures that the most up-to-date information is included in future budgets. These are reported to the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees through quarterly budget monitoring reports and to the Corporate Leadership Team, along with recommended action plans (if required) to ensure the overall budget can be met. The system provides the necessary data to serve as the base for the report, and experts in technical areas such as Treasury Management are utilized to support staff expertise.</p> <p>The Section 151 officer has overall statutory responsibility for the proper administration of the authority's financial affairs, including the preparation of the Statement of Accounts and making arrangements for appropriate systems of financial control.</p> <p>Internal Audit issued a limited assurance regarding key financial controls for the 2022/23 financial year. Key strategic findings include: the Council struggled to perform core financial reconciliations; investments have not been independently authorized since May 2022; aged debts have not been regularly reviewed; and car parking income has not been regularly reconciled. Based on the updated reports presented to Governance, Risk and Audit Committee, Internal Audit has now provided reasonable assurance over Key Controls Assurance in 2023/24.</p> <p>During the year, Internal Audit issued limited assurance over the post implementation status of the new finance system. The new Finance system is operational but not fully functional due to challenges such as the departure of key personnel and lack of succession planning. 'Urgent' priority recommendations were raised concerning project management and the formal documenting of key decisions.</p> <p>In the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial year, the Authority was unable to publish its statement of accounts by the target dates required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The 2023/24 Statement of Accounts were published on 14 January 2025 (required date was 31 May 2024). Delays were caused by staff shortages and the need to prioritize closing the budget gap, resulting in the accounts process suffering.</p> <p>The issue above is evidence of weaknesses in proper arrangements for supporting the Council's statutory reporting requirements and in having effective processes and systems for accurate and timely management information.</p>

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements (continue)

Governance

We set out below the arrangements for the governance criteria covering the financial year 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria

Findings

How the body ensures it makes properly informed decisions, supported by appropriate evidence and allowing for challenge and transparency. This includes arrangements for effective challenge from those charged with governance/audit committee

The Council's Constitution sets out the decision-making framework, which includes specifying which decisions are reserved for the Full Council and which are for the executive or a committee of the Council. Some decisions within the Constitution are delegated to officers, and these delegations are outlined in the Constitution. The Governance, Risk, and Audit Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee play important roles in ensuring transparency and informed decision-making. The Governance, Risk, and Audit Committee provides oversight and monitors the governance, risk management, and internal control arrangements of the Council, assuring their effectiveness and efficiency. This is achieved through items received by the Committee, including but not limited to internal and external audit, key finance items, governance reviews, and strategic risk management reporting. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the Council's primary oversight committee that seeks to ensure the Cabinet is held to account, reliable services are provided, and value for money is achieved.

During the year, Internal Audit issued limited assurance over the post implementation status of the new finance system. The new Finance system is operational but not fully functional due to challenges such as the departure of key personnel and lack of succession planning. Although the project was included in the Medium Project Board's progress reporting since late 2021, the updates were high-level and lacked detailed scrutiny, as evidenced by the absence of meeting minutes. There is no dedicated board with clear roles and responsibilities and detailed reporting and frequent meeting.

How the body monitors and ensures appropriate standards, such as meeting legislative/regulatory requirements and standards in terms of officer or member behaviour (such as gifts and hospitality or declarations/conflicts of interests)

Councillors are subject to the Member Code of Conduct, which relates not only to behaviour but also to the disclosure of interests. The Council maintains a register of each Member's interests, including both pecuniary and other interests. Each meeting agenda includes an item that invites Members to declare any interests they may have. This is supported by a flowchart and information provided within the meeting papers. There is a system in place for individuals to lodge complaints about a Member's conduct, and this procedure is published on the Council's website. When Members are offered gifts and hospitality, the Constitution requires that any gift or hospitality over a set value, or otherwise significant, must be registered with the Monitoring Officer. The Monitoring Officer maintains a list of such gifts and hospitality and reports this in the annual Monitoring Officer report. Officers are also subject to a Code of Conduct and have obligations to disclose potential conflicts of interest, gifts, and hospitality. Such gifts and hospitality are similarly recorded in the Monitoring Officer's report. A Member/Officer protocol defines the relationship and roles of these two Council bodies.

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

We set out below the arrangements for improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness criteria covering the financial years 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria

Findings

How financial and performance information has been used to assess performance to identify areas for improvement

The Performance Management Framework promotes the communication and understanding of performance management and provides guidance to those responsible for ensuring that performance management is applied effectively and consistently. It defines what performance management is, the key components, types of performance measures, the reporting framework, and roles and responsibilities. Performance management reports are presented to Cabinet on a quarterly basis and are reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Financial performance data is regularly reported to committees through the budget monitoring reports.

How the body evaluates the services it provides to assess performance and identify areas for improvement

Each department sets performance targets annually. Benchmarking information against similar councils in England, using CIPFA's Nearest Neighbours model, is provided to assess relative performance and identify high-achieving councils. This comparison aims to review service delivery and improve outcomes for our customers. As part of the Corporate Plan for 2023-2027, a Performance Portal has been established where the public can access the Council's key targets and metrics, and view performance information relative to these targets.

How the body ensures it delivers its role within significant partnerships, engages with stakeholders it has identified, monitors performance against expectations, and ensures action is taken where necessary to improve

The Council has a Customer Service Strategy and a complaints procedure, which, along with other processes such as Freedom of Information requests, allow for internal reviews of decisions. Members of the public have the opportunity to attend and ask questions at Full Council meetings and participate in other committees. The Performance Portal provides further transparency into the achievement of targets. The Council also works closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure efficiencies where possible.

Decisions regarding Council representation in partnerships follow a set delegation scheme. The Cabinet approves delegations and plays a key role in forging partnerships with local organizations, provided there is no major policy change. While the Cabinet can delegate partnership-related functions, it remains accountable to the Full Council. The Monitoring Officer ensures high standards of conduct in financial dealings with partners and monitors the risk appraisal for contracts with external bodies. The Chief Financial Officer must confirm that satisfactory accounting arrangements will be adopted in relation to partnerships and joint ventures, including the verification of third-party identities. Directors must secure approvals prior to finalizing negotiations with external entities.

Appendix E - Summary of arrangements (continue)

Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

We set out below the arrangements for improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness criteria covering the financial years 2023/24 (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024).

Reporting Sub-Criteria	Findings
How the body ensures that commissioning and procuring services is done in accordance with relevant legislation, professional standards and internal policies, and how the body assesses whether it is realising the expected benefits	The Council employs an officer as a procurement specialist who can provide knowledge and expertise to other officers, with assistance from the Council's in-house legal service when required. A Procurement Strategy, which is vital for securing best value, supports the Council's priorities and provides information about the Council's procurement values and principles. The Council's Constitution contains Contract Procedure Rules that set out the required procedures depending on the expected value of a contract and the situations in which an exemption from these rules can be granted. The Chief Financial Officer and the Monitoring Officer have oversight in such circumstances.

Appendix F – PSAA Statement of Responsibilities

As set out on the next page our fee is based on the assumption that the Council complies with PSAA's Statement of Responsibilities of auditors and audited bodies. In particular the Council should have regard to paragraphs 26-28 of the Statement of Responsibilities which clearly set out what is expected of audited bodies in preparing their financial statements. We set out these paragraphs in full below:

Preparation of the statement of accounts

26. Audited bodies are expected to follow Good Industry Practice and applicable recommendations and guidance from CIPFA and, as applicable, other relevant organisations as to proper accounting procedures and controls, including in the preparation and review of working papers and financial statements.

27. In preparing their statement of accounts, audited bodies are expected to:

- prepare realistic plans that include clear targets and achievable timetables for the production of the financial statements;
- ensure that finance staff have access to appropriate resources to enable compliance with the requirements of the applicable financial framework, including having access to the current copy of the CIPFA/LASAAC Code, applicable disclosure checklists, and any other relevant CIPFA Codes.

assign responsibilities clearly to staff with the appropriate expertise and experience;

provide necessary resources to enable delivery of the plan;

maintain adequate documentation in support of the financial statements and, at the start of the audit, providing a complete set of working papers that provide an adequate explanation of the entries in those financial statements including the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the judgements and estimates made by management;

- ensure that senior management monitors, supervises and reviews work to meet agreed standards and deadlines;
- ensure that a senior individual at top management level personally reviews and approves the financial statements before presentation to the auditor; and
- during the course of the audit provide responses to auditor queries on a timely basis.

28. If draft financial statements and supporting working papers of appropriate quality are not available at the agreed start date of the audit, the auditor may be unable to meet the planned audit timetable and the start date of the audit will be delayed.

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ED None

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North Norfolk District Council Statement of Accounts 2023/2024



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Statement of Accounts for 2023/24 on the following pages sets out the Council's income and expenditure for the year, and its financial position at 31 March 2024. The format and content of the financial statements is prescribed by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24, which in turn is underpinned by International Financial Reporting Standards. It comprises core and supplementary statements.
- 1.2 This narrative statement aims to provide the reader with information about the Council, its main objectives, strategies and the principle risks it faces and to provide a commentary on how the Council has used its resources to the desired outcomes. It also helps to explain and highlight the linkages between the information contained within the narrative statement itself and the information presented within the financial statements. The accounting policies applied in production of the accounts can be found on Pages 21 – 37.

2. Statements included within the Accounts

- 2.1 The accounts consist of the following main statements:

- **Expenditure and Funding Analysis** – The Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA) is a note to the financial statements. However, it is positioned with the core statements as it provides a link from the portfolio-based analysis of the revenue outturn presented in the Narrative Report to the analysis within the Net Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The EFA shows how the funding available to the Council for the year (i.e. Government grants, rents, Council Tax and Business Rates) has been used to provide services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned under generally accepted accounting practice (GAAP). The Expenditure and Funding analysis also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's services. Income and expenditure accounted for under GAAP is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement** – this statement shows the accounting cost of providing services in the year in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from local taxation. The top half of the statement provides an analysis by service area. The bottom half of the statement deals with corporate transactions and funding.
- **Movement in Reserves Statement** – this statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council analysed between:
 - 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and;
 - 'other reserves' which are maintained for accounting purposes.
- **Balance Sheet** – this statement shows the value, as at the balance sheet date, of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. It sets out the financial position of the Council at the year-end, showing its balances, resources and long-term indebtedness, the net current assets employed in its operations, together with summarised information on the fixed assets held. The Balance Sheet is fundamental to the understanding of the Council's year-end financial position.

- **Cash Flow Statement** – this summarises all flows of cash from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes. It shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents during the reporting period and 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 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.

- **Collection Fund** – As a billing authority the Council is responsible for the billing, collection and distribution of council tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR). In accordance with the statutory requirement contained in Section 89 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (amended by Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Local Government Finance Act 2012) billing authorities are required to establish and maintain a separate fund for the collection and distribution of amounts due in relation to council tax and NNDR. This statement, known as the Collection Fund, shows the total income collected by the Council from council tax and NNDR and how this has been distributed to Central Government; the major precepting bodies of Norfolk County Council (NCC), the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN) and North Norfolk District Council (NNDC - which includes the local precepts for Parish and Town Councils). There will be a debtor or creditor position between the billing authority (NNDC), Central Government and the major preceptors (NCC & OPCCN) to be recognised at the end of each year. This is because the amounts paid out of the Collection Fund during the years will not exactly match the cash collected in council tax and NNDR.

- **Notes to the Accounts** – The accounts are supported by various notes to the main statements which provide additional information to that contained in the core statements themselves.

3. Organisational overview and external environment

Our district

- 3.2 North Norfolk District consists of 962 km² of beautiful countryside and 73km of coastline. With a range of active village communities and seven busy market towns comprising of Wells-next-the-Sea, Fakenham, Holt, Sheringham, Cromer, North Walsham and Stalham, North Norfolk has a strong appeal for residents, visitors and businesses alike.

- 3.3 North Norfolk’s population is estimated to have grown from 105,600 in 2019 to approximately 109,000 by 2024, with the number of resident households projected to increase from 49,100 to around 51,000 over the same period. A large proportion of residents live in one of the market towns, with the remainder residing in rural village homes. This demographic distribution results in a low population density of around 112 persons

per square kilometre, compared to 427 for England as a whole. The district's rural character is defined by its 121 parishes, numerous villages, and consistently low crime rate, making North Norfolk one of the most attractive and safe places to live in the UK.

- 3.4 Residents work predominantly in the accommodation and food sector, retail, manufacturing, and health. The largest numbers of businesses are in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector followed by retail, construction, accommodation and food services and the professional, scientific and technical sectors.

Corporate Plan and priorities

- 3.5 The Council's Corporate Plan covering 2023 – 2027, along with a supporting delivery plan. The Delivery Plan shows what the Council will do to meet the needs and aspirations of residents and businesses as established within the Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan can be located: north-norfolk.gov.uk/media/9394/corporate-plan-2023-to-2027.pdf

The 2023 – 2027 Plan sets out the Council's priorities which are:

- Our Greener Future
- Developing Our Communities
- Meeting Our Local Housing Need
- Investing In Our Local Economy and Infrastructure
- A Strong, Responsible and Accountable Council

4. Governance

- 4.1 The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) is a statutory document which explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively, this is supported by the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance. There have been no significant changes or issues surrounding governance during the current financial year. A full copy of the Statements, AGS and the Code are available on the Council's website.

5. Risks and opportunities

- 5.1 There is still considerable uncertainty around future years funding forecasts and this position will not improve until the outcome from the Fair Funding Review, which will set new baseline funding allocations and responding to spending pressures and changes in service demand, and the review of the Local Retention of Business Rates, are concluded. The Comprehensive Spending Review, which sets out the expenditure limits over the coming years has been delayed, which have also resulted in single year settlements in recent years. A multi-year settlement has been lobbied for by the sector to provide greater certainty over future funding streams.
- 5.2 Local Authority funding from business rates is open to risks around funding fluctuations due to increases and decreases in the rateable values of non-domestic properties and successful alterations of lists and appeals against the rateable values. The Valuation Office Agency, who hear the appeals, currently have a backlog and are slow to clear outstanding appeals increasing the risk of the Council needing to pay out large refunds.
- 5.3 The Council currently holds £17.8m in reserves, which is a decrease in reserves compared to the prior year, some of these reserve could be made available to support service budgets in the short to medium term. Use of reserves does not represent a sustainable funding mechanism for the longer term as these are one-off resources.
- 5.4 The Council's Corporate Risk Register, which details the significant risks the Council faces (including financial risks), is published on its website.

