

BOROUGH OF BARROW-IN-FURNESS

AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting: Wednesday, 27th April, 2022
at 10.00 am (Committee Room No.4)

A G E N D A

PART ONE

1. Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members.

2. Urgent Items

To deal with any items which the Chair considers to be of an urgent nature.

3. Delegations

To receive notice from Members who may wish to move any delegated matter non-delegated and which will be decided by a majority of Members present and voting at the meeting.

4. Admission of Public and Press

To consider whether the public and press should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

5. Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations by Members and/or co-optees of interests in respect of items on this Agenda.

Members are reminded that, in accordance with the revised Code of Conduct, they are required to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests or other registrable interests which have not already been declared in the Council's Register of Interests. (It is a criminal offence not to declare a disclosable pecuniary interest either in the Register or at the meeting).

Members may however, also decide, in the interests of clarity and transparency, to declare at this point in the meeting, any such disclosable pecuniary interests which they have already declared in the Register, as well as any other registrable or other interests.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

5 - 12

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 17th March, 2022.

7. Public Participation

Any member of the public who wishes to ask a question, make representations or present a deputation or petition at this meeting should apply to do so by no later than 5pm two working days before the meeting. Information on how to make the application can be obtained by viewing the Council's website www.barrowbc.gov.uk or by contacting the Democratic Services Team at cteadmin@barrowbc.gov.uk or by telephone on 01229 876314.

(1) Questions and Representations

To receive any questions or representations which have been received from Members of the public.

(2) Deputations and Petitions

To receive any deputations or petitions which have been received from members of the public.

FOR DECISION

- | | | |
|------------|--|-----------|
| (D) | 8. Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 | 13 - 36 |
| | To consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 and authorise the Chair of the Committee to sign on behalf of the Council; and | |
| | To publish the Annual Governance Statement on the Council's website with the audited Statement of Accounts. | |
| () | 9. Statement of Accounts 2020-2021 | 37 - 158 |
| | To receive the Statement of Accounts for 2020-2021 | |
| () | 10. Audit Findings Report | 159 - 198 |
| | To receive the Audit Findings Report and raise any questions; and Accept the management responses to the matters raised by the Appointed Auditors | |
| () | 11. Approvals and Letter of Representation | 199 - 202 |
| | To approve the audited accounts and authorise the Chair of the committee to sign the Statement of Accounts for 2020-2021 on behalf of the Council; and | |
| | Approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020-2021 and authorise the Chair of the committee to sign on behalf of the Council; and | |
| | Approve the finalised Letter of Representation and authorise the | |

Director of Resources and the Chairman of the committee to sign on behalf of the Council; and

To publish the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement on the Council's website

- (I) 12. Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022-2023 203 - 206
To consider and agree the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022-23.
- (I) 13. Internal Audit Final Reports 207 - 218
To Note the Internal Audit final reports.
- (D) 14. Annual Report 219 - 228
To consider and endorse the Annual Report.

NOTE (D) – Delegated
(R) – For Referral to Council

Membership of Committee Councillors

Councillors Burns (Chairman)
Assouad (Vice-Chair)
Callister
Hall
Nott
Shirley

For queries regarding this agenda, please contact:

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BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL
AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting Thursday 17th March, 2022
at 2.00 pm. (Banqueting Hall)

PRESENT:- Councillors Burns (Chair), Assouad, Morgan and Seward.

Officers Present:- Susan Roberts (Director of Resources), Debbie Storr (Head of Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer) and Katie Pepper (Democratic and Electoral Services Officer).

Also present:- Matt Derrick from Grant Thornton.

39 – Apologies for Absence/Attendance of Substitute Members

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Callister and Nott.

Councillors Morgan and Seward had attended as substitutes for this meeting only.

40 – Delegations

Referring to Agenda Item No.11 the Chairman moved that the matter be a delegated decision.

41 – Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th December, 2022 were taken as read and confirmed.

42 – Public Participation

RESOLVED:- To note that no questions, representations, deputations or petitions had been received in respect of the meeting.

43 – Audit and Governance Committee Work Plan

The Director of Resources submitted a report outlining the Audit and Governance Work Plan for 2021-2022, a copy of which had been appended to the report. The Work Plan sets out the business of the Audit and Governance Committee to provide a forward plan and to demonstrate that the terms of reference had been covered.

There had been several revisions, many of which had been driven by the annual audit which was ongoing and not yet concluded:

3. Internal Audit Annual Plan
6. Annual Audit Letter
6. Certification of Grants
8. External Audit Annual Plan

- 17. Annual Governance Statement
- 20. Statement of Accounts
- 20. Letter of Representation
- 21. Audit Findings Report
- 28. Annual Report of the Committee

An additional Audit and Governance Committee would be scheduled to receive the closure of the annual audit.

Item 18 was not on the agenda as there were no actions to report.

RESOLVED:- To note the Work Plan for 2021-2022.

44 – Internal Audit Final Report

The Head of Internal Audit reported that Internal Audit performed audits in accordance with the approved Annual Plan which was based on a risk assessment of the internal control environment. On completion, the final reports were presented to this Committee for consideration.

There had been three final reports appended for consideration, as follows:-

21-27 Recruitment – Restricted Assurance. This report contained one important issue and five previous recommendations.

21-03 Council Tax and Council Tax Support – Substantial Assurance. This report contained one important issue and six previous recommendations.

21-04 Business Rates (NNDR) – Substantial Assurance. This report contained one important issue and three previous recommendations.

21-12 Car Park Meter Income – Substantial Assurance. This report contained one important issue, one minor issue and three previous recommendations.

21-14 Accounts Receivable – Restricted Assurance. This report contained one major issue, two important issues, one minor issue and four previous recommendations.

21-18 Accounts Payable – Substantial Assurance. This report contained one important issue and four previous recommendations.

All recommendations had been accepted by management unless otherwise stated.

RESOLVED:- To note the Internal Audit Final reports.

45 – Internal Audit Progress Report

The Head of Internal Audit presented the Internal Audit Progress Report for the period 1st April, 2021 to 4th March, 2022.

20 recommendations had been fully accepted and one recommendation partly accepted. Each of the recommendations had been assigned a Priority Grade 1-3, 1 being major issues and 3 being minor issues. Two had been rated Priority 3, fifteen had been rated Priority 2 and three had been rated Priority 1.

There had been one Priority 1 recommendation since the previous Committee.

RESOLVED:- To Note the Internal Audit Progress Report.

46 – Relocation Policy

The Head of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer presented the revised relocation policy which had been presented to Executive Committee on 9th February, 2022.

Following recent internal audit reports, Audit and Governance requested a policy review to ensure that the relocation policy was fit for purpose.

The Monitoring Officer had looked at best practice elsewhere and the revised document had been attached to the agenda. This had been presented to Executive Committee and adopted at its meeting on 9th February, 2022.

RESOLVED:- To Note the revised Relocation Policy.

47 – Audit Progress Report and Sector Update

The External Auditors had produced a Progress Report and Sector Update report to Members. The report provided the Committee with details of the Auditors progress in delivering their responsibilities as External Auditors. This also included a summary of emerging national issues and developments that may be relevant to the Council as well as a number of challenge questions in respect of those emerging issues which the Committee may wish to consider.

A table of progress as at March 2022 had been presented as follows:-

2020/21 Deliverables	Planned Date	Status
Audit Plan		
We are required to issue a detailed accounts audit plan to the Audit Committee setting out our proposed approach in order to give an opinion on the Council's 2020-21 financial statements and the Auditors Annual Report on the Authority's Value for Money arrangements.	September 2021	Complete
Audit Findings Report		
The Audit Findings Report will be reported to the Audit Committee.	April 2022	Not Due Yet

Auditors Report

This includes the opinion on your financial statements	April 2022	Not Due Yet
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Auditors Annual Report

This Report communicates the key issues arising from our Value for Money Work.	July 2022	Not Due Yet
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2021/22 Deliverables	Planned Date	Status
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Audit Plan

We are required to issue a detailed audit plan to the Audit Committee setting out our proposed approach in order to give an opinion on the authority's 2021/22 financial Statements.	November 2022	Not Due Yet
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Audit Findings (ISA260) Report

The Audit Findings Report will be reported to the November Audit Committee.	November 2022	Not Due Yet
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Auditor's Annual Report

The Key output from local audit work on arrangements to secure VFM is an annual commentary on arrangements, Which will be published as part of the Auditors Annual Report	November 2022	Not Due Yet
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Auditors Report

This will include our opinion on your financial statements and our other reporting requirements, as set out in 'The auditors Statutory responsibilities' section of this report.	November 2022	Not Due Yet
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RESOLVED:- To receive the External Auditor's report.

48 – Procurement Review – Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

The Head of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer presented the Procurement Review.

The review was to consider revisions to the financial regulations and contract standing orders to be incorporated into the annual review of the Constitution. It was intended that these would help strengthen arrangements around procurement processes and provide assurance to members that work was ongoing to ensure audit concerns were being addressed, and that value for money was being obtained.

There were some specific amendments to reflect the creation of the Council's wholly owned company Barrow Forward Limited.

RESOLVED:-

1. To note the Outcome of the Procurement Review; and
2. Approve the revisions to the financial regulations and contract standing orders and recommend to Council for adoption to take effect from 1 April 2022.

49 – Risk Management

The Director of Resources reported that the Risk Registers were submitted to the Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis to ensure they remained up to date and relevant.

The current Risk Registers were to be published on the Council's website.

The Operational and Corporate Risk Registers had been attached as appendices to the report.

RESOLVED:- To note the Risk Management Report

50 – Anti-fraud Policies

The Director of Resources reported that as part of the Policy Framework, the Council had Anti-Fraud policies:

- Anti-Fraud, Theft, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Response Plan;
- Whistleblowing Policy

These documents had been reviewed and there had been minor changes to reflect the Contract Standing Order updates and terminology.

The Anti-Fraud, Theft, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Response Plan set out the Council's commitment to the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. It outlined the responsibilities of staff, Members and management and set out the procedures to be followed where suspicion of financial or other irregularity was raised.

The Whistleblowing Policy applied to all staff, Members and those contractors working for the Council and on their premises. The Policy set out the Council's expectation that serious concerns were raised.

The Anti-Fraud, Theft, Bribery and Corruption Strategy and Response Plan had been published on the Council's website, and the Whistleblowing Policy had been published on the Intranet.

A reminder of the purpose and importance of the Anti-Fraud Policies would be sent to staff and Members.

RESOLVED:- To note the Anti-fraud Policies Review.

51 – Code of Corporate Governance

The Head of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer reported that the Council produced a Code of Corporate Governance which was reviewed on an annual basis. Guidance for preparing the Code was provided by the Chartered Institute for Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

CIPFA revised the framework for good governance in the public sector based on the International Framework, Good Governance in the Public Sector.