6. Financial Performance

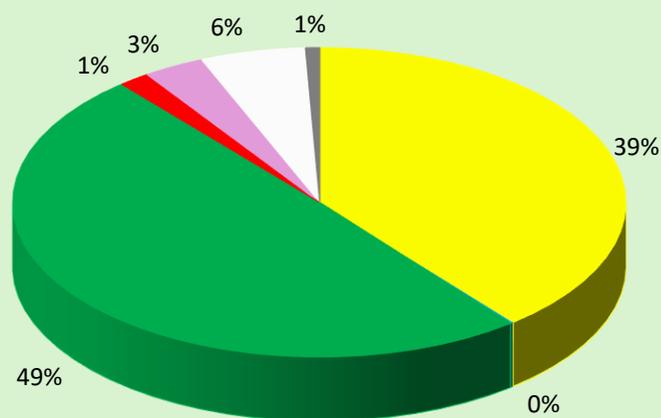
- 6.1 The Council reports on its performance against its Corporate Objectives quarterly. The report covering the 2023-24 financial year can be found on the Council's website.

6.2

Revenue Activity

- 6.3 The following chart provides an overview of the resources available to the Council during the year along with the outturn position compared to the budget. The tables below show how the revenue activity was financed during the year, highlighting that around 11% of the net funding is from external sources, i.e. New Homes Bonus and other non-ringfenced grants including Covid support grants, the balance of 89% comes from council tax and locally retained business rates reflecting the continuing shift from central to local funding. This position is shown net of fees and charges service income and highlighted in the tables below.

Revenue Financing 2023/24



	£000	%
Council Tax	(6,872)	39
Retained Business Rates	(8,700)	50
New Homes Bonus	(31)	1
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(567)	-
Revenue Support Grant	(290)	3
3% Funding Guarantee	(974)	6
Other Non-Ringfenced Grants	(130)	1
	(17,565)	100

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6.4 The financial performance of the Council has been monitored throughout the year by officers and Members with regular reports being presented to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The summary below provides an overview of the outturn position compared to the updated budget (i.e. updated for virements and approved in-year updates). The overall outturn position for the financial year against budget was reported to Cabinet on 8th July 2024.

2023/24 Subjective Analysis	2023/24 Budget £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Variance	
			£000	%
Employee Costs	16,422	15,042	(1,380)	(8)
Premises	3,860	4,067	207	5
Transport Related Expenditure	310	279	(31)	(10)
Supplies & Services	13,793	14,751	958	7
Transfer Payments	17,078	19,608	2,530	15
Capital Financing Costs	4,134	4,253	119	3
Income	(31,139)	(34,601)	(3,462)	11
Total cost of services	24,458	23,399	(1,059)	(4)

- 6.5 Transfers to and from reserves in the year are made in line with the Council's policy framework for earmarked reserves as approved as part of the annual budget setting process. In addition, some roll forward requests of budget underspends have been recommended for approval as part of the outturn report where there is no annual budget provision in 2024/25.
- 6.6 The 2023/24 outturn report covers the final budget monitoring position for the year and provides a detailed commentary covering the budget variances and the reasons behind some of these, a copy of which can be found on the September Cabinet agenda. The reasons for some of the more significant movements included in the summary above in percentage terms are as follows:
- **Employee Costs** - The majority of the variance in employee costs, totalling £1,380k, is attributed to savings arising from vacant posts alongside adjustments in current service costs for the Local Government Pension Scheme. This adjustment represents the difference between the Council's cash contributions to the Pension Fund during the year and the value of pensions accrued during the same period, as determined by the actuary. These additional costs are reversed out under net operating expenditure, resulting in no impact on the revenue outturn position. However, the increase is reflected in long-term liabilities on the Balance Sheet.
 - **Premises** – The overspend in premises included £66k relating to additional ground maintenance costs, including emergency tree works. There were overspends of £52k on additional sea defence expenditure. There was also a net overspend of £94k relating to premises running costs which are primarily being driven by overspends in utility charges.
 - **Transport** – Saving in mileage claims and vehicle insurance have been offset by higher fuel costs – resulting in a net underspend of £31k.
 - **Supplies and Services** – The overall overspend is attributed to several key factors: a net overspend of £433k on increased Bed and Breakfast costs, partly offset by housing benefits and client contributions, driven by the cost-of-living crisis; a £351k overspend on the waste and cleansing contract; Increased insurance premiums totalling £31k; £595k in contributions to the Norfolk County Council and East Anglia LEP in respect of designated area enterprise zones. Overspend of overspends of £26k Postage costs and annual billing, £62k Computer software and hardware purchases; £80k for provision for enforcement costs; £55k for consultancy fees for specialist advice; £0.190m on agency staff costs incurred covering vacant posts (offset by employee savings). The main items offsetting these overspends are savings of £169k on grant expenditure, which are funded by external grants; £14k reduction in the provision for bad and doubtful debts, underspend of £923k on professional fees, planned expenditure on the local plan, conservation appraisals and environmental sustainability works which have been offset by reduced contributions from earmarked reserves.
 - **Transfer Payments** - The overspend relates to the total of amount of housing benefits paid out in 2023/24 being higher than anticipated. However, this is offset by a reduction in Subsidy received from the Department for works and Pensions (DWP).
 - **Capital Financing Costs** – The current General Fund position excludes the final capital adjustments; these do not have an impact on the Council's final outturn revenue position.
 - **Income** – The favourable variance of £3,462k is primarily due to various underspends, offset by some areas of overspend. Key contributors include: £1,488k increased Housing Benefit Subsidy income – this increase in subsidy grant relates to an increase in subsidy payment

volume; £151k Windfall VAT income successfully recovered from HMRC relating to an historic Leisure Centre case; £398k in higher levels of car parking income than anticipated; £44k surplus licensing income; £783k additional waste and recycling income; £385k Other recoverable charges relating to benefit overpayment debt; and £453k temporary accommodation costs. Offset partially by shortfalls in of £379k in Planning, Building Control and Land charge income.

Business Rates Retention

- 6.7 The Collection Fund Account can be found, along with the associated notes, on pages 87 to 90.
- 6.8 The Council has been a member in a business rates pool for the 2023/24 financial year alongside other surrounding district councils and Norfolk County Council. Being in the Pool allows growth in the business rates collected in Norfolk to be retained locally, rather than being passed to central government. The retained growth amount is paid over in the form of a levy payment to Norfolk County Council as the lead Council for the Pool.
- 6.9 The Council can retain all the income it receives from renewable energy schemes, provided it granted planning permission for the scheme. When completing the NNDR1 each year the Council must include the amount it anticipates it will receive. Any variation will be carried forward to the following year.
- 6.10 The business rate income is paid into the Collection Fund and then distributed to Central Government, the County Council and NNDC in accordance with the proportionate shares set out in the Scheme. The distribution is based on the NNDR1 return and any variances at outturn will produce a surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund which is then distributed in the following year.

7. Treasury Management and Economic Climate

- 7.1 The amount of surplus cash available for investment during the year was at times higher than the level anticipated in the budget; although the overall rate of interest was lower than budget. This is, in part, due to the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) having reduced the bank base rate due to help sustain the economy during COVID-19, which resulted in reductions in net returns on the Money Market Funds that the Council uses to manage its cash flow.
- 7.2 The current economic climate, which has been significantly affected by the UK economy alongside global events causing further economic uncertainties, has had an impact on the Council's investment income. Investment income achieved in the current year (2023/24) totalled £1,552k, a favourable variance of £19k from the budgeted position.
- 7.3 The Council had no long-term debt at 31 March 2024. The only debt taken during the year was short-term debt to fund any short-term cash shortfalls.

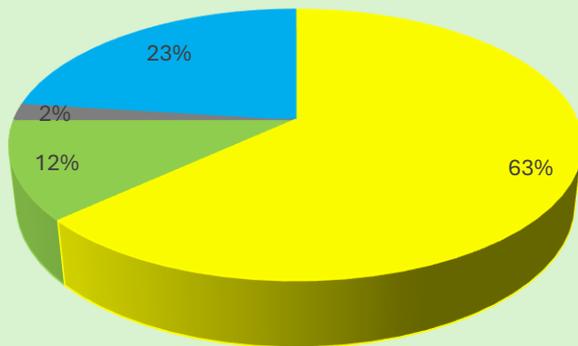
8. Capital

8.1 Capital expenditure in the year amounted to £13.6m (£6.9m in 2022/23). The areas where expenditure was incurred are shown in the table below. More detail can be found in the 2023/24 outturn report.

Capital Activity Summary 2023/24 Outturn	2023/24 Budget £000	2023/24 Outturn £000	Variance	
			£000	%
Our Greener Future	20,875	5,141	(15,734)	(75)
Developing Our Communities	6,173	1,426	(4,747)	(77)
Meeting our Housing Need	4,828	5,224	396	8
Investing in Our Local Economy & Infrastructure	5,551	1,747	(3,804)	(68)
A Strong, Responsible & Accountable Council	404	84	(320)	(79)
	37,831	13,622	(24,209)	(63)

8.2 The financing of the capital programme is shown in the chart below.

Capital Financing 2023/24



	£000	%
Grants	8,608	63
Other reserves	1,607	12
Internal Borrowing	277	2
Capital Receipts	3,130	23
	13,622	100

9. Reserves and Balances

- 9.1 The Council has a General Fund which is the statutory fund into which all the Council's receipts are required to be paid and out of which all Council's liabilities are to be met, except where there are statutory rules that must be applied. The recommended minimum General Fund balance is currently £2.1m. The balance was £2.2m at 31 March 2024.
- 9.2 The purpose of holding a general reserve is to provide a working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cash flows to avoid temporary borrowing and to provide a contingency to help cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies. Each year alongside approval of the budget Members approve the policy framework for the earmarked reserves and assessment of the optimum level of general reserve. This is informed by a risk assessment of the budget that considers the context within which the budget has been established along with the financial risks facing the Council. This will include factors such as, sensitivity of pay and price inflation and interest rates, levels of savings anticipated, demand led budgets (spend and income), future funding fluctuations and emergencies.
- 9.3 In addition to the general reserve the Council holds earmarked reserves held to meet known or predicted liabilities totaling £15.6m. The reserves also provide a means at the year-end for carrying funds forward to the new financial year to fund ongoing commitments and known liabilities for which no separate revenue budget exists, more detail can be found in Note 9. There are earmarked reserves that have balances, yet the timing of the use of the reserve is yet to be agreed.

10. Outlook

10.1 Several risks continue to face Local Authorities in terms of funding, i.e. local retention of business rates and responding to spending pressures and changes in service demand. Some of the more significant and current risks that continue to face the Council are as follows:

- Funding reductions - Further funding reductions and the continued shift from central government support from Revenue Support Grant to local funding from retained business rate income and council tax and the potential impact of the ongoing Fair Funding Review and the Spending Review. Consultation on this has been significantly delayed.
- New Homes Bonus (NHB) – The Council is due to receive ‘legacy’ payments in respect of the NHB over years but as yet there is still little news regarding what system will replace the current funding mechanism;
- Business rates – The risk of funding fluctuations from business rates continues to be a prevalent feature of the funding for local authorities. The impact of appeals only exacerbates this risk, although this is mitigated at a local level by the earmarked reserve. The implementation of localisation of business rates has also been delayed although further consultation is expected later this year;
- Savings/income – the delivery of savings built into budget projections and income from demand led services i.e. planning, parking fees;
- Economy – The economic environment both nationally and locally continues to face significant challenges and uncertainties, influenced by a mix of global and domestic factors. High inflation persists, although there are signs of gradual easing in some sectors. Rising interest rates remain a concern, impacting consumer spending and business investment. The lingering effects of global supply chain disruptions continue to affect economic activity, compounded by geopolitical tensions, including the ongoing war in Ukraine and the recent escalation of the Gaza-Israel conflict. These conflicts have exacerbated instability in global markets, particularly in energy and commodities, adding further pressure to an already fragile economic landscape. Additionally, emerging challenges such as energy price volatility and climate-related risks are placing further strain on economic resilience.
- Inflation – The Consumer Price Index (CPI), began to fall during the period from 7.8% in April 2023 to 3.8% in March 2024. Inflation leads to higher operational costs, with rising prices for goods and services essential to delivering public services. The outlook is cautiously optimistic as the inflation falls closer to the Bank of England inflation target of 2%.
- Investment returns – The rising Bank of England base rates provides a favourable environment for return on investments placed with the Council’s cash reserves providing a modest boost to income. The delivery of investment returns is problematic with the choice of counterparty and period of exposure needing to be weighed in on a daily basis in line with the treasury management strategy and the global markets continue to be impacted due to the economic uncertainties. Sound principles underpinned by professional guidance from treasury management advisors allows for a cautious but not complacent approach to investment returns;

- Housing benefit subsidy – As a significant budget year on year this presents a risk in terms of the accuracy of the claims and subsidy recovered. This is mitigated by an earmarked reserve that the Council maintains;
- Pay – the budget has been updated to reflect the pay review undertaken by the National Joint Council (NJC) along with annual increments.
- Temporary accommodation – The Council is unable to fully recover from central government the costs relating to the housing benefit subsidy relating to temporary accommodation. The Council is currently acquiring local properties to use directly to help manage the cost of this provision. This cost is increasing year on year and placing a pressure on our budgets. we will continue to monitor the situation, however as a demand led service this is outside of our control.

10.2 The Council does however have a number of work streams in place to help address these risks and also has a healthy reserve position to support in the short to medium term.

10.3 The disclosures required for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 in relation to the Council's pension scheme are detailed in Note 24 and show a Net Pension Liability of £3.4m as at 31 March 2024 (£11.8m at 31 March 2023). The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the Council has in the long run to pay retirement benefits. However, statutory arrangements for funding the deficit mean that the financial position of the Council remains healthy. At present the deficit on the scheme would be made good by increased contributions over the remaining working life of employees, as assessed by the scheme actuary.

11. Further Information

11.1 For further information about these accounts please contact the finance team at accountancy@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

Statement of Responsibilities

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required to:

- Make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Council, that officer is the Chief Finance Officer.
- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.
- Approve the Statement of Accounts.

Certification

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I confirm that this Statement of Accounts has been approved by myself, Councillor Sarah Bütikofer, Chair of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee on **xxxxx**. Delegated authority for the Chair of the Committee to sign the Accounts in consultation with the Section 151 Officer was given at its meeting on **xxxxx**.

Signed on Behalf of North Norfolk District Council

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 of Practice).

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.

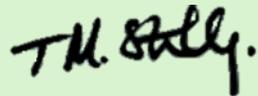
The Chief Finance Officer has also:

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

Certificate by the Chief Finance Officer

I certify that this Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices and presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at the reporting date and of its expenditure and income for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Dated: 14 January 2025



Tina Stankley CPFA, Director of Resources

Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA)

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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) below, to the Council's management accounts. The EFA shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (Government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) by Local Authorities in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by Authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's departments.