The framework was designed as a reference document for those who developed governance codes for the public sector when updating and reviewing their own codes. The framework provided a shared understanding of what constituted good governance in the public sector.

Although the core principles had not changed there had been some improvements that have been introduced in the last year which were highlighted in the appendix.

RESOLVED:- To endorse the Code of Corporate Governance as attached to the report.

52 – Review of Audit and Governance Committee Effectiveness

The Director of Resources reported that a review of the Audit and Governance Committee effectiveness had been undertaken. The review had been based upon the CIPFA Toolkit for Local Authority Audit Committees.

The completed checklist had been attached as an appendix to the report.

There were no issues or actions arising and Members of the Audit and Governance Committee had been recommended to endorse the review.

RESOLVED:- To endorse the Review of Effectiveness.

53 – Going Concern

The Director of Resources reported that the Council was required to assess and determine that it was appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. The review should take account of all available information about the future, which was at least, but not limited to the next twelve months from the end of the reporting period.

The accounts of the Council for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 would be prepared on a going concern basis. This basis assumed that the Council would be able to realise its assets and liabilities in the normal course of business and that it would continue in business for the foreseeable future.

Management Team considered the significant factors and determined that the going concern concept did apply to the Council.

The accounts for 2020-2021 were currently subject to audit and the 2020-2021 going concern assessment had been updated to reflect the developments of Local Government Reorganisation that had been enacted since the original assessment was made.

RESOLVED:-

1. To endorse the going concern assessment for the preparation of the 2021-2022 accounts; and
2. Endorse the revised going concern assessment applicable to the 2020-2021 accounts.

54 – Accounting Policies

The Director of Resources reported that she was responsible for the preparation of the authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LAASAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code).

In preparing the Statement of Accounts, the Director of Resources was responsible for selecting suitable accounting policies, applying those consistently and complying with the code.

The accounting policies had been reviewed to ensure that they remained relevant, current and reflected best practice.

RESOLVED:- To approve the accounting policies for the preparation of the Accounts for 2021-2022.

The meeting closed at 2.44 p.m.

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PART ONE

Barrow Borough Council
Audit Committee and Governance
27 April 2022
Annual Governance Statement 2020/21

Report from: Head of Legal and Governance

Report Author: Head of Legal and Governance

Wards: All

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

1.1 The Council has responsibility for ensuring that Council business is conducted with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for. Part of this governance process is the preparation and publication of an Annual Governance Statement which is a self assessment of how effective we consider our governance arrangements to be.

2.0 Recommendation

Members are requested to

- (1) consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020/21 and authorise the Chair of the Committee to sign on behalf of the Council after considering the audit findings report; and**
- (2) to publish the Annual Governance Statement on the Council's website with the audited Statement of Accounts.**

3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 The draft Annual Governance Statement was presented to Members at the July 2021 Committee inviting any feedback following a review which had been undertaken by Management Team involving the following Officers

- Chief Executive - Head of Paid Services
- Director of Resources - S151 Officer
- Director of People and Place
- Assistant Director - Housing
- Head of Legal and Governance - Monitoring Officer
- Head of Internal Audit

The Council has assessed itself against the principles of good governance that are defined in the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

3.2 Following incorporation of further feedback received, the Annual Governance Statement is now presented for final approval and sign off by the Chair of this Committee on behalf of the Council.

4.0 Consultation

Audit and Governance Committee were consulted through its meeting in August 2021.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options but Members are encouraged to raise any questions.

6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities

6.1 Good governance underpins the Council Plan priorities and supports its objectives.

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report.

Legal

7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity

7.3 There are no equality or diversity implications related to this report.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Annual Governance Statement not published	Reputational risk Impact on closing of accounts	Plan and timetable Liaison with appointed auditors

Contact Officers

dstorr@barrowbc.gov.uk

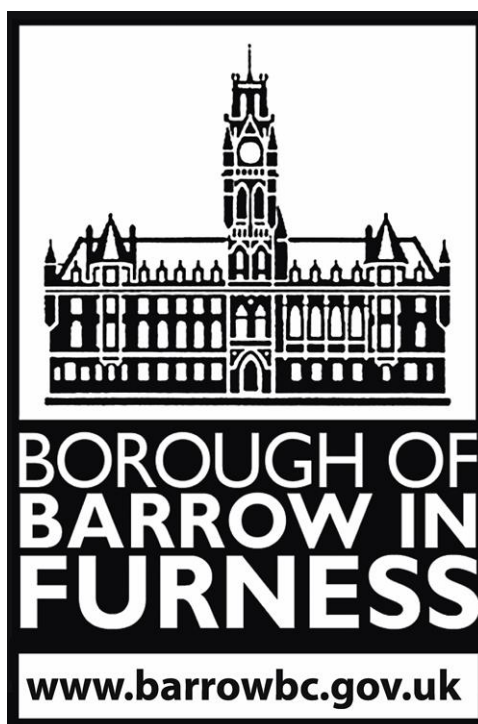
Appendices Attached to this Report – *If none, please state none or delete section*

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Annual Governance Statement

Background Documents Available

Name of Background document	Where it is available
Previous Annual Governance Statements and reports to Committee	www.barrowbc.gov.uk

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Version Control:	
Document Name:	Annual Governance Statement 2021
Version:	Version 1.1
Author:	Corporate Support Manager/Head of Legal and Governance
Approved by:	Audit and Governance Committee
Date Approved:	
Review Date:	July 2022

Annual Governance Statement 2020-2021

1. Scope and Responsibility

Barrow Borough Council is responsible for delivering a wide range of statutory and discretionary services to the public and organisations in the area of the Borough. The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council has put in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs and facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

2. Governance

Governance comprises the arrangements put in place to ensure that the intended outcomes for stakeholders are defined and achieved.

3. The Council's Governance Framework

Effective governance in the public sector encourages improved decision making and efficient use of resources. Effective governance is characterised by robust scrutiny, which provides important pressures for improving public sector performance and tackling corruption. Effective governance can improve management and lead to better service delivery, and, ultimately, better outcomes.

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes for the direction and control of the Council and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable and proportionate level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Barrow Borough Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The Principles of Good Governance and the Governance Framework is aligned to the CIPFA/SOLACE framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government which sets out seven core principles of good governance, these are:

A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating a strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.

- The Council's constitution defines the roles and responsibilities of the Council's decision making, regulatory, Audit and Governance and Overview and Scrutiny committees. It also defines the roles of the statutory officers and includes the delegations that officers hold.
- Members and officers have an induction which set includes the behaviours that are expected.
- The Council's values and behaviours was rolled out to all staff and Members during 2020-21.
- A fraud hotline is in place to allow confidential reporting so that anonymous complaints can be investigated.

B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

- There is a process for consultation in place and a number of consultations were carried out in 2020/21.
- The Council has engaged a Social Media and Public Relations provider to positively project the Barrow Borough Council brand and attain a stronger reach to customers. This will be developed through a revised Communications Strategy
- The Council is developing its website to provide a key means of communication in an open and transparent way.
- We provide clear recommendations to the decision making committees, this is by supported reasoning and evidence. We assess the financial, legal, health, social, economic environmental and implications as well risks relating to those decisions and provide Members with the outputs from those assessments.

C. Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits.

- The Council published its council plan for 2020- 2024 and has identified three priority areas.
- We are developing service plans to ensure we deliver the priorities agreed in the Council Plan
- The Council was successful in applying for Town Deal funding for regeneration.

- The Council has developed ambitious plans to regenerate part of Barrow town centre and submitted to the Government's Levelling Up Fund.

D. Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of intended outcomes.

- The Medium Term Financial Strategy is reviewed annually
- The Council is developing service plans to ensure we deliver the priorities agreed in the Council Plan
- The Council supports and encourages staff to undertake professional training.
- The Council has an effective Member training programme in place
- Staff have regular briefings with senior management.

E. Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.

- The Council has a risk policy which is reviewed regularly by Management Team and is approved by the Executive Committee.
- The Council has corporate and operational risk registers which are reviewed regularly by Management Team and the Audit and Governance Committee.

F. Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.

- The Audit and Governance Committee has defined roles which are set out in the Council's Constitution.
- External auditors routinely attend Audit and Governance Committee meetings.
- The Head of Internal Audit has access to the Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- Members are asked to declare any interests at the beginning of every committee meeting.

4. Review of Effectiveness

Barrow Borough Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the senior managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the Head of Internal Audit's annual report, and also by comments made by the appointed auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

A Management Team consisting of the following Officers were involved in reviewing this Annual Governance Statement:

- Chief Executive - Head of Paid Service
- Director of Resources – Section 151 Officer
- Director of People and Place
- Assistant Director - Housing
- Head of Legal and Governance - Monitoring Officer
- Head of Internal Audit

The Council has assessed itself against the principles of good governance that are defined in the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

In order to demonstrate that the existing governance and control arrangements are fit for purpose and are complied with, Corporate Support undertake reviews of individual departments.

To support the self-assessment, we reviewed the source documents recommended in the CIPFA guidance schedule and identified additional evidence to demonstrate compliance with the supporting principals of good governance.

In 2020 the Council invited the Local Government Association to undertake a Corporate Peer review and has developed plans to deliver the recommendations from the review.

5. The Constitution

The Borough of Barrow-in-Furness has updated and agreed a [Constitution](#) which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures, which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

Some of these processes are required by the law, while others are a matter for the Council to choose and set out the basic rules governing the Council's business.

The Constitution is regularly reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose. The review in 2020 considered delegation and procedural arrangements and also had regard to the recommendations of the Local Government Association Governance Review. Changes have also been made to address the implications brought about by the Coronavirus Pandemic, e.g., virtual meetings, when decision making was further reviewed and a Virtual Meetings Rules and Protocol was adopted.

The Monitoring Officer undertakes an annual review, and this was last reported to Council in March 2022. This report considered changes to the

contract standing orders and financial regulations following the recent procurement review.

The Constitution sets out the Council's ethical standards for Elected Members and Officers.

We have reviewed and adopted formal codes of conduct defining standards of personal behaviour for Members and Officers. The Monitoring Officer monitors compliance with the Member's code of conduct. The Members code was reviewed in September 2020 taking account of best practice recommendations arising from the Committee on Standards in Public Life following their report on Local Government Ethical Standards which was published in January 2019. Revised Standards Arrangements were also adopted in March 2021. The Code was further updated in January 2022 following the LGA model Code and consideration by the Cumbria Monitoring Officers Group for a consistent code for the Cumbrian principal authorities.

The Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the officer's code of conduct.

We have put in place effective systems to protect the rights of staff. We ensure that policies for whistleblowing are accessible to staff and those contracting with the Council, and arrangements for the support of whistleblowers, are in place.

The Constitution includes the Council's Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, committee structure, delegation powers and how the Council operates.