	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund	Adjustments Between Funding & Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the CIES	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund	Adjustments Between Funding & Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the CIES
		2023/24			2022/23	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Corporate leadership/Executive support	567	(40)	527	493	(158)	335
Communities	10,459	676	11,135	8,454	5,791	14,245
Place and Climate Change	5,741	890	6,631	4,183	1,251	5,434
Resources	5,141	(86)	5,055	3,935	2,910	6,845
	21,908	1,440	23,348	17,065	9,794	26,859
Other Income and Expenditure	(18,500)	(4,814)	(23,314)	(15,335)	(4,363)	(19,698)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services	3,408	(3,374)	34	1,730	5,431	7,161
Opening General Fund Balances	21,251			22,981		
Surplus/(Deficit) in year	(3,408)			(1,730)		
Closing General Fund Balances	17,843			21,251		

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES)

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

		Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
		2023/24			2022/23		
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Corporate Leadership/Executive Support Communities		2,545	(2,018)	527	2,591	(2,256)	335
Place and Climate Change Resources		22,174	(11,039)	11,135	25,153	(10,909)	14,244
		9,623	(2,991)	6,631	9,148	(3,713)	5,434
		36,782	(31,727)	5,055	39,467	(32,621)	6,846
Cost of Services		71,124	(47,775)	23,349	76,359	(49,500)	26,859
Other Operating Expenditure	10			2,237			510
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	11			(565)			(28)
Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	12			(24,985)			(20,181)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services	7			35			7,195
(Surplus)/Deficit on revaluation of PPE Assets	14(a)			(12,773)			(9,738)
Financial Assets	14(b)			367			2,953
Actuarial (Gains)/Losses on Pension Assets/Liabilities	14(d)			(8,397)			(40,856)
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure				(20,803)			(48,001)
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure				(20,768)			(40,842)

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT

Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS)

		General Fund Balance	Earmarked GF Reserves	Capital Receipts Reserves	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Authority Reserves
	Note	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April 2022		3,277	19,704	4,984	-	27,965	7,668	35,631
<u>Movement in Reserves during 2022/23</u>								
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		(7,159)	-	-	-	(7,159)	48,001	40,841
Adjustments from Income and Expenditure charged under the accounting basis to the funding basis	8	5,429	-	318	-	5,747	(5,747)	-
Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	9	1,569	(1,569)	-	-	-	-	-
Increase/(decrease) in 2022/23		(159)	(1,569)	318	-	(1,412)	42,254	40,841
Balance at 31 March 2023		3,114	18,136	5,301	-	26,553	49,222	76,475
<u>Movement in Reserves during 2023/24</u>								
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		(35)	-	-	-	(35)	20,803	20,767
Adjustments from Income and Expenditure charged under the accounting basis to the funding basis	8	(3,375)	-	(2,490)	-	(5,864)	5,864	-
Transfer (to)/from Earmarked Reserves	9	2,519	(2,519)	-	-	-	-	-
Increase/(decrease) in 2023/24		(891)	(2,519)	(2,490)	-	(5,899)	26,667	20,767
Balance at 31 March 2024		(2,223)	(15,619)	(2,811)	-	(20,654)	76,589	97,242

Balance Sheet

		31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	Note	£000	£000
Property, Plant and Equipment	30	93,659	74,835
Investment Property	27	1,196	1,196
Intangible Assets	28	788	912
Long Term Investments	39	19,039	22,622
Long Term Debtors	33/39	1,863	2,045
Total Long-Term Assets	39	116,545	101,610
Short Term Investments	39	-	-
Inventories		11	7
Short Term Debtors	33	14,237	10,679
Cash and Cash Equivalents	18	2,028	2,857
Assets held for sale	32	319	697
Total Current Assets		16,595	12,420
Bank Overdraft	18	(6,071)	(1,436)
Short Term Borrowing	39	(6,791)	(9,053)
Short Term Creditors	34	(10,275)	(13,414)
Capital Grants Receipts in Advance	38	(3,834)	(3,115)
Short Term Provisions	35	(493)	(532)
Total Current Liabilities		(27,464)	(27,550)
Other Long-Term Liabilities	24	(8,434)	(11,827)
Total Long-Term Liabilities		(8,434)	(11,827)
Net Assets		97,242	76,474

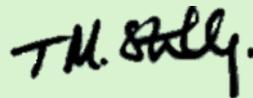
Balance Sheet

		31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	Note	£000	£000
Usable Reserves:			
General Fund Balance		2,223	3,115
Earmarked Reserves	9	15,619	18,137
Capital Receipt Reserve		2,812	5,301
Total Usable Reserves		20,654	26,553
Unusable Reserves:	14		
Revaluation Reserves	14(a)	40,057	27,763
Pooled Fund Adjustment Account	14(b)	(244)	124
Capital Adjustment Account	14(c)	43,728	37,564
Pensions Reserve	14(d)	(3,430)	(11,827)
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	14(e)	(3,167)	(3,348)
Accumulated Compensated Absences Adjustment Account	14(f)	(356)	(354)
Total Unusable Reserves		76,587	49,921
Total Reserves		97,242	76,474

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The Statement of Accounts presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024. The notes on pages 21 to 86 form part of the financial statements.

Dated: 14 January 2025



Tina Stankley CPFA, Director of Resources

Cash Flow Statement

		31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	Note	£000	£000
Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the provision of services	7	(35)	(7,159)
Adjustments to Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	15	242	(2,682)
Adjustments for items included in the Net (Surplus)/Deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	15	2,550	5,661
Net Cash Flows generated from Operating activities		2,757	(4,180)
Investing Activities	16	(4,914)	(1,841)
Financing Activities	17	(3,306)	(2,456)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		(5,463)	(8,477)
Cash and Cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	18	1,420	9,897
Cash and Cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	18	(4,043)	1,420

1. Accounting Policies

A. General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2023/24 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2024.

The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015. These practices primarily comprise the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24 and the Service Reporting Code of Practice 2023/24 supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The accounting convention adopted in the Statement of Accounts is principally historical cost, modified by the revaluation of certain categories of non-current assets and financial instruments.

A local authority's Statement of Accounts are prepared on a going concern basis, this is, the accounts should be prepared on the assumption that the Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. This means in particular that the income and expenditure accounts and balance sheet assume no intention to curtail significantly the scale of the operation.

The accounting policies detailed below have been consistently applied within the Financial Statements.

B. 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 supplies are received and their consumption; they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including those services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received, rather than when payments are made.
- Interest payable on borrowings and receivable on investments is 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.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a receivable or payable for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where there is evidence that debts are unlikely to be settled, the balance of receivables is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected.

Where the Council is acting as an agent for another party (e.g. in the collection of NNDR and Council Tax), income and expenditure are recognised only to the extent that commission is receivable by the Council for the agency services rendered or the Council incurs expenses directly on its own behalf in rendering the services.

C. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable on demand. Cash equivalents are highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash on the Balance Sheet date, and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

D. Changes in Accounting Policies and Estimates and Errors

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 opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period as if the new policy had always been applied. Changes in accounting estimates are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change. Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the prior period. There were no material errors from previous year requiring restatement.

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 assets attributable to the service.

The Council is not required to raise Council Tax to cover depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisations.

F. Employee Benefits

Benefits Payable during Employment

Short-term employee benefits (those that fall due wholly within 12 months of the year-end), such as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. cars) for current employees, are recognised as an expense in the year in which employees render services to the Council. An accrual is made against services in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services for the cost of holiday entitlements and other forms of leave earned by employees but not taken before the year-end and which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the remuneration rates applicable in the following financial year. Any accrual made is required under statute to be reversed out of the General Fund Balance by a credit to the Accumulating Compensated Absences Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy and are charged on an accruals basis to the Non Distributed Costs line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the Council is demonstrably committed to either terminating the employment of an officer or group of officers or making an offer to encourage voluntary redundancy.

Where termination benefits involve the enhancement of pensions, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or pensioner in the year, not the amount calculated according to 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 (LGPS), administered by Norfolk County Council. The scheme provides defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees worked for the Council.

The Local Government Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2011, the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2009 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2014.

- The liabilities of the Norfolk 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 discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate of 4.85% (4.75% in 2022/23). This rate is based on a corporate yield curve based on the constituents of the iBoxx corporate bond index. In line with the adoption of IAS 19 – Employee Benefits, an individual discount rate is calculated for each employer, based on their own weighted average duration category. The weighted average duration is used to identify the appropriate category for each employer as shown in the table below:

Weighted Average Duration	Discount Rate Category
Less than 17 years	Short
Between 17 and 23 years	Medium
More than 23 years	Long

- The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into seven components:
 - Current service cost - The increase in the present value of the defined benefit obligation resulting from employee service in the current period.
 - Past service cost – The increase in the present value of the defined benefit obligation for employee service in prior periods, resulting in the current period from the introduction of, or changes to, post-employment benefits or other long-term employee benefits. Past service cost may either be positive (where benefits are introduced or improved) or negative (where existing benefits are reduced).
 - Interest cost – The increase during a period in the present value of a defined benefit obligation which arises because the benefits are one period closer to payment.
 - Expected return on assets -The expected increase during a period in the value of assets, based on values and long term expected returns as at the start of the period.
 - Gains/losses on settlements and curtailments -the result of actions to relieve the Council of liabilities or events that reduce the expected future service or accrual of benefits of employees - debited/credited to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non-Distributed Costs;
 - 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. These are recognised under ‘other comprehensive income’.
 - Contributions paid to the Norfolk pension fund - cash paid as employer’s contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions 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.

G. Events after the Balance Sheet Date

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

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

H. Exceptional Items

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

I. Financial Instruments

A financial instrument is a contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Non-exchange transactions, such as those relating to taxes, benefits and Government grants, do not give rise to financial instruments.

J. Financial Liabilities

A financial liability is an obligation to transfer economic benefits controlled by the Council and can be represented by a contractual obligation to deliver cash or financial assets or an obligation to exchange financial assets and liabilities with another entity which is potentially unfavourable to the Council.

The majority of the Council's financial liabilities held during the year are measured at amortised cost and comprised:

- Short term loans from other local authorities
- Overdrafts with Barclays bank
- Lease payables
- Trade payables for goods and services received

K. Financial Assets

A financial asset is a right to future economic benefits controlled by the Council that is represented by cash, equity instruments or a contractual right to receive cash or other financial assets or a right to exchange financial assets and liabilities with another entity that is potentially favourable to the Council. The financial assets held by the Council during the year are accounted for under the following three classifications:

Amortised Cost comprising:

- Cash in hand
- Bank current and deposit accounts with Barclays bank
- Loans to other local authorities
- Loans to small companies and housing associations
- Covered bonds issued by banks and building societies
- Trade receivables for goods and services provided

Fair value through profit and loss (all other financial assets) comprising:

- Money market funds
- Pooled bond, equity and property and multi-asset funds

Where loans are advanced at below market rates, they are classed as 'Soft Loans' and specific accounting requirements apply to them. The Council has a very small number of car loans to employees and other loans to voluntary organisations to encourage leisure activities and economic development. The impact of accounting fully for the losses on these loans is considered to be immaterial and the special accounting requirements have not been applied.

Where assets are identified as impaired because of a likelihood arising from a past event that payments due under the contract will not be made, the asset is written down and a charge made to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The impairment loss is measured as the difference between the carrying amount and the present value of the revised future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate.

L. 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 Account until conditions attached to the grant or contributions have been satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that specify that the 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 payables. When conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (for 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 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.

Where general (non-ring fenced) revenue grants are allocated to the Council by Central Government these are credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

M. 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 for more than one financial year.

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held by the Council can be determined by reference to an active market. The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service lines 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 lines 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 with proceeds greater than £10,000 the Capital Receipts Reserve.

N. Inventory and Work in Progress

Inventories including bar stock are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is determined using the first-in, first-out (FIFO) method.

O. Investment Properties

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, based on the amount at which the asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable parties at arm's length. 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 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.

P. Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant or equipment from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases. Where a lease covers both land and buildings, the land and buildings elements are considered separately for classification. Arrangements that do not have the legal status of a lease but convey a right to use an asset 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

Page 92 Property, plant and equipment held under finance leases is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the lease's inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Initial direct costs of the Council are added to the carrying amount of the asset. Premiums paid on entry into a lease are applied to writing down the lease liability. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the 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 the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement)

Property Plant and Equipment recognised under finance leases is accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, subject to depreciation being charged over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life.

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 provision is made from revenue towards the deemed capital investment in accordance with statutory requirements. Depreciation and revaluation and impairment losses 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.

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, e.g. there is a rent-free period at the commencement of the lease.

Q. 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.

R. Property, Plant and Equipment

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

Recognition

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

A de-minimis level of £10,000 is applied to expenditure on assets.

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

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

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its fair 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 – fair value, determined by the measurement of the highest and best use value of the asset
- All other assets - fair value, determined by the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value - EUV).

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

Assets included in the Balance Sheet at fair value are re-valued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their fair value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years. Valuations are carried out either by an internal or external qualified valuer.

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 revaluation or impairment loss previously charged to a service.

Where decreases in value are identified, the revaluation loss is accounted for as follows:

- where there is a balance of revaluation gains for the asset in the revaluation Reserve, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains);
- where there is no balance in the Revaluation Reserve or insufficient balance, the carrying amount of the asset is written down against the relevant service 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 as follows:

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

Where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant service line(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.

Disposals

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.

Assets Held for Sale are:

- immediately available for sale;
- where the sale is highly probable;
- actively marketed;
- expected to be sold within 12 months.

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

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

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

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are generally 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. Receipts are appropriated to the Reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

Depreciation

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

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Buildings - straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer (typically 30 to 100 years);
- Vehicles, plant and equipment - a percentage of the value of each class of assets in the Balance Sheet, as advised by a suitably qualified officer. The maximum useful life is 10 years and the minimum 4 years typically most assets have a useful life of 5 years;
- Infrastructure – straight line allocation over 20 years.
- Community and Surplus assets – The land element of these is not depreciated, any property is depreciated over its useful life.

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.

Componentisation

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment asset has major components whose cost is significant (i.e. more than 30%) in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately.

Componentisation is considered for all new valuations, enhancement expenditure and acquisition expenditure carried out on or after 1 April 2011. Where a component is replaced or restored (i.e. enhancement expenditure) the carrying amount of the old component shall be de-recognised before reflecting the enhancement.

The Council recognises the following levels of components:

- Substructure
- Superstructure
- Internal services
- External works

Componentisation is not applicable to land as land is non-depreciable and is considered to have an infinite life.

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S. Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation but where there is uncertainty around the timing.

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 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. Where the obligation is expected to be settled within 12 months of the Balance Sheet date the provision is recognised as a Current Liability in the Balance Sheet. Other provisions are recognised as Long Term Liabilities.

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 and where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made); the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service. Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision

is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Council settles the obligation.

Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the Council settles the obligation. Provisions for bad and doubtful debts are maintained in respect of possible losses from non-collection of amounts owing to the Council. This includes council tax, business rates and other income. The provisions are recalculated each year based on age and category of outstanding debt at the end of the financial year, reflecting historical collection patterns, and are included in the Balance Sheet as an adjustment to receivables.

Contingent Liabilities

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

Contingent Assets

A contingent asset arises where an event has taken place that gives the Council a possible asset whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence or otherwise of uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Council. Contingent assets are not recognised in the Balance Sheet but disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

T. 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 and included against the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council tax for the expenditure.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments and retirement benefits and that do not represent usable resources for the Council - these Unusable Reserves are explained elsewhere within the Accounting Statements.

U. Revenue Expenditure Fund from Capital under Statute

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

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

V. 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.

W. Council Tax and Non-domestic Rate Income

Billing authorities in England are required by statute to maintain a separate fund for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of Council tax and Non-Domestic Rates (NDR). In its capacity as a Billing Authority, the Council acts as an agent collecting and distributing Council tax and NDR income on behalf of the major preceptors and itself.

From 1 April 2009, the Council has been required to show Council tax income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account as accrued income.

Page 99 From 1 April 2013, the Council has been required to show Non-Domestic Rate income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account as accrued income.

The Council's share of Collection Fund income and expenditure is recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure section.

X. 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 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 uses a combination of internal and external Valuers to provide valuations for its assets and liabilities in line with the highest and best use definition within the accounting standard. They are therefore using the same assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, assuming that market participants act in their economic best interest. This would take into account the markets 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 at its highest and best use.

The Valuers have used 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.

2. Accounting Standards That Have Been Issued But Not Yet Been Adopted

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the UK 2023-24 ("the Code") has introduced the following changes in accounting policy, which will need to be adopted fully by the Council in the 2024-25 financial statements from 1 April 2024.

The Council is required to disclose information relating to the impact of the accounting changes on the financial statements as a result of the adoption by the Code of a new standard that has been issued but is not yet required to be adopted by the Council. The Council is required to make disclosure of the estimated effect of the new standard in these financial statements.

The following accounting standards have changes next year, but these are either not relevant to the Council or the changes are expected to be minor and are not expected to make any change to the reported information in the accounts and will therefore not have a material effect:

- Amendments to IAS 1 (Classification of Liabilities as Current or Non-current)
- Amendments to IAS 1 (Non-current Liabilities with Covenants)
- Amendments to IAS 12 (International Tax Reform: Pillar Two Model Rules)
- Amendments to IAS 7 and IFRS 7 (Supplier Finance Arrangements (Amendments to IAS 7 and IFRS 7))

IFRS16 (Leases)

As permitted by the Code, the Council has chosen not to adopt this standard from 1 April 2023. It will be adopted in the 2024-25 financial statements from 1 April 2024.

3. Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

In applying the accounting policies set out in Note 1, the Council has had to make certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for Local Government. However, the Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision.
- Asset Categorisation - The Code classifies assets according to certain criteria. For example investment properties are classified as those assets that are held primarily to generate rental income or for capital appreciation, surplus assets are those assets that are surplus to service needs and do not meet the criteria for investment property or assets held for sale. Assets held for sale is usually restricted to property that is expected to be sold in 12 months.
- NNDR ratings list alterations- are estimates made for the expected loss of income as a result of alterations of ratings lists following the Check, Challenge, Appeal process. This based on currently outstanding checks, challenges and appeals and as well as expected further ones based on historical values.

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

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

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2021 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Property Plant and Equipment	Asset valuation in the current economic climate is subject to significant stress. Impairment reviews by the Council of its asset base have been undertaken in a robust way to reflect the changes in its asset values. Depreciation charges are related to the useful life of the assets and dependant on the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets.	It is important that the asset values in the Balance Sheet are kept under review. If the useful lives of the assets are reduced depreciation increases and the carrying value of the assets falls. Whilst there is a risk in any valuation exercise changes to useful lives and depreciation do not impact the Council's useable reserves as depreciation charges do not fall on the tax payer.

<p>Fair Value Measurements</p>	<p>Where the fair value of financial assets and financial liabilities cannot be measured based on quoted prices in active markets (i.e. Level 1 inputs) their fair value is measured using valuation techniques (e.g. quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets or, the discounted cash flow). Where possible these inputs are based on observable data, but where this is not possible judgement is required in establishing fair values. This will typically include considerations such as uncertainty and risk. However, changes to the assumptions used could affect the fair value of the Council's assets and liabilities. Where Level 1 inputs are not available, the Council has used relevant experts to identify the most appropriate valuation technique to determine fair value.</p>	<p>The Council uses the discounted cash flow (DCF), and 'market approach' (as defined in paragraphs B5 to B7 of IFRS 13) to measure the fair value of its assets.</p> <p>The inputs to this latter technique constitute Level 2 inputs, which are observable for the asset either directly or indirectly. If there were to be significant unobservable inputs, this could result in a significantly lower or higher fair value measurement for the investment properties and financial assets.</p>
<p>Pensions Liability</p>	<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, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. Actuaries are employed by the pension schemes administrators to provide expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.</p>	<p>The effects on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured, for example a 0.1% decrease in the real discount rate assumption would result in an increase of 2% in the pension liability which is approximately £1,767k.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) A one year increase in member life expectancy would result in an increase of approximately 4% in the pension liability, the pension liability would increase by approximately £4,258k. (ii) If salaries were to increase by 0.1% more than anticipated, the pension liability would increase by approximately £186k. (iii) If pensions payable were to increase by 0.1% more than anticipated, the pension liability would increase by 2%, approximating to £1,612k

5. Events After The Balance Sheet Date

The Statement of Accounts were authorised for issue by the Director of Resources on 14 January 2025. Events taking place after the accounts are authorised for issue are not reflected in the Financial Statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March 2024, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information. There were no subsequent events that required an adjustment to the financial statements and the notes.

6. Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2023/24.

	Adjustments for Capital Purposes	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments	Other Differences	Total Adjustments	Adjustments for Capital Purposes	Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments	Other Differences	Total Adjustments
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23
Page 30 CET/Corporate	(22)	44	18	40	(412)	224	30	(158)
Communities	(808)	137	(5)	(676)	5,086	660	45	5,791
Place and Climate Change	(1,011)	112	9	(890)	682	546	23	1,251
Resources	(288)	394	(20)	86	2,441	435	34	2,910
Net Cost of Services	(2,129)	687	2	(1,440)	7,797	1,865	132	9,794
Other Income and Expenditure	5,180	(546)	181	4,815	(4,374)	1,360	(1,349)	(4,363)
Difference between General Fund Surplus and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	3,051	141	183	3,375	3,423	3,225	(1,217)	5,431

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 these assets;

Financing & Investment Income & Expenditure – the statutory charges for capital financing and other revenue contributions are deducted from other income and expenditure as these are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices;

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

Net Change in Pension Adjustments – this column is the 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's 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.

Other Differences – this column relates to other differences between amounts debited/credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and amounts payable/receivable to be recognised under statute. Also included within this column is the charge under Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure represents the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations for Council Tax and 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 timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future surpluses and deficits on the Collection Fund.

7. Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Expenditure		
Employee Benefits Expenses	15,875	18,330
Other Service Expenses	24,904	19,592
Support Service Recharges	12,879	13,654
Depreciation, Amortisation, Impairment, DRF	4,210	9,268
Interest Payments	424	179
Precepts and Levies	3,354	3,164
Gain on disposal of assets	(639)	(2,215)
Total Expenditure	61,007	61,971
Income		
Fees, Charges and Other Service Income	(15,786)	(14,452)
Interest and Investment Income	(1,552)	(1,461)
Income from Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates, District Rate Income	(22,992)	(18,274)
Government Grants and Contributions	(20,641)	(20,625)
Total Income	(60,971)	(54,812)
Surplus/(Deficit) on the Provision of Services	36	7,159

8. Movement in Reserves Statement – Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations

	General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in unusable Reserves	General Fund Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	Movement in unusable Reserves
	2023/24				2022/23			
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adjustments to Capital Adjustment Account								
<u>Reversal of items debited or credited to the CIES</u>								
Depreciation & Impairment of Non-Current Assets	(2,579)	-	-	2,579	(3,066)	-	-	3,066
Revaluation gain/(loss) on PPE	(556)	-	-	556	(5,646)	-	-	5,646
Movement in Investment Property Market Value	-	-	-	-	(255)	-	-	255
Amortisation of intangible assets	(282)	-	-	282	(276)	-	-	276
Capital Grants & Contributions	4,541	-	-	(4,541)	2,159	-	-	(2,159)
Revenue Expenditure Fund from Capital Under Statute	(794)	-	-	794	(27)	-	-	27
Written off Non-Current Assets on sale or disposal	(2)	-	-	2	(642)	-	-	642
<u>Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CIES</u>								
Statutory Provision for the Financing of Capital Investment	475	-	-	(475)	662	-	-	(662)
Capital Expenditure Charged Against the General Fund	1,607	-	-	(1,607)	810	-	-	(810)
Adjustments to Capital Receipts Reserves								
Transfer of the disposal sales proceeds recorded in CIES	641	(641)	-	-	2,857	(2,857)	-	-
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure		3,130	-	(3,130)		2,540	-	(2,540)
Adjustments to Pooled Fund Adjustment Account								
Pool Fund fair value gain/loss debited or credited to CIES					-	-	-	-
Adjustments to Pensions Reserve								
Pension Costs (transferred to/from the pensions reserve)	140	-	-	(140)	(6,159)	-	-	6,159
Employer's pension contributions		-	-		2,936	-	-	(2,936)
Adjustments to Collection Fund Adjustment Account								
Council Tax & NNDR (transfers to/from the Collection fund)	181	-	-	(181)	1,349	-	-	(1,349)
Adjustments to Accumulating Compensated Absences Adjustment Account								
Holiday pay	2	-	-	2	(133)	-	-	133
Total Adjustments	3,375	2,490		(5,864)	(5,431)	(317)	-	5,748

General Fund Balance - The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of a 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.

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

Capital Grants Unapplied – The Capital Grants Unapplied Account holds grants and contributions received towards capital projects from 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.

9. Movement in Reserves Statement – Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £000	Transfers Out 2022/23 £000	Transfers In 2022/23 £000	Balance at 31 March 2023 £000	Transfers Out 2023/24 £000	Transfers In 2023/24 £000	Balance at 31 March 2024 £000
Asset Management	882	(72)	37	847	(245)	-	602
Benefits	750	(23)	-	727	-	-	727
Building Control	224	-	-	224	(78)	-	146
Business Rate Retention	3,517	(1,688)	-	1,829	(7)	131	1,952
Capital Project Reserve	556	-	-	556	(71)	-	485
Coast Protection	302	(179)	344	467	(225)	-	242
Communities	569	(162)	-	406	(106)	-	300
Delivery Plan Reserve	4,326	(1,202)	-	3,124	(903)	-	2,221
Economic Development & Regeneration	198	-	35	233	(54)	-	179
Election Reserve	103	-	83	186	(183)	60	63
Enforcement Board	91	(30)	-	61	(15)	-	46
Environmental Health	312	-	182	494	(35)	655	1,115
Environment	150	-	-	150	-	-	150
Grants	2,357	(113)	376	2,620	(17)	84	2,687
Grassed Area Deposits	371	-	-	371	-	-	371
Housing	2,108	(481)	647	2,275	(985)	132	1,422
Land Charges	337	-	-	337	-	-	339
Legal	124	(31)	-	93	(5)	-	88
Major Repairs Reserve	329	(21)	280	588	(130)	-	458
New Homes Bonus	223	-	-	223	(76)	-	147
Organisational Development	172	(17)	-	155	(43)	-	111
Pathfinder	90	-	-	90	-	-	90
Planning – Revenue	218	-	199	417	(179)	50	288
Restructuring and Invest to Save	897	(378)	145	664	-	53	715
Net Zero Reserve	-	-	500	500	(28)	-	472
Treasury Reserve	500	-	-	500	(200)	-	300
Innovation Fund	-	-	-	-	(100)	-	(100)
Total	19,707	(4,398)	2,828	18,137	(3,685)	1,165	15,617
Total transfers out during the year		(4,398)			(3,685)		
Total transfers in during the year			2,828			1,165	
Net Movement in Earmarked Reserves		(1,570)			(2,520)		

The purpose of each earmarked reserves is explained below:

Asset Management - To support improvements to our existing assets as identified through the Asset Management Plan.

Benefits - To mitigate any claw back by the Department of Works and Pensions following final audited subsidy determination.

Building Control – Ring- fenced to cover any future deficits on the building control service.

Business Rates Retention – To be used to mitigate the impact of final claims and appeals in relation to business rates retention scheme.

Capital Projects Reserve - To provide funding for capital projects. This includes the VAT shelter income that is received in the year and not yet spent on projects.

Coast Protection - To support the on-going coast protection maintenance programme.

Common Training - To deliver the corporate training and development programme.

Communities – To support projects that communities identify where they will make a difference to the economic and social wellbeing of the area. This is funded from the return of the second homes funding from Norfolk County Council.

Economic Development and Regeneration: Service underspends rolled forward that relate to one off projects or expenditure not budgeted for in future years, including learning for everyone.

Election Reserve - Established to meet costs associated with district council elections, to smooth the impact between financial years.

Environmental Health - Earmarking of underspends and additional income to meet Environmental Health.

Grants – Earmarking of grants received in the year for which expenditure is yet to be incurred, for example due to the timing of the receipt.

Grassed Area Deposits - To finance ongoing commitments in relation to grounds maintenance contracts.

Housing – Includes Community Housing Fund grant received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) This is to support community led housing schemes and assisting in the delivery of affordable housing within the area.

Land Charges – To mitigate the impact of potential income reductions for the service.

Legal – Includes funding for Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) work and other one-off work.

Local Strategic Partnership – Ring fenced from the former Local Strategic Partnership, earmarked for ongoing liabilities.

LSVT Reserve – To meet the cost of successful warranty claims not covered by bonds and insurance following the housing stock transfer.

New Homes Bonus (NHB) – Established for supporting communities with future growth and development and Plan review.

Organisational Development - To provide funding for organisation development to create capacity within the organisation, including the support of apprenticeship and intern programmes.

Pathfinder - To help coastal communities adapt to coastal changes. The balance represents grant funding that has been received that has been fully allocated to projects to deliver the Pathfinder objectives but has not yet been spent.

Planning – Additional Planning Income earmarked for Planning Initiatives including Plan Business Process Review.

Property Investment Fund – To provide funding for the acquisition and development of new land and property assets

Property Company – To fund potential housing development and property related schemes

Restructuring and Invest to Save - To be used for restructuring costs including one-off redundancy and pension strain costs and invest to save projects that will deliver efficiency savings.