The Section 151 Officer is responsible to the Council for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on all financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal control.

The Council takes a longer-term view and publishes plans so the public are aware of our intended outcomes. This information can be found published in documents including the Council's Priorities and the Council Plan.

The Council has prepared and published a plan which sets out the Council's priorities and a Medium Term Financial Plan which is a financial representation of the Council's Vision and supports the priorities.

The Council will enable the Chief Financial Officer to bring influence to bear on all material decisions and provide advice on the levels of reserves and balances to be retained. The Chief Financial Officer has responsibility for ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful.

6. Decision Making Process

The [Council Plan](#) is a strategic document under which the Council's other policy framework documents sit. It communicates the Council's Vision which specifies intended outcomes for the period from 2020-2024. The plan details how the Council will achieve the priorities. The Council plan will be supported by service plans which reflect the Council's priorities.

Unless delegated to Officers, Council decisions are made by a Committee acting under delegated powers or by Full Council. All meetings are open to the public unless exempt information is being discussed and we attempt to publish all committee agenda items under "Part 1" unless there is the need to preserve confidentiality where it is proper and appropriate to do so.

The Council will develop and retain a management structure that provides leadership and creates the opportunity for staff to work effectively and efficiently to achieve the Council objectives. We will provide training and support to enable staff to develop their skills so they can achieve their full potential. We will develop skills on a continuing basis to improve performance, including the ability to scrutinise and challenge and to recognise when external expert advice is needed. We will ensure that the statutory officers have the skills, resources and support necessary to perform effectively in their roles and that these roles are properly understood throughout the Council.

Members are provided with financial and performance reports on a regular basis which demonstrates how the Council achieves value for money.

Agendas, reports and minutes for all Council meetings are published on the Council's website. [Committee Reports and Minutes](#)

7. Customer Engagement

We strive to engage with stakeholders on an individual and collective basis to demonstrate that we deliver services and outcomes which meet the needs and expectations of the public. These arrangements will recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish robust processes for dealing with these competing demands.

Barrow Borough Council welcomes and encourages attendance and contributions by the public at its meetings. Public participation guidelines were agreed by Council in June 2020 as part of the Council's commitment to community governance and openness.

The Council has recently developed an ambitious customer service strategy which defines how we will engage with customers and other stakeholders and involve them in improving our services.

8. Partnership Working

The Council participates in formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes to be achieved more effectively. The Council is actively involved in partnership boards that deliver key improvements to the Borough.

We contribute to and support initiatives that benefit the residents and businesses in the Borough. We ensure that partnerships are based on trust, a shared commitment to change and a culture that promotes and accepts challenge among partners.

When supporting stakeholder relationships, we are clear about the Terms of Reference and clearly define our role. Our arrangements will recognise that different sections of the community have different priorities and establish robust processes for dealing with these competing demands.

9. Managing Risk

The Council recognises that risk management is an integral part of all activities and must be considered in all aspects of decision making. We have risk management arrangements in place including mitigating actions to support the achievement of the Council's intended outcomes. We work with our contractors to understand our shared risks. We ensure that risk management is embedded into the culture of the Council, with Members and managers at all levels recognising that risk management is part of their job.

10. Managing Performance

The Council's performance management arrangements outline the approach taken to recovery planning and service performance. Heads of Service monitor performance at a detailed level as a management tool. Certain indicators are shared with the relevant Director, and some are reported to the Senior Management Team on an ongoing basis; complaints and absence management are standard; others are reported by exception. The key performance indicators are included in the annual Statement of Accounts Narrative Report to provide context against the financial outturn. The published annual service performance is presented to the Executive Committee as part of the outturn reporting, and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to inform their work programme. The outcomes and progress against the Council Plan is reported as the Growing Forward report at least once a year, plus the progress on major projects is presented at the Major Projects Advisory Board and Brilliant Barrow (Town Deal) Board quarterly.

The Council produces a number of strategies and policies to ensure we comply with our responsibilities in terms of Use of Resources and Value for Money; these are published on the Council's website. [Corporate Documents](#)

11. Managing Data

The Council undertook a review of data management in preparation for the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation which has delivered improvements to internal controls to facilitate compliance with the regulation.

The Council has made significant investment in the IT infrastructure to minimise the loss of data through cyber attacks.

12. Governance Arrangements and Internal Control

We maintain the Audit and Governance Committee to raise awareness and take the lead in ensuring high standards of conduct are embedded within the Council's culture. The governance function of the Audit and Governance Committee includes:

- Consider reports and opinion of the internal audit function.
- Consider specific reports from internal audit and ensure agreed recommendations are implemented in a reasonable time frame.
- Consider reports and opinion of the appointed auditor.
- Monitor the risk management process.
- Monitor the Councils policies on the anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategy which are detailed in the Code of Governance.

Additional corporate assurance arrangements for 2020/21 include:

A review of the terms of reference of the Audit Committee was undertaken early in 2020 following which the name of the Committee was changed to Audit and Governance Committee to reflect the incorporation of the standards and governance arrangements and the terms of reference amended to reflect these and the delegations to the Monitoring Officer.

The Council publishes an Annual Governance Statement, signed by the Chief Executive and the Chair of the Audit Committee to confirm that they are satisfied that we have effective governance arrangements in place.

13. Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council operates with a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee which can challenge a decision by the Executive Committee prior to it being implemented. It has a remit, which allows them to assist the Council and the Executive in the development of its budget and policy framework.