Sports Hall Equipment and Sports Facilities - To support renewals for sports hall equipment. Transfers in the year represents over or under achievement of income target.

10. Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Other Operating Expenditure

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Parish Council Precepts	2,876	2,725
Gain on the Disposal of Non-Current Assets	(639)	(2,215)
Total	2,237	510

11. Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Financing Investment Income and Expenditure

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Interest Expense	441	166
Pension Interest Cost and Expected Return on Pensions Assets	546	1,254
Fair Value Changes of Pooled Funds	-	-
Interest Income	(1,552)	(1,448)
Fair Value changes of Investment Properties	-	-
Total	(565)	(28)

12. Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Council Tax Income	(9,747)	(9,389)
Non-Domestic Rates	(8,691)	(6,725)
Other Non-Ringfenced Government Grant	(1,993)	(1,908)
Capital Grant and contributions	(4,554)	(2,159)
Total	(24,985)	(20,181)

13. Balance Sheet – Usable Reserves

Movements in the Council's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement and Note 8 and Note 9.

14. Balance Sheet – Unusable Reserves

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Revaluation Reserve	40,057	27,763
Pooled Fund Adjustment Account	(243)	123
Capital Adjustment Account	43,728	37,564
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	-	-
Pensions Reserve	(3,430)	(11,827)
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	(3,167)	(3,348)
Accumulated Compensated Absences Adjustment Account	(356)	(354)
Total	(76,589)	(49,921)

14(a) Revaluation Reserve

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

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

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

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Balance at 1 April	(27,762)	(18,188)
Upward revaluation of assets	(14,488)	(11,865)
Downward revaluation of assets and impairments losses not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services	1,742	2,121
Difference between Fair Value Depreciation and Historical Cost Depreciation	451	170
Balance at 31 March	(40,057)	(27,762)

14(b) Pooled Fund Adjustment Account

The Pooled Fund Adjustment Account contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its investments in pooled funds and are therefore accounted for under IFRS 9 at fair value through profit and loss. A statutory override currently applies enabling gains or losses to be transferred to this unusable reserve, thereby protecting the Council Tax payer from changes in fair value on these investments. The balance is reduced when investments with accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost
- disposed of and the gains are realised

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	124	2,717
Upward/(Downward) Revaluation of Investments Charged to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services.	(367)	(2,593)
Balance at 31 March	(244)	124

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14(c) 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 and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Council.

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

Note 8 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Balance at 1 April	37,564	41,132
<u>Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure posted to the CIES</u>		
Charges for Depreciation and Impairment on Non-Current Assets	(2,579)	(3,065)
Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(556)	(5,900)
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(281)	(276)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(793)	(27)
Non-Current Assets written off on disposal to the CIES	(2)	(641)
	33,353	31,223
Adjusting amounts written out of the revaluation reserve	451	170
Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	33,804	31,393
<u>Capital Financial Applied in the year:</u>		
Use of capital receipts reserve to finance new capital expenditure	3,130	2,540
Capital Grants and contributions credited to the CIES that have been applied to capital financing	4,712	2,159
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balance	475	662
Capital Expenditure charged against the General Fund balance	1,607	810
	43,728	37,564
Movements in the market value of investment properties debited or credited to the CIES	-	-
Balance at 31 March	43,728	37,564

The revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute (REFCUS) grant funding has been applied to the REFCUS line of the CAA note above. Please refer to Note 31 - Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing for the gross balances.

14(d) Pensions Reserve

The Pensions Reserve absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for post-employment benefits and for funding benefits in accordance with statutory provisions. The Council accounts for post-employment benefits in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as the benefits are earned by employees accruing years of service, updating the liabilities recognised to reflect inflation, changing assumptions and investment returns on any resources set aside to meet the costs. However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the

Council makes employer's contributions to pension funds or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The deficit 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.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	(11,827)	(49,459)
Actuarial gains/(losses) on pensions assets and liabilities	8,265	40,856
Reversal of Items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the CIES	(2,901)	(6,159)
Employer's pension contributions and direct payment to pensioners payable in the year	3,033	2,935
Balance at 31 March	(3,430)	(11,827)

14(e) Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of Council Tax and Business Rate 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.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	(2,978)	(4,693)
Amount by which Council Tax and Business Rate Income credited to the CIES is different from Council Tax and Business Rate income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(189)	1,345
Balance at 31 March	(3,167)	(2,978)

14(f) Accumulating Compensated Absences Adjustment Account

The Accumulating Compensated Absences Adjustment Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences, e.g. annual leave, earned but not taken in the year. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	(354)	(222)
Settlement or cancellation of an accrual made at the end of the preceding year	354	222
Amounts accrued at the end current year	(354)	(222)
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(2)	(132)
Balance at 31 March	(356)	(354)

15. Cash Flow Statement – Arising from Operating Activities

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Interest received	1,552	1,424
Interest paid	(441)	(115)
Net cash flows from operating activities	1,111	1,309
The surplus or deficit on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following		
Depreciation	2,579	3,066
Impairment and downward valuations	,556	5,900
Amortisation	282	276
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(3,450)	(13,533)
Increase in Interest and Dividend Debtors	-	-
Increase in debtors	(484)	(2,074)
Increase in inventories	(4)	(2)
Movement in pension liability	799	3,260
Carrying amount of non-current assets, and non-current assets held for sale, sold or derecognised	2	642
Movement in Investment Property Values	(38)	(217)
	242	(2,682)
Adjust for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities		
Capital grants credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services		
Net adjustment from the sale of short term and long term investments	3,191	12,110
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property, and intangible assets		(2,857)
Fair value pooled funds	(641)	
Other items for which the cash effects are investing or cash flows		(3,592)
	2,550	5,661

16. Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(13,622)	(9,351)
Purchase of short-term and long-term investment		
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(249)	2,857
Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments		
Other receipts from investing activities	8,957	4,653
Net cash flows from investing activities	(4,914)	(1,841)

17. Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Cash receipts of short-term and long-term borrowing	18,700	-
Other receipts from financing activities		-
Repayments of short-term and long-term borrowing	(21,000)	(4,000)
Other payments for financing activities	(1,006)	1,544
Net cash flows from financing activities	(3,306)	(2,456)

18. Cash Flow Statement – Cash and cash equivalents

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Cash held by officers	3	4
Bank current accounts	(6,071)	(1,436)
Investments in liquidity money market funds	2,024	2,853
Total cash and cash equivalents	(4,044)	1,420

19. Trading Operations

The Council currently operates three general produce markets on two car park sites in Sheringham and Cromer. They are provided to meet local demands and to promote tourism. The trading objective is to minimise the deficit relating to the service.

The Council lets a total of 20 industrial units and self-occupies 1 over 4 sites in Catfield, North Walsham and Fakenham. The Catfield and Cornish Way, North Walsham sites offer starter units which were developed jointly with EEDA, to provide opportunities for local business start-ups and developments. 3 larger brand-new units at Hornbeam Road, North Walsham were acquired in December 2020. The trading objective is to minimise the deficit relating to the service.

Trading operations are incorporated into the CIES. Some are an integral part of one of the Council's services to the public (e.g. refuse collection), whilst others are support services to the Council's services to the public. The expenditure of these operations is allocated or recharged to the relevant service area within the CIES Cost of Services.

The surplus is due to higher income from both market traders and rental income at the industrial units.

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	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
<u>General Produce Markets</u>		
Turnover	(32)	(36)
Expenditure	70	73
Deficit/(Surplus)	<u>38</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Industrial Units</u>		
Turnover	(94)	(76)
Expenditure	102	5
Deficit/(Surplus)	<u>8</u>	<u>(71)</u>
Total (Surplus)/Deficit on trading operations	<u>46</u>	<u>(34)</u>
Services to the public including expenditure of continuing operations	46	(34)
Support Services recharged to expenditure of continuing operations	(2)	(3)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit included within operating expenditure	<u>44</u>	<u>(37)</u>

20. External Audit Costs

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

	2023/24 £000	2022/23 £000
Fees payable for external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year	150	44
Fees payable for the certification of grant claims and returns for the year	21	21
Additional fees in respect of the prior year audit	68	-
Total	239	65

21. Members Allowances

The Council paid the following amounts to Members of the Council during the year. Full details can be obtained by writing to:

Information Services, Holt Road, Cromer, Norfolk, NR27 9EN.

	2023/24 £	2022/23 £
Allowances	344,649	339,585
Expenses	11,056	9,389
Total	355,705	348,974

22. Officers' Remuneration

The following table sets out the remuneration paid to the Council's senior officers. A senior officer is defined as being a statutory chief officer as defined in the Local Government and Housing Act (LGHA) 1989 section 2(6); a non-statutory Chief officer as defined in the LGHA 1989 section 2(7); or someone with responsibility for the management of the Council, being able to direct or control its major activities, whether solely or collectively.

For the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2024:

<u>Job Title</u>	Year	Salary, Fees and Allowance	Bonuses	Expenses Allowances	Compensation for loss of office	Sub- Total	Pension Contribution	Total
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<u>1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024</u>								
Chief Executive	2023/24	118,576	-	963	-	119,539	15,991	135,530
Director for Communities	2023/24	94,863	-	963	-	95,826	13,759	109,615
Director for Resources & Section 151 Officer	2023/24	89,555	-	963	-	90,518	12,985	103,503
Director for Place & Climate Change	2023/24	94,863	-	963	-	95,826	13,203	109,059
Monitoring Officer	2023/24	69,127	-	963	-	70,090	10,023	80,113
<u>1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023</u>								
Chief Executive	2022/23	114,566	-	963	-	115,529	16,333	131,862
Director for Communities	2022/23	91,684	-	963	-	92,647	11,931	104,578
Director for Resources & Section 151 Officer	2022/23	84,693	-	963	-	85,656	12,284	97,940
Director for Place & Climate Change	2022/23	91,684	-	963	-	92,647	7,662	100,309
Monitoring Officer	2022/23	57,056	-	963	-	58,019	8,459	66,478

The number of employees not falling into the category of senior officers shown above whose remuneration, excluding pension contributions was £50,000 or more in bands of £5,000 were:

Remuneration Band	2023/24	2022/23
	Number of Employees	Number of Employees
£50,000 - £54,499	11	11
£55,000 - £59,999	6	6
£60,000 - £64,499	1	3
£65,000 - £69,999	3	1
£70,000 - £74,499	1	-

23. Exit Packages

The number of exit packages agreed with the total cost per band and total cost of the compulsory and other are set out in the table below.

Bandings	2023/24				2022/23			
	Compulsory Redundancies Number of Employees	Other Departures Number of Employees	Total Employees	Total Amount	Compulsory Redundancies Number of Employees	Other Departures Number of Employees	Total Employees	Total Amount
£0 - £20,000	-	1	1	11,055	-	1	1	19,073
£20,001 - £40,000	-	1	1	35,385	-	2	2	52,546
£40,001 - £60,000	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	40,952
£60,001 - £80,000	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	63,588
£80,000 - £100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	2	2	46,440	1	4	5	176,160

24. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Participation in pension schemes

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

The Council participates in two post-employment schemes:

- The Local Government Pension Scheme, administered locally by Norfolk County Council - this was a funded defined benefit final salary scheme up to 31/03/2014 then replaced with a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme from the 01/04/2014, The Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions liabilities with investment assets.
- Arrangements for the award of discretionary post-retirement benefits upon early retirement - this is an unfunded defined benefit final arrangement; under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made. However, there are no investment assets built up to meet the pension's liabilities, and cash has to be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due.

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 post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	Local Government Pension Scheme 2023/24 £000	Local Government Pension Scheme 2022/23 £000
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		
<u>Cost of Services</u>		
Current service cost	2,355	4,754
Past service costs loss	-	45
<u>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</u>		
Interest Cost	5,009	3,935
Expected return on scheme asset	(4,463)	(2,575)
Total post-employment benefit charged to the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	2,901	6,159
<u>Other post-employment benefit charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</u>		
Actuarial gains/(losses)	8,265	40,856
Total post-employment benefit (credited)/charged to the CIES	(11,116)	(47,015)
<u>Movement in Reserves Statement:</u>		
Reversal of net charges made to the surplus/deficit for the provision of services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the code	(2,901)	(6,159)
Actual amount charged against the general fund balance for pensions in the year		
Employers' contribution payable to the scheme	3,033	2,935

Assets and liabilities in relation to post-employment benefits

Reconciliation of present value of the scheme liabilities (defined benefit obligation):

Pension Scheme Funded Liabilities Local Government	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Opening balance at 1 April	106,095	145,018
Current service cost	2,355	4,754
Interest cost	5,009	3,935
Contributions by scheme participants	746	685
Actuarial (gains)/losses	(3,334)	(44,509)
Benefits paid	(4,160)	(3,586)
Unfunded benefits paid	(253)	(247)
Past service costs	-	45
Closing Balance at 31 March	106,458	106,095

Reconciliation of fair value of the scheme (plan) assets:

Local Government Pension Scheme	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Opening balance at 1 April	94,268	95,559
Expected rate of return	4,463	2,275
Actuarial gains	4,931	(3,653)
Employers' contributions	2,780	2,688
Contributions by scheme participants	746	685
Contributions in respect of Unfunded Benefits	253	247
Benefits paid	(4,160)	(3,586)
Unfunded benefits paid	(253)	(247)
Closing Balance at 31 March	103,028	94,268

Fair Value of Employer Assets

Asset Category	2023/24				2022/23			
	Quoted price in active markets	Quoted price not in active markets	Total	Percentage of total assets	Quoted price in active markets	Quoted price not in active markets	Total	Percentage of total assets
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Equity Securities:								
Consumer	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Manufacturing	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Energy & Utilities	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Financial Institutions	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Health & Care	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Information Technology	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Other	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Debt Securities:								
Corporate Bonds (Investment Grade)	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Corporate Bonds - Non-Investment Grade	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
UK Government	2,575	-	2,575	2%	810	-	810	1%
Other	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Private Equity:								
All	-	12,972	12,972	13%	-	9,007	9,007	10%
Real Estate								
UK Property	-	7,709	7,709	7%	-	8,158	8,158	9%
Overseas Property	-	1,163	1,163	1%	-	1,401	1,401	1%
Investment & Unit Trusts								
Equities	19,641	-	19,641	19%	44,831	-	44,831	47%
Bonds	-	11,748	11,748	11%	18,184	-	18,184	19%
Infrastructure	-	-	-	0%	-	10,590	10,590	11%
Other	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%

Fair Value of Employer Assets (continued)

Asset Category	2023/24				2022/23			
	Quoted prices in active markets	Quoted prices not in active markets	Total	Percenta ge of total assets	Quoted prices in active markets	Quoted prices not in active markets	Total	Percentage of total assets
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Derivatives:								
Foreign Exchanges	1,834	-	1,834	2%	(286)	-	(286)	0%
Other	-	-	-	0%	-	-	-	0%
Cash & Cash Equivalents:								
All	1,567	-	1,567	2%	1,574	-	1,574	2%
Total	69,435	33,593	103,028	100%	65,113	29,156	94,269	100%

The expected return on scheme assets is determined by considering the expected returns available on the assets underlying the current investment policy. Expected yields on fixed interest investments are based on gross redemption yields as at the Balance Sheet date. Expected returns on equity investments reflect long-term real rates of return experienced in the respective markets.

The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the Council has in the long run to pay post-employment (retirement) benefits. The total net liability of £11.8m 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.
- finance is only required to be raised to cover discretionary benefits when the pensions are actually paid.

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. Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and Discretionary Benefits 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 1 April 2022. In relation to the Commutation Adjustment, an allowance is included for future retirements to elect to take 50% of the maximum additional tax-free cash up to HMRC limits for pre-April 2008 service and 75% of the maximum tax-free cash for post-April 2008 service.

The principal assumptions used by the actuary have been:

Mortality Assumptions	Local Government Pension Scheme 2023/24	Local Government Pension Scheme 2022/23
<u>Longevity at 65 for Current Pensioners:</u>		
Men	22.1	22.3
Women	24.5	24.7
<u>Longevity at 65 for Future Pensioners:</u>		
Men	22.8	23.0
Women	26.0	26.2
Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	2.75%	2.95%
Rate of Increase in Salaries	3.45%	3.65%
Expected Return on Assets	3.45%	3.65%
Rate of Discounting Scheme Liabilities	4.85%	4.75%

History of experience gains and losses

The actuarial gains identified as movements on the Pensions Reserve in 2023/24 can be analysed into the following categories, measured as a percentage of assets or liabilities at 31 March 2024.

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
	%	%	%	%	%
Difference between the expected and actual return on assets	4.79	(3.9)	6.1	17.8	(7.4)
Experience gains and losses on liabilities	3.11	0.1	3.0	(0.7)	(2.0)

25. Related Parties

This disclosure note has been prepared using the Council's Register of Members' Declarations of interest in addition to a specific declaration obtained in respect of related party transactions from Members and Chief Officers.

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties - bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Council or to be controlled or influenced by the Council. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Council.

Central Government

Central Government has effective control over the general operations of the Council - it is responsible for providing the statutory framework, within which the Council operates, provides most of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g. Council tax bills, housing benefits). Grants received from Government departments are set out in the expenditure and income analysed by nature in Note 7. Grant receipts outstanding at 31 March 2024 are shown in Note 38.

Members & Officers

Members of the Authority have direct control over the Authority's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2023/24 is shown in Note 21. During 2023/24, works and services to the value of £162,696 were commissioned from companies in which twelve members had an interest. Contracts were entered into in full compliance with the Authority's standing orders.

The most significant total values for general expenditure were:

- £121,690 linked to the University of East Anglia in which one Member had an interest.

In addition, the Authority paid grants totalling £58,000 to voluntary organisations in which three members had declared an interest. In all instances, the grants were made with proper consideration of declarations of interest. There were no material expenditure transactions involving Chief Officers.

The most significant total values for grant expenditure were:

- £53,000 linked to Sheringham Little Theatre

Income totalling £58,850 was received from entities in which members had an interest. There were no material expenditure transactions involving Chief Officers. There were no significant total values for income.

The relevant persons linked to the above transactions did not take part in any discussion or decision relating to the expenditure/income. Details of all these transactions are recorded in the Register of Members' Interest, open to public inspection at the Council Offices during office hours.

26. Leases

Council as Lessee

Finance Leases

The Council held no Finance leases as at 31 March 2024.

Operating Leases

The Council leases property, land, vehicles and items of equipment, including printing and telephone equipment, as part of a number of operating leases. The future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

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	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Not Later than one year	74	74
Later than one year and not later than five years	215	245
Later than five years	48	100
	337	419

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

	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	£000	£000
Minimum Lease Payments	83	71
Contingent Rents	86	99
	169	170

Council as Lessor

Operating Leases

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

- for the provision of community services, such as sports facilities, tourism services and community centres
- for economic development purposes to provide suitable affordable accommodation for local businesses

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

	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2023 £000
Not Later than one year	(410)	(228)
Later than one year and not later than five years	(1,144)	(618)
Later than five years	(1,591)	(906)
	(3,145)	(1,751)

The minimum lease payments receivable do not include rents that are contingent on events taking place after the lease was entered into, such as adjustments following rent reviews.

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27. Investment Properties

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

	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2023 £000
Rental income from investment property	(149)	(132)
Direct operating expenses from investment property	36	351
Net (gain)/loss	(112)	220

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

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

	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2023 £000
Opening Balance	1,195	389
Additions:		
Purchases	-	-
Disposals	-	-
Transfers	-	709
Net gains/losses from fair value adjustments	-	9
Closing Balance	1,195	1,195

The changes identified in the table above are as a result of the properties being revalued in year. No further transfers, additions or disposals have taken place.

Fair Value hierarchy

The Council's investment properties have been value assessed as Level 2 on the fair value hierarchy for valuation purposes (see Accounting Policies for an explanation of the fair value levels).

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

The fair value of investment property has been measured using a market approach, which takes into account either direct or indirect observable inputs for the asset. These inputs took the form of analysed and weighted market evidence such as sales, rentals and yields in respect of comparable properties in the same or similar locations at or around the valuation date.

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

These assets have been revalued as at 31 March 2024, by Wilks Head & Eve.

28. Intangible Assets

The Council accounts for its software as intangible assets, to the extent that the software is not an integral part of a particular IT system and accounted for as part of the hardware item of Property, Plant and Equipment. Intangible assets would include both purchased licenses and internally generated software – the Council does not currently have any internally generated intangible assets.

All software is given a finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the Council. The useful lives assigned to all software currently used by the Council is 5 years.

The carrying amount of intangible assets is amortised on a straight-line basis. The movement on intangible asset balances during the year is as follows:

	2023/24			2023/24		
	Internally Generated Assets £000	Other Assets £000	Total £000	Internally Generated Assets £000	Other Assets £000	Total £000
Opening Balance:						
Gross Carrying Amounts	-	3,211	3,211	-	2,901	2,091
Accumulated Amortisation	-	(2,299)	(2,299)	-	(2,023)	(2,023)
Net Carrying amount at start of year	-	912	912	-	878	878
Additions:						
Purchases	-	158	158	-	310	310
Derecognition	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Amortisation for the period	-	(282)	(282)	-	(276)	(276)
Closing Balance	-	788	788	-	912	912

No significant contracts have been entered into during the financial year 2023/24.

29. Impairment Losses

An impairment review was undertaken for the financial year 2023/24. The review identified that due to the type and use of properties and taking into consideration their location with Norfolk and the Eastern region, that any economic changes during the year would not result in any economic impairment of assets.

30. Property, Plant and Equipment

Movement in 2023/24:	Other Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total Property Plant and Equipment
Cost or Valuation:	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
At 1 April 2023	58,214	20,587	19,098	2,925	507	3,619	104,950
Additions	2,822	1,343	14	547	-	3,929	8,655
Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation increase/(decrease) recognised in the revaluation reserve	12,451	-	-	(465)	759	-	12,745
Revaluation increase/(decrease) recognised in the provision of services	(556)	-	-	-	-	-	(556)
Derecognition – disposals	(2)	-	-	-	-	-	(2)
Derecognition – other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assets reclassified (to)/from held for sale	552	-	-	-	-	-	552
Other movements in cost or valuation	-	-	(394)	-	-	396	2
At 31 March 2024	73,481	21,930	18,718	3,007	1,266	7,944	126,346
Accumulated Depreciation							
At 1 April 2023	2,070	14,983	12,769	262	31	-	30,115
Depreciation charge	647	1,316	565	43	-	-	2,571
Depreciation written out to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation written out to the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment losses/(reversals) recognised in the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment losses/(reversals) recognised in the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Derecognition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eliminated on reclassification to assets held for sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other movements in depreciation and impairment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2024	2,717	16,299	13,334	305	31	-	32,606
Net Book Value							
At 31 March 2024	70,764	5,631	5,384	2,702	1,235	7,944	93,660
At 31 March 2023	56,144	5,604	6,329	2,663	476	3,619	74,835

Movement in 2022/23:	Other Land and Buildings	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets Under Construction	Total Property Plant and Equipment
Cost or Valuation:	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
At 1 April 2022	52,238	20,132	18,389	4,127	487	1,829	97,202
Additions	1,677	455	155	306	20	2,526	5,139
Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation increase/(decrease) recognised in the revaluation reserve	9,214	-	-	179	-	-	9,393
Revaluation increase/(decrease) recognised in the provision of services	(3,959)	-	-	(1,687)	-	-	(5,646)
Derecognition – disposals	(428)	-	-	-	-	-	(428)
Derecognition – other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assets reclassified (to)/from held for sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other movements in cost or valuation	(528)	-	554	-	-	(736)	(710)
At 31 March 2023	58,214	20,587	19,098	2,925	507	3,619	104,950
Accumulated Depreciation							
At 1 April 2022	1,402	13,179	12,244	204	31	-	27,060
Depreciation charge	668	1,804	525	58	-	-	3,055
Depreciation written out to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation written out to the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment losses/(reversals) recognised in the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment losses/(reversals) recognised in the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Derecognition	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eliminated on reclassification to assets held for sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other movements in depreciation and impairment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	2,070	14,983	12,769	262	31	-	30,115
Net Book Value							
At 31 March 2023	56,144	5,604	6,329	2,663	476	3,619	74,835
At 31 March 2022	50,836	6,953	6,145	3,923	456	1,829	70,140

Capital Commitments

The major commitments relate to the following Schemes:

	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2023 £000
Splash Reprovision	263	300
Fakenham Urban Extension	1,581	-
Cromer Coastal Defence Scheme	10,371	12,210
Mundesley Coastal Defence Scheme	5,792	7,618
	18,007	20,218

Revaluations

The Council carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment required to be measured at fair value is revalued at least every five years. During the intervening years reviews are undertaken to ensure the carrying value of assets are not materially different from their fair values. Impairment reviews are also carried out annually to ensure that the carrying value of assets is not overstated. For the 2023/24 accounts the programme of valuations were carried out by Wilks Head & Eve. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

Valuations of vehicles, plant and equipment are based on current prices where there is an active second-hand market or latest list prices adjusted for the asset condition. Further details regarding the valuations are provided within the Statement of Accounting Policies which starts on page 10.

All revaluations have been undertaken as at 31 March 2024.

	Other Land and Buildings £000	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment £000	Infrastructure Assets £000	Community Assets £000	Surplus Assets £000	Assets Under Construction £000	Total Property Plant and Equipment £000
Carried at historical cost	-	5,631	5,384	141	1,235	7,944	20,335
Valued at fair value as at:							
31 March 2024	41,367	-	-	2,561	-	-	43,928
31 March 2023	26,670	-	-	-	-	-	26,670
31 March 2022	2,727	-	-	-	-	-	2,727
Total	70,764	5,631	5,384	2,702	1,235	7,944	93,660

31. 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.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	15,162	15,856
<u>Capital Investment:</u>		
Property, plant and equipment	8,837	5,140
Intangible assets	158	310
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	746	1,459
Long Term Debtor		
<u>Sources of finance:</u>		
Capital receipts	(3,130)	(2,540)
Government grants and other contributions	(4,554)	(3,591)
Direct revenue contributions	(1,607)	(810)
Minimum revenue provision	(475)	(662)
Closing Capital Financing Requirements	15,137	15,162
<i>Explanations of movements in the year:</i>		
Increase in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	(25)	(694)
Capital receipts applied in lieu of minimum		-
Increase in Capital Financing Requirement	(25)	(694)

32. Assets Held for Sale

During the financial year, there have been no changes in classification within Assets Held for sale, and none have been sold.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Balance brought forward	698	922
Assets newly classified as Held for Sale:		
Property Plant and Equipment	(552)	-
Assets sold		(214)
Other movements	174	(10)
Balance carried forward	320	698

33. Receivables

Receivables represent the amounts owed to the Council at 31 March 2024 and are analysed below. This figure is split between long term -amounts not falling due within 1 year, and Short Term - amounts falling due within 1 year of the Balance Sheet date.

The Council makes an allowance for outstanding amounts for which recovery of receivables is not anticipated (bad debt provision). Receivables are shown net of the bad debt provision within the Balance Sheet.

	Long Term		Short Term	
	31 March 2024	31 March 2023	31 March 2024	31 March 2023
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Central government bodies	-	-	4,538	4,990
Other local authorities	-	-	718	1,281
NHS bodies	-	-	-	-
Other entities and individuals*	1,863	2,045	10,142	5,653
	1,863	2,045	15,398	11,924
Less: Bad debt provision				
General Fund	-	-	(938)	(1,003)
Collection Fund	-	-	(223)	(242)
	-	-	(1,161)	(1,245)
	1,863	2,045	14,237	10,679

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* Breakdown of Short-Term Receivables - significant entries within the other entities and individual's category are shown below

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Council tax and NNDR	1,006	903
Housing benefit overpayments recoveries	899	891
Treasury Debtors – Principal Payments	5,351	
Right to buy receipts	383	778
Loans falling due within 1 year	287	281
VAT invoices awarded	160	151
Capital Contributions not yet received	54	631
Recycling Credit Income	183	
Other smaller receivables	1,819	2,018
	10,142	5,653

34. Payables

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Central government bodies	(5,789)	(7,135)
Other local authorities	(2,423)	(2,203)
Other entities and individuals	(5,898)	(7,191)
	(14,110)	(16,529)
Less Capital Receipts in advance:		
Central government bodies	3,835	3,115
Other local authorities	-	-
Other entities and individuals	-	-
	3,835	3,115
	(10,275)	(13,414)

Breakdown of significant entries within the other entities and individuals category

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Waste and recycling contract payments	(554)	(432)
Rent allowance payments to benefit claimants	(13)	(1,423)
Council tax and NNDR	(641)	(363)
Planning developer contributions receipts in advance	(2,599)	(2,843)
NNDC employee accumulated absences provision	(356)	(354)
Capital creditors	(422)	(159)
Audit Accruals	(268)	-
Other smaller payables	(1,045)	(968)
	(5,898)	(6,542)

35. Provisions

The Council has set aside a provision for potential liabilities as a result of alternations to Business Rates rateable values. The total liability is shared in accordance the Business Rate Retention Scheme proportionate shares applicable for the Council, Central Government and Norfolk County Council. The Council has no other outstanding legal cases in progress or other potential liabilities that require provisions to be made.