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are offered formal training by an external provider.

14. Internal Audit

The internal audit function develops an annual audit plan which is risk based and it is agreed by the Director of Resources and the Audit and Governance Committee. The audit plan provides a structured approach to reviewing internal control arrangements.

Based on the Plan, Internal Audit provides specific reports and recommendations. It also provides an Annual Report on the internal control arrangements which includes an audit opinion in support of the Council's Annual Governance Statement as required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The opinion is derived from work carried out by Internal Audit during the year as part of the agreed Internal Audit Plan.

15. Internal Control Environment

Internal controls are designed to help safeguard the Council and minimise risks to delivery. The controls exist to ensure accuracy, promote efficiency, and encourage adherence to policies, rules, regulations, and laws.

Collectively the internal controls form an environment that is independently assessed by the Internal Audit function. The Head of Internal Audit is required to issue an independent opinion of the Council's internal controls as part of the Annual Report.

The opinion for the financial year 2020-2021 is extracted from the published Internal Audit Annual Report and is presented in **Section 16**.

An Action Plan is presented in **Section 17** to address the concerns identified from the Internal Audit reports issued in relation to 2020-2021.

16. Head of Internal Audit Annual Opinion Statement

This opinion statement is provided in support of the Council's Annual Governance Statement as required under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.

The opinion is derived from work carried out by Internal Audit during the year as part of the agreed Internal Audit Plan. The Plan for 2019/20 was developed to primarily provide management with independent assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the internal control environment.

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards state that the internal control environment comprises three key areas: internal control, governance and risk management processes. My opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control environment is based on an assessment of each of these key areas.

As referred to above, there is a requirement for the "system of Internal Control" to include an assessment of sources of assurance, beyond just that

of Internal Audit itself. As the Council is required to produce an Annual Governance Statement, sources of assurance are reflected and reviewed within this process, which Internal Audit are a part of; therefore, the control environment is reviewed more fully in this way.

2020/21 Year Opinion

This report cannot provide reasonable assurance that the organisation’s framework of governance, risk management and control predominantly operated satisfactorily during 2020/21 due to the restrictions and limitations of the coronavirus pandemic. Conversely, I do not have evidence to confirm significant deviation from the control arrangements occurred.

My detailed opinion is that, for the minimal systems reviewed, the Council has reasonable systems of control in place, although there are significant weaknesses which put some of the system objectives at risk.

There are, however, areas where only Restricted Assurance can be provided, which relate to the following final reports:

- Covid Risk Assessment – Post Assurance Review (Draft);
- IT Procedures Review.

Weaknesses found as a result of our work, together with our recommendations for improvement, have been included in our reports to senior management and Members. Additionally, any weaknesses identified through the Annual Governance Statement process are recorded separately and reflect the assurance provided from all sources both internal and external.

Co-operation

The successful achievement of the audit plan is dependent on the contribution of the Internal Audit resource and the Council’s staff as audit clients. I would like to record my appreciation for the involvement and commitment of staff, and for their critical appraisal of our recommendations during the year. I would also like to acknowledge the support shown by the Audit and Governance Committee in the delivery of our Plan.

17. Action plan

Head of Internal Audit’s opinion statement for 2020/21 identified a number of weaknesses in the documentation of IT procedures. The Council has taken action to address these recommendations:

Recommendation	Completed
The Council should accelerate the completion of the development of a coherent and managed suite of policies that form part of an overarching Information Security Management System.	31 December 2021
The Council should ensure that all policies undergo the	31 December

Recommendation	Completed
appropriate approval process to ensure it is fit for purpose and is regularly reviewed.	2021
The Council should introduce a suitable review and/or approval process for procedural documentation to ensure the guidance is appropriate for the user and follows best practice.	31 December 2021
The Council should ensure that areas for which there are currently no policy or procedures, are incorporated within the documentation set.	31 December 2021
The Council should ensure all policies are compliant with the Council's Document Control Policy using the standard format.	31 December 2021
The Council should create and implement a standard format for procedural documentation to ensure all appropriate information is captured.	31 December 2021
The Council should present policies and procedures to staff in a user friendly and accessible way as part of a policy and procedure communication plan.	31 December 2021

The responsible officer for completing the actions was the IT Manager.

The Director of Resources has retained the services of an IT Expert/Specialist to provide resource and support to the IT Team with projects, strategic advice and to close off these procedural/documentation matters.

The overall IT Security Policy was presented to the Executive Committee on 15 December 2021 and the sub-policies (protocols) reviewed to provide a common review point. The report to the Executive Committee clarified the status of the IT policies, protocols and procedures to ensure that the approvals under officer delegation or by committee are clear.

The COVID-19 audit report and management response has been finalised.

The actions identified from previous Internal Audit Annual Reports are included as **Appendix 1**.

18. Impacts of COVID-19

As lockdown measures were introduced across the country, the authority adjusted to the significant disruption to staffing across services and functions.

The business continuity plans were implemented and reviewed to ensure that essential services continued to be delivered to our residents. A number of measures were quickly introduced to ensure the safety of staff, Members and customers, whilst maintaining service delivery; buildings were closed to the public, agile and flexible ways of working were introduced, virtual meetings were set up and social distancing and health and safety measures were established.

The Local Authority and Police and Crime Commissioner elections were postponed under the Coronavirus Act 2020 and took place in May 2021.

Following regulations made under the Coronavirus Act 2020 the May 2020 Annual Council meeting was cancelled and appointments carried forward until the next Annual Meeting. Arrangements were put in place for all committee meetings to be held remotely and live streamed.

The Annual Meeting for 2021 was brought forward to April to enable it to be held remotely whilst regulations still permitted. Since the 7 May 2021 arrangements have been made for a return to meetings in a physical venue adhering to COVID-19 requirements.

The Chief Executive has delegated powers to take such action on behalf of the Council as appears to them necessary in circumstances that prevent obtaining the necessary authority from an appropriate committee following consultation with the Leader of the Council, as set out in the Council's constitution.

In order to deliver the local authority elements of the national COVID-19 support package of business grants, business rate reliefs and hardship relief, it was necessary to temporarily reassign resources and defer other priorities to ensure an effective response was achieved. The new powers from Coronavirus legislation were implemented by the Council. More details of the authority's response can be found in the Growing Forward reports presented to the Executive Committee in July 2020 and March 2021.

The majority of Council services have continued throughout although some services were suspended for a short period e.g., green waste collection and bulky waste collection. Additional waste collections were provided to minimise fly tipping while the Household Waste Recycling Centres were closed.

Car parking enforcement, leisure and cultural services were affected resulting in additional expenditure and a loss of income to be met from the COVID-19 emergency funding and sales, fees and charges compensation.

The Council actively supported the county wide strategic co-ordination group.

The Council actively supported the community resilience group's approach to outbreak management by delivering track and trace.

19. Governance and Assurance Summary

The Council uses its Annual Governance Statement to demonstrate that it has sound decision making processes in place and governance arrangements that are fit for purpose.

The assurance reports received from the Head of Internal Audit provide a useful indicator of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements. His opinion is that the Council has basically sound systems of control in place, although there are weaknesses which put some of the system objectives at risk.

The Council accepts this opinion and has put additional arrangements in place to further improve and enhance our governance arrangements.

These include a comprehensive review of the Council's constitution which clarified and affirmed the extent of officer delegation. We have strengthened the Senior Management Team by appointing a Director of People and Place and a Head of Legal and Governance. We have appointed external consultants to support the Council in delivering major projects and service improvements.

We are engaging with other Local Authorities and the private sector to deliver a project management approach to contract tendering.

The Council has undergone a significant staff restructure which will strengthen governance.

Draft

Certification Statement

The review of the governance arrangements for the financial year 2020/21 has not highlighted any areas of major concern for the Council. We believe that the existing arrangements are fit for purpose and are adequate to meet the Council's corporate aims.

Councillor Mrs A Burns
Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee

S Plum
Chief Executive

Draft

Actions Raised from 2019-2020

The Head of internal Audit’s opinion statement for 2019/20 identified a number of weaknesses in internal control. The Council produced an action plan to address these issues:

Audit Area	Action	Officer - Completion
Contracts: Maritime Streets Landscaping Design; Cavendish Park changing rooms; Refuse Collection, Recycling and Street Cleaning 2017-2024; Maritime Streets Landscaping Works	The Contract Management Checklist will be replaced by a project management approach to ensuring that all documentation is in place at each stage of future contract processes. The Council has engaged external support from another Local Authority and the private sector to deliver training and provide guidance to ensure this is delivered effectively.	Management Team - Training sessions by an external provider were rolled out to Management Group. The Council is continuing to develop its project management approach. Complete
	The project Management approach will involve robust cost analysis prior to the start of the contract. There will be regular update meetings with the project team to address significant deviation from the initial costs.	Project Teams - On-going throughout the project. Oversight of Corporate Programme Board. Complete
Procurement	A new contract is being prepared for seasonal baskets but this was not completed by the December 31 st implementation date because the resource was diverted to other activities. This has been extended for another season to allow planting for the spring/summer baskets and summer barrier baskets until the end of September. This was approved by the Executive Committee in November 2020.	Head of Operational Services – On-going

Audit Area	Action	Officer - Completion
	Grounds Maintenance - this was extended and now includes playgrounds. The extension was signed in 2019 until 31 st May 2024.	Head of Operational Services – Complete
	The Public Conveniences and Stairwell cleansing was retendered in 2020 and awarded for two years.	Director of People and Place – Complete
	The catering contract has been subject to a number of reviews, partly because the impact of Covid on the hospitality industry. A new catering contract has now been completed.	Director of People and Place – Complete
	Establish a service driven contract monitoring group to ensure contracts including formally extending contracts and retendering managed in line with the Council’s Contract Standing orders.	Heads of Service – by exception performance and other contractual matters will be raised with the Corporate Programme Board - Complete
Leasing arrangements	The lease arrangements for Phoenix Business Centre are under consideration	Commercial Estate Manager - The Council is currently trying to resolve outstanding issues
	The lease on the Lawson Street property is currently being renewed on a full rental basis rather than shared income. It is deemed that the new lease does not require an auditing clause.	Commercial Estate Manager - Complete

Actions Raised from 2018-2019

The Head of internal Audit’s opinion statement for 2018/19 identified a number of weaknesses in internal control. The Council produced an action plan to address these issues:

Audit Area	Action	Officer – Completion
Market Hall	Improve the administration and management of stalls and leasing in Barrow Market.	<p>Market Supervisor - Most recommendations have been implemented and this is substantially complete. Updates on the recommendations relating to the important issues are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overtime levels are managed and monitored by Finance. ○ Traders are regularly reminded and insurance certificates are checked where possible. ○ Tenancy agreements are signed. ○ Arrears: Arrears over £500 are challenged ○ Cash: Storage arrangements have been improved. ○ H&S: The Market Supervisor is responsible and is supported by the Council’s H&S adviser. ○ The minor issues have been resolved including: ○ Website being is updated regularly. ○ Arrangements in place for petty cash. ○ Procedures and trader pack are updated as required. ○ Fire alarms and lighting are tested routinely. ○ Arrangements for casual stall holders and guidelines in place for trading space.