	1 April 2023	Provisions made in 2023/24	Used in 2023/24	31 March 2024
	£000	£000	£000	£000
NNDC Rating List Changes – Total Collection Fund	(1,329)	-	98	(1,232)
Proportionate percentage	40%	40%	40%	40%
NNDC Share	(532)	-	39	(493)

36. Contingent Liabilities

At 31 March 2023, the Council had the following material contingent liabilities:

- (a) **Housing Stock Transfer** - As part of the legal agreements associated with the transfer of the housing stock to the Victory Housing Trust in 2006/07, the Council provided a number of environmental and non-environmental warranties, guarantees and indemnities to the Trust and its Lenders.

The risks associated with these warranties and indemnities have been assessed following professional advice and where appropriate the Council has, or is making, arrangements to transfer some of the potential risks. Specifically, insurance has been arranged in respect of the environmental warranties. To the extent that claims have to be met some time in the future beyond those covered by the environmental warranty insurance and the pension bond, the Council discloses a contingent liability.

- (b) **Benefits** - There is a risk of potential claw back from the Department of Works and Pensions following the final audit and sign off the year end subsidy claim. To mitigate the impact of any claw back there is an earmarked reserve for which the balance stood at £727k at 31 March 2023.

37. Contingent Assets

In accordance with IAS 37 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities & Contingent Assets the Council has identified the following contingent assets:

- (a) **Freehold Reversions for Shared Equity Dwellings** – The Council has acquired a share in the freehold reversions for shared equity dwellings. The Council does not benefit from any ongoing rental income in relation to these properties and will not realise the equity share unless the properties owners buy the Council out of the agreement. As the value of these properties to the Council is contingent upon this action the assets have not been recognised within the financial statements.

38. Grant Income

The Council credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure accounts in 2023/24.

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
<u>Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income:</u>		
Revenue Support Grant	(290)	(94)
Business Rates	(7,056)	(6,725)
Covid Grants	-	-
New Homes Bonus	(31)	(887)
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(698)	(878)
Council Tax Family Annexe Discount	-	(50)
Capital Grants and Contributions	(4,505)	(2,226)
Council Tax Support New Burdens	-	-
SFC Support grants	-	-
3% Funding Guarantee	(974)	-
Total	(13,554)	(10,860)
<u>Credited to Services:</u>		
DWP - Rent Allowances	-	-
DWP - Admin Subsidy	(79)	(75)
Dept for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy	(27)	(468)
Cabinet Office	-	8
Dept. for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	(28)	(415)
Dept of Health & Social Care	-	(55)
Environment Agency	-	(3)
Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Govt (MHCLG)	(3,388)	(2,321)
Norfolk County Council	(646)	(1,512)
Sport England	(5)	-
Historic England	(14)	(29)
Other Grants & Contributions	(364)	(212)
Total	(5,566)	(5,082)
Total Revenue Grants Received	(19,121)	(15,942)

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

	2023/24	2022/23
	£000	£000
Capital Grant Receipts in Advance		
Disabled Facilities Grant	(1,114)	(1,270)
Cromer West Prom	(50)	(50)
Mundesley cd refurbishment	(839)	(165)
Cromer CP scheme 982	(87)	(158)
Coastwise Grant	(1,410)	(996)
Climate Change Coastal tool	(22)	(21)
Changing places toilets	-	(180)
DLUC - LAHF Fund	(312)	(374)
	(3,834)	(3,214)

Page 140 **39. Financial Instruments**

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

Financial Liabilities	2023/24		2022/23	
	Long Term £000	Current £000	Long Term £000	Current £000
Loans – Principal sum borrowed	-	(11,700)	-	(9,000)
Loans – Accrued interest	-	(95)	-	(53)
Total Borrowing	-	(11,795)	-	(9,053)
Bank Overdraft	-	(6,071)	-	(1,437)
Total Cash Overdrawn	-	(6,071)	-	(1,437)
Trade payables	-	(3,840)	-	(4,080)
Finance leases	-	-	-	-
Included in Creditors	-	(3,840)	-	(4,080)
Total Financial Liabilities	-	(21,706)	-	(14,570)

The debtors and creditors lines on the Balance Sheet include £3,494k short term debtors and £6,395k short term creditors that do not meet the definition of a financial instrument as they are non-exchange transactions.

Financial Assets	2023/24		2022/23	
	Long Term £000	Current £000	Long Term £000	Current £000
Investments at fair value through profit & loss:				
Accrued interest	-	23	-	48
Fair value	19,015	-	22,575	-
Total Investments	19,015	23	22,575	48
Fair value	-	2,024	-	2,854
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	-	2,024	-	2,854
Trade receivables		10,105	-	4,833
Loans made for service purposes	2,322	-	2,042	-
Included in Debtors	2,322	10,105	2,042	4,833
Total Financial Assets	21,337	12,152	24,617	7,735

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Offsetting Financial Assets and Liabilities

Financial assets and liabilities are offset against each other where the Council has a legally enforceable right to offset and it intends either to settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously. The table below shows those instruments that have been offset on the balance sheet. The Council had no other financial assets or liabilities subject to an enforceable master netting arrangement or similar agreement.

	31 March 2024			31 March 2023		
	Assets £000	Liabilities £000	Net balance sheet position £000	Assets £000	Liabilities £000	Net balance sheet position £000
Financial Assets						
Bank accounts in hand	109	(109)	-	117	(117)	-
Financial liabilities						
Bank overdrafts	109	(6,181)	(6,072)	117	(1,554)	(1,437)

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

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

	2023/24				2022/23
	Financial liabilities	Financial Assets			Total
	Amortised Cost	Amortised Cost	Fair Value through Profit & Loss	Total	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Interest expense	441	-	-	441	166
Interest payable and similar charges	441	-	-	441	166
Interest income	-	(69)	(359)	(428)	(228)
Dividend income	-	-	(1,123)	(1,123)	(1,220)
Gains from changes in fair value	-	-	-	-	(124)
Losses from changes in fair value	-	-	244	244	-
Interest and investment income	-	(69)	(1,238)	(1,307)	(1,572)
Net impact on surplus/deficit on provision of services	441	(69)	(1,238)	(866)	(1,406)
Impact on other comprehensive income	-	-	-	-	-
Net (gain)/loss for the year	441	(69)	(1,238)	(866)	(1,406)

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Fair values of Assets and Liabilities

Financial instruments, except those classified at amortised cost, are carried in the Balance Sheet at fair value. For most assets, including bonds, shares in money market funds and other pooled funds, the fair value is taken from the market price.

Financial instruments classified at amortised cost are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair values have been estimated by calculating the net present value of the remaining contractual cash flows at 31 March 2024. The fair value of short-term instruments, including trade payables and receivables, is assumed to approximate to the carrying amount given the low and stable interest rate environment.

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

- Level 1 – fair value is only derived from quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities, e.g. bond prices

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- Level 2 – fair value is calculated from inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability, e.g. interest rates or yields for similar instruments.
- Level 3 – fair value is determined using unobservable inputs, e.g. non-market data such as cash flow forecasts or estimated creditworthiness.

	Balance Sheet 31 March 2024 £000	Fair Value 31 March 2024 £000	Fair Value 31 March 2023 £000
Financial liabilities at amortised cost:			
Liabilities for which fair value is not disclosed	(21,397)	(17,867)	(23,250)
Total Financial Liabilities	(21,397)	(17,867)	(23,250)
Recorded on the balance sheet as:			
Short-term borrowing	(11,795)	(11,795)	(9,053)
Short-term creditors	(3,530)	(3,530)	(12,760)
Bank Overdraft	(6,072)	(6,072)	(1,437)
Total Financial Liabilities	(21,397)	(21,397)	(23,250)

	Fair value level	Balance Sheet 31 March 2024 £000	Fair Value 31 March 2024 £000	Fair Value 31 March 2023 £000
Financial assets held at fair value:				
Money Market Funds	1	2,010	2,010	2,830
Pooled Fund	1	19,017	19,017	22,575
Total		21,027	21,027	25,405
Assets for which fair value is not disclosed		12,464	12,464	12,779
Total financial assets		33,491	33,491	38,184
Recorded on the balance sheet as:				
Long-term investments		19,017	19,017	22,575
Long-term debtors		2,322	2,322	2,042
Short-term investments		23	23	48
Short-term debtors		10,105	10,105	10,665
Cash and Cash equivalents		2,024	2,024	2,854
Total Financial Assets		33,491	33,491	38,184

40. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising From Financial Instruments

The Council complies with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management and Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, both revised in December 2017.

To comply with the Treasury Management Code, the Council approves a Treasury Management Strategy before the commencement of each financial year which sets out the parameters for the management of risks associated with Financial Instruments. The Council also produces Treasury Management Practices specifying the practical arrangements to be followed to manage those risks.

The Treasury Management Strategy includes an Investment Strategy in compliance with Central Government's Investment Guidance to Local Authorities. The guidance defines a prudent investment policy as having the two objectives of security (protecting the capital sum from loss) and then liquidity (keeping adequate funds readily available for expenditure when needed). The Council's Treasury Management Strategy and its Treasury Management Practices seek to achieve a suitable balance between risk and return or cost.

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 unplanned financial loss might arise for the Council as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates, market process etc.

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Credit Risk - Treasury Investments

The Council manages this risk by ensuring that investments are placed with counterparties which have a high credit rating and for the maximum periods and amounts set out in the Treasury Management Strategy.

The security and liquidity of the funds invested are the primary objective of the Council's treasury management activities. The Council selects countries and the institutions within them as suitable counterparties for investment after analysis and careful monitoring of credit ratings and a range of economic indicators and financial information are taken into account.

The table below shows the credit criteria exposures of the Council's investment portfolio by credit rating.

Financial Instruments – Balances by credit risk:

Credit Rating	Long Term 31 March 2024 £000	Short Term 31 March 2024 £000	Long Term 31 March 2023 £000	Short Term 31 March 2023 £000
AAA	-	2,010	1,012	2,830
AA+	-	-	-	-
AA	-	-	-	-
AA-	-	-	-	-
A+	-	-	-	-
A	-	-	-	-
A-	-	-	-	-
Unrated	-	-	-	-
Total	-	2,010	1,012	2,830
Credit Risk not applicable	20,000	-	21,569	-
Total Investments	20,000	2,010	22,581	2,830

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Credit risk is not applicable to shareholdings and pooled funds where the Council has no contractual right to receive any sum of money.

The Council has no historical experience of counterparty default, and the Council does not anticipate any losses from default in relation to any of its current investments. No credit limits were exceeded in the financial year.

None of the above were identified as past due during the year.

Loss allowances on treasury investments have been calculated by reference to historic default data. A delay in cash flows is assumed to arise in the event of a default. Investments are determined to have suffered a significant increase in credit risk where they have been downgraded by three or more credit rating notches or equivalent since initial recognition, unless they retain an investment grade credit rating. They are determined to be credit impaired when awarded a “D” credit rating or equivalent. At 31 March 2024, £0 (2023: £0) of loss allowances related to treasury investments.

Credit Risk – Loans

The Council’s has an exposure to credit risk through a loan to a housing association. This is collateralised by charges secured on residential property which are owned by the housing association. The value of the collateral is greater than 110% of the carrying value of the loan. The Council assessed the credit quality of the housing association prior to advancing the loan and it was satisfactory. The Council managed the credit risk inherent in its loans for service purposes in line with its published Investment Strategy.

Loss allowances on loans for service purposes have been calculated by reference to indicative interest rates adjusted for current economic conditions. They are determined to have suffered a significant increase in credit risk where the counterparty has dropped by two or more rating notches, and the new rating is below investment grade. They are determined to be credit impaired when receiving a “D” indicative rating.

Financial Instruments – Loans:

Loan No.	Description	Exposure Type	Balance Sheet 31 March 2024 £000	Risk Exposure 31 March 2024 £000	Balance Sheet 31 March 2023 £000	Risk Exposure 31 March 2023 £000
LN0001	Broadland Housing Association	Loan at market rates	1,750	1,750	1,885	1,885
LN0002-4	Home for Wells	Loan at market rates	254	254	150	150
			2,004	2,004	2,035	2,035

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Credit Risk - Receivables

In addition to treasury investments, the Council is exposed to credit risk from its customers. However, the Council has put in place appropriate debt recovery procedures to manage this risk and minimise any loss.

The age analysis of trade receivables which are past due date but are not impaired is shown below.

	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2023 £000
Less than three months	159	17
Three months to one year	136	10
More than one year	47	29
	342	56

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. The Council has ready access to borrowing at favourable rates from the Public Works Loan Board and other local authorities, and at higher rates from banks and building societies.

There is no perceived risk that the Council will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments. The Council does not currently have any long-term debt and therefore does not have any maturing liabilities for which funds would be required.

Time to Maturity Years	Liabilities	Assets	Net Assets	Liabilities	Assets	Net Assets
	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2024 £000	31 March 2023 £000	31 March 2023 £000	31 March 2023 £000
Less than 10 years	(6,181)	2,010	(4,171)	(1,554)	2,830	1,276
Over 10 years	-	109	109	-	117	117
No fixed maturity	-	19,016	19,016	-	22,575	22,575
	6,181	21,135	14,954	(1,554)	25,522	23,968

Market risk

Interest rate risk

The Council is exposed to risk in terms of its exposure to interest rate movements on its investments and borrowing. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council. For instance, a rise in interest rates would have the following effect:

- Investments at variable rates – the interest income will rise.
- Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall.
- Borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the liabilities will fall
- Borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense will rise.

Investments measured at amortised cost and loans borrowed are not carried at fair value, so changes in their fair value will have no impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. Movements in fair value of fixed rate investments measured at fair value will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income or the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services as appropriate.

The Treasury Management Strategy aims to mitigate these risks by setting upper limits on its net exposures to fixed and variable interest rates. The money markets and interest rate forecasts are monitored to adjust exposures to fixed and variable rates appropriately. For example, during periods of falling interest rates fixed rate investments may be made for longer periods to secure better returns.

If interest rates had been 1% higher (with all other variables held constant) the financial effect would be £317k (£209k in 2022-23).

Price risk

The market prices of the Council's bond investments and its units in pooled funds are governed by prevailing interest rates and the price risk associated with these instruments is managed alongside interest rate risk. The Council invests in funds with underlying assets in property, equity and bonds. A 1% rise in interest rise will reduce the fair value of pooled funds that invest in bonds by £138k; a 5% fall in the price of equity would result in a £264k fall in fair value and a 5% fall in the price of property would result in a £400k fall. These changes would result in a charge to Profit and Loss but would currently be reversed out to the Pooled Fund Adjustment Account due to the Statutory Override in place. This is a time limited adjustment.

Foreign Exchange Risk

The Council has no financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies and therefore there is no exposure to loss arising from movements in exchange rates.