Audit Area	Action	Officer – Completion
Recruitment	Review recruitment policy and ensure interviews are held in compliance with the policy. Review current grading structure.	<p>HR Manager/Management Team - The recommendations relating to the minor issues have been addressed. Updates on the recommendations relating to the major issues are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The review of the recruitment policy is complete and new arrangements are in place. The policy is being updated for publication. ○ New arrangements are in place for high level posts. ○ Arrangements are in place for assessing qualifications and grades and shortlisting consistently. Training as been provided to support this. <p>Updates on the recommendations relating to the important issues are detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure: ○ Post approval pre recruitment, ○ number of officers for selection and interviews, ○ use of a formal checklist ○ Retention of interview scoresheets, ○ Redeployment, ○ Appropriate criteria identified in the person specification, ○ Monitoring of Interview questions.
Playing fields	Review arrangements for maintaining playing fields	Assistant Director Community Services - This review is complete, and appointment of alternative service provision is in progress.

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PART ONE

Barrow Borough Council
Audit and Governance Committee
27 April 2022
Statement of Accounts 2020-2021

Report from: Director of Resources

Report Author: Director of Resources

Wards: None

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 1.1 The Statement of Accounts is the statutory presentation of the Council's financial performance for 2020-2021. The Narrative Report section also contains non-financial information for the year to provide a complete picture of the Council's affairs for the financial year.
- 1.2 The Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement was published in draft on the Council's website on the 30 July 2021 and provided to our Appointed Auditors.
- 1.3 Members will be asked to approve the audited accounts after considering the Annual Governance Statement and the Audit Findings Report later on the agenda.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 **Members are recommended to receive the Statement of Accounts for 2020-2021 and raise any questions.**

3.0 Background and Proposals

- 3.1.1 The Statement of Accounts summarises the transactions for the financial year 2020-2021 and presents the Council's financial position at the 31 March 2021 together with non-financial performance to provide clear information on the use of resources over the year.
- 3.1.2 The Statement of Accounts is attached at **Appendix 1** and a final version will be provided at the meeting.

3.1.3 This report presents the Statement of Accounts and a later report requests approval as that decision can only be made once the Annual Governance Statement and Audit Findings Report have been considered.

3.1.4 The first draft Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue and published online with the Annual Governance Statement were authorised for issue and published on the 30 July 2021; the documents were also provided to our Appointed Auditors.

3.2 Contents of the Statement of Accounts

3.2.1 The Statement of Accounts (**'Statement'**) contains the following sections:

- Narrative Report – summary of financial and non-financial information.
- Statement of Responsibilities of the Council and the Director of Resources.
- Movement in Reserves Statement – summary of the movement during the year for usable and unusable reserves and the statutory adjustments required arriving at the council tax requirement (dwelling rent setting for the Housing Revenue Account).
- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – summary of services' accounting costs for the year.
- Balance Sheet – the value of the Council's assets and liabilities at the year end, the net assets are matched by the reserves held at the year end.
- Cash Flow Statement – changes in the Council's cash and cash equivalents for the year split between operating, investing and financing activities.
- Notes to support the main accounting statements.
- The Housing Revenue Account.
- The Collection Fund (Council Tax and Business Rates).

3.3 Narrative Report

3.3.1 COVID-19

- Restrictions at a national and local level applied during 2020-2021. The authority continued to provide services and worked around the face-to-face limitations by using alternative methods such as remote meetings, additional telephony, and social media. Many staff undertook alternative duties as part of the response and that included the distribution of various grants.
- The funds distributed during COVID-19 fall into two groupings, those where the authority is entirely instructed by Government (agency) and those where the authority had to determine elements of a scheme to meet local impacts (principal).
- £17.2m was distributed under agency arrangements and £2.7m as principal.

- £3.9m was awarded through an expansion of the retail relief scheme and this, together with £751k of compensation for losses in local tax collection, is accounted for through the precepting arrangements for the Collection Fund.
- The authority used £3.05m of direct funding from Government to cover the additional costs and irrecoverable losses in income due to COVID-19.

3.3.2 Performance

- The authority delivers services to people who live in, work in and visit the Borough. The authority has an overarching Council Plan which sets the focus for the priorities and direction for the use of the available resources.
- To effectively implement corporate priorities and meet legal obligations, the authority must maintain a financially stable position, be able to demonstrate value for money, good governance, transparency and must establish values and behaviours. The authority has identified the following cross-cutting objectives that are being implemented:
 - financial resilience and financial stability;
 - strong procurement and effective contract management;
 - organisational development;
 - customer focus; and
 - consistent and professional project management.
- Our values are set out below and our behaviours have been identified in terms of what our colleagues would see, hear and feel when those values were being displayed:
 - community focus – provide excellent service for all customers and colleagues;
 - honesty and integrity – do the right thing; we are open and confident to challenge and be challenged;
 - our team – all work together to achieve our shared vision and goals;
 - aim high – encourage creativity and embrace change; and
 - proud – celebrate who we are and our achievements.
- The authority's vision is for our Borough to be a great place to live, work and visit.
- The Council