41. Going Concern

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023-24 (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, made for the going concern period to 31st January 2026 management of the Council have 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:

Date	General Fund	Earmarked reserves
31/03/24	£2.22m	£15.62m

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 or for short periods for cashflow purposes which are both consistent with our plans and normal practice).

The key assumptions within this forecast included;

- Assumptions around spending levels for both revenue and capital purposes;
- Assumptions around internally and locally driven income levels, such as car parking, planning fees and investment returns;

- A council tax increase of £4.95 for a Band D property for both the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24 and council tax income included at the level calculated for the budget for each year.
- Business Rates income included at the level determined in the NNDR1 for both years.
- All known grant income included at the level notified to the Council.

The final Financial Settlement figures for 2024/25 were announced in good time to include in the final Budget reports to full Council each year. So all central government funding figures are now known.

Financial risk management is also routinely considered which is documented within the 2024/25 Cabinet budget papers for the Cabinet meeting on 5 February 2024.

Our cash flow forecasting and assessment of the adequacy of our liquidity position demonstrates positive cash balances for the Council and its subsidiaries throughout the going concern period, and no expectation of any additional external borrowing to fund day to day operations.

Additionally, the general reserves are projected to remain above the minimum level of £2.1 million required in the short-term.

On this basis, the Council is satisfied that it can continue to operate without any financial difficulties, and it has a reasonable expectation that it will have adequate resources to continue in operational existence throughout the going concern period will be able to maintain the provision of its services. For this reason, alongside the statutory guidance, the Council continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing these financial statements.

Collection Fund

	Notes	2023/24 Council Tax £000	2023/24 Business Rates £000	2023/24 Total £000	2022/23 Total £000
Opening Balance (Surplus)/Deficit		(840)	8,667	7,827	11,003
Income:					
Council Tax	4 & 5	(89,079)		(89,079)	(84,413)
Business Rates	2	-	(27,076)	(27,076)	(23,877)
Contributions to Previous Year Estimated Deficit					
- North Norfolk District Council		-	(123)	(123)	(130)
- Norfolk County Council		-	(31)	(31)	(33)
- Central Government		-	(154)	(154)	(163)
- Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner		-	-	-	-
Total Income		(89,079)	(27,384)	(116,463)	(108,616)
Expenditure					
Precepts and Demands:	3				
- North Norfolk District Council		9,598	-	9,598	9,235
- Norfolk County Council		65,435	-	65,435	62,243
- Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner		12,446	-	12,446	11,817
Proportionate Shares:					
- North Norfolk District Council		-	10,391	10,391	8,261
- Norfolk County Council		-	2,597	2,597	2,088
- Central Government		-	12,989	12,989	10,327
Disregarded Amounts:					
- Enterprise Zone Growth		-	345	345	95
- Renewable Energy		-	1,259	1,259	1,138
Distribution of Previous Year Estimated Surplus:	3				
- North Norfolk District Council		16	-	16	-
- Norfolk County Council		73	-	73	-
- Central Government		-	-	-	-

COLLECTION FUND

- Norfolk Police and Crime Commissioner		21	-	21	-
Change in allowance for impairment	7	225	(54)	171	318
Allowance for cost of collection			278	278	271
Appeals Charge to Collection Fund			(326)	(326)	(647)
Change in Provision for appeals			229	229	296
Total Expenditure		87,814	27,708	115,522	105,442
Movement in Collection Fund Balance During Year		(1,265)	324	(941)	(3,174)
Closing Cumulative (Surplus)/Deficit 31 March	6	(2,105)	8,991	(6,886)	7,829

1. General

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 Local Government bodies and Central Government. The Collection Fund is consolidated with the other accounts of the billing authority for Balance Sheet purposes.

2. Income from Business Ratepayers

The Council collects NNDR from ratepayers based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency, multiplied by a uniform Business Rate in the £ set nationally by Central Government. The total rateable value for the District was £126,150,750 on 31 March 2024 (£89,059,924 on 31 March 2023). The national multipliers for 2023/24 were 49.9p for qualifying Small Businesses (49.9p in 2022/23), and the standard multiplier was set at 51.2p for all other businesses (51.2p in 2022/23).

The net income from Business Rate payers was £27.076m (£23.877m in 2022/23) after £2.97m of transitional protection payments due from Central Government. The transitional protection scheme provided protection to ratepayers from large changes in their bills following revaluations of their business by phasing in changes gradually. This meant that a billing authority collected more or less rates than would otherwise be the case, and Government Regulations make provision for adjusting payments to be made to or from billing authorities.

3. Precepts and Demands

	Precept/Demand 2023/24 £000	Collection fund Surplus 2023/24 £000	Net Payment 2023/24 £000	Net Payment 2022/23 £000
North Norfolk District Council	9,597	16	9,613	9,238
Norfolk County Council	65,435	73	65,508	62,267
Norfolk Police & Crime Commissioner	12,446	21	12,467	11,822
	87,478	110	87,588	83,327

4. The Council Tax Base for 2023/24

Therefore each £1 of Council Tax set was calculated to produce income of £41,356 (£41,031 in 2022/23).

Valuation Band	Number of Chargeable Dwellings Adjusted for Discounts		Equivalent Number of Band D dwellings		Equivalent Number of Band D Dwellings adjusted for Non-Collection allowance	
	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23	2023/24	2022/23
A	5,371	5,358	5,298	5,235	5,203	5,156
B	8,793	8,746	8,837	8,769	8,678	8,638
C	9,018	8,983	9,083	9,005	8,920	8,870
D	8,095	8,079	8,171	8,098	8,024	7,977
E	5,593	5,542	5,646	5,570	5,544	5,486
F	3,236	3,195	3,271	3,213	3,212	3,165
G	1,636	1,623	1,660	1,623	1,630	1,599
H	144	143	148	142	145	140
Total Tax Base	41,885	41,669	42,114	41,655	41,356	41,031

5. Band D Tax Rate

For 2023/24, the Council set a Council tax rate of £2,129.18 for a band D dwelling (£1,967.51 in 2022/23). This consisted of; £1,592.64 (£1,516.95 in 2022/23) for Norfolk County Council, £302.94 (£288.00 in 2022/23) for the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Norfolk and £163.62 (£158.67 in 2022/23) for the District's requirements as the District Council Tax was frozen. The average amount of Parish Council Tax was £69.98 (£66.41 in 2022/23). The actual sums for Parish Council ranged from nil to £149.45 (£nil to £149.45 in 2022/23) were charged for parish and town council requirements.

The calculation of the District's Council tax is made by dividing its demand on the Collection Fund by the equivalent number of Band D dwellings in the area (the Tax Base). An adjustment is made to the Tax Base to take into account the anticipated non-collection of amounts due.

Discounts are given for empty and other properties, in respect of students, disabled people, single occupiers and those in receipt of support under the Local Council Tax Support Scheme. Since 2004/05 the Council has implemented the provisions of the Local Government Act 2003 and exercised its discretionary powers to reduce or eliminate discounts on certain empty properties and second homes. Further reforms in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 gave the Council new flexibilities to vary Council tax on second homes and empty dwellings, and to apply a premium on empty properties.

6. Balances

The total balance is attributed as follows:

Share of Balance	31 March 2024			31 March 2023
	Council Tax	Business Rates	Total	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000
North Norfolk District Council	(151)	2,891	2,740	2,447
Norfolk County Council	(642)	883	241	857
Norfolk Police & Crime Commissioner	(120)	-	(120)	2
Central Government	-	3,466	3,466	3,262
	(913)	7,240	6,327	6,568

7. Bad Debt Provision

The Collection Fund account provides for bad debts on arrears based on historical experience of non-payment and the age of debt.

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Glossary of Terms

Accruals

The accounting treatment that requires expenditure and income to be recognised in the period it is incurred or earned, not when the money is actually paid or received.

Amortisation

The process of spreading a cost to revenue over a number of years. For example Intangible Assets are amortised to revenue over their useful life.

Bad Debts

Amounts owed to the Council which are considered unlikely to be recovered. An allowance is made in the accounts for this possibility.

Balance Sheet

The Council's financial position at the year end. It summarises what the respective assets and liabilities are.

Business Rates

Business or National Non-Domestic Rates are collected from occupiers of business properties based upon a rateable value and a nationally set rate. They are collected by each authority and nationally determined proportionate shares are paid to the Government and Norfolk County Council with a share retained by the authority.

Capital Adjustment Account

An account which reflects the difference between the cost of fixed assets consumed and the capital financing set aside to pay for them. The balance represents the balance of capital resources set aside to finance capital expenditure (e.g. capital receipts, revenue contributions) awaiting consumption of resources e.g. from depreciation and impairment.

Capital Expenditure

Spending on the purchase or enhancement of significant assets which have an expected life of over a year - for example major improvements to the Council's housing or construction of a car park.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

The Capital Financing Requirement represents the Council's underlying need to borrow for capital purposes.

Capital Receipts

Money received from the sale of assets. This can be used to finance capital expenditure or repay debt.

Collection Fund

The account which contains all the transactions relating to community charge, council tax and business rates together with the payments to this Council, Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Police Authority to meet their requirements.

Contingent Assets

A Contingent Assets is a possible asset that arises from past events and whose existence will only be confirmed by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control.

Corporate and Democratic Core

Costs relating to the Council's status as a multi-functional, democratic organisation.

Contingent Liabilities

A Contingent Liability is a possible obligation that arises from past events and whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the Council's control.

Deferred Capital Receipts

Representing the amounts that are not available as cash. They arise from Council house sales on mortgage to the Council, and where repayments of principal sums due are received over a number of years.

Depreciation

A measure of the financial effect of wearing out, consumption or other reduction in the useful life of a fixed asset.

Earmarked Reserve

Amounts set aside for a specific purpose to meet future commitments or potential liabilities, for which it is not appropriate to establish provisions.

Financial Instruments

Any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another. The term covers both financial assets and financial liabilities. Examples of financial assets include bank deposits, equity instrument of another entity, e.g. shares, contractual right to receive cash or another financial asset from another entity, such as a trade receivable. Financial liabilities include for example, contractual obligations to deliver cash or another financial asset.

Fixed Assets

Representing, as fixed assets, the value of what the Council owns in terms of property, land etc. and what is owed to the Council in respect of debt.

General Fund

The account which summarises the revenue costs of providing services, which are met by the Council's demand on the Collection Fund.

Impairment

Reduction in the value of a fixed asset below its amount included in the Balance Sheet.

Infrastructure

A classification of fixed assets which have no market value and which exist primarily to facilitate transportation and communication requirements (e.g. roads, street lighting).

Intangible Assets

Intangible Assets are non-financial fixed assets that do not have a physical substance and include for example software licences.

International Accounting Standard 19 (IAS 19)

The requirement for Local Authorities to include the forecast cost of future pensions in the accounts on a notional basis.

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

A set of international accounting standards stating how particular types of transactions and other events should be reported in Financial Statements. IFRS are issued by the International Accounting Standards Board.

Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT)

The process of transferring Council House stock from a local Council to a Registered Social Landlord. North Norfolk District Council transferred its housing stock to North Norfolk Housing Trust in February 2006.

Leasing

A method of acquiring items such as vehicles and computer equipment by payment of a lease charge over a period of years. There are two types of lease.

A finance lease is where the Council effectively pays for the cost of an asset (it counts as Capital expenditure for control purposes and is included on our Balance Sheet). A primary lease period is that period for which the lease is originally taken out and a secondary period relates to any extension.

An operating lease (a long-term hire) is subject to strict criteria and the cost can be charged as a running expense. The item leased must be worth at least 10% of its original value at the end of the lease and does not appear on the Balance Sheet.

Liabilities

This shows what the Council owes for borrowing, payables etc. at the Balance Sheet date.

Minimum Revenue Provision

The minimum amount which must be charged to the revenue account each year and set aside as a provision to meet the rest of credit liabilities for example borrowing

National Non-Domestic Rate (NNDR)

NNDR is set by the Government and collected by each authority and nationally determined proportionate shares are paid to the Government and Norfolk County Council with a share retained by the Council.

Non Distributed Costs

The cost of discretionary benefits awarded to employees retiring early and any depreciation and impairment losses chargeable on non-operational properties.

Payables

Amounts which the Council owes to others for goods and services received before the year end of 31 March but which were not paid until after 1 April.

Precepts

The amount which the Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Police Authority require us to collect, as part of the Council tax, to pay for their services is called a precept. Town and Parish Councils also precept on the District Council to pay for their expenses.

Provisions

An amount set aside for potential liabilities which may arise or will be incurred, where there is uncertainty as to the amounts concerned or the dates on which these liabilities may arise.

Prudential Code

Professional code of practice developed by CIPFA which came into effect from the 1 April 2004 to ensure Local Authorities Capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. 'The code allows authorities to undertake borrowing to finance capital expenditure as long as they can demonstrate affordability.'

Receivables

Sums which at the 31 March are owing to the Council.

Reserves

Accumulated balances built up from excess of income over expenditure or sums that have been specifically identified for a particular purpose which are known as earmarked reserves.

Revaluation Reserve

Net unrealised gains from the revaluation of fixed assets recognised in the balance sheet. Introduced in the 2007 SORP from 1 April 2007.

Revenue Contribution to Capital (or Direct Revenue Financing)

Use of revenue resources to finance capital expenditure.

Revenue Expenditure

The day to day running expenses on the services provided.

Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but does not result in the creation of a fixed asset has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service revenue account in the year.

Revenue Income

Amounts receivable for such items as rents and charges for services and facilities.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

Grant paid by central government to aid Local Council services in general as opposed to specific grants which may only be used for a specific purpose.

Soft Loans

Loans which are made at less than market rates or interest free. A Council will sometimes make soft loans to achieve a policy or service objective. For example an interest free loan to a voluntary organisation to provide upfront funding or car loans to employees.

Support Services

Activities of a professional, technical and administrative nature which are not Local Authority services in their own right, but support main front-line services.

Temporary Loan

Money borrowed on a short-term basis as part of the overall borrowing strategy.

VAT Shelter

A procedure agreed by the MHCLG and HM Revenues and Customs to ensure that following a housing stock transfer there is no impact on taxation. Had the Council retained the housing stock and carried out the necessary works on the properties the VAT would have been reclaimed by the Council, however the Housing Trust are unable to recover the VAT and the VAT shelter arrangement allows the VAT to be recovered and shared between the Council and Victory Housing Trust.

Glossary of Acronyms

CFR	Capital Financing Requirement
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
IAS	International Accounting Standards
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standard
LSVT	Large Scale Voluntary Transfer
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision
NNDC	North Norfolk District Council
REFCUS	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute
RSG	Revenue Support Grant
SERCOP	Service Reporting Code of Practice
SORP	Statement of Recommended Practice
TIC	Tourist Information Centre
UK GAAP	United Kingdom - Generally Accepted Accounting Principles

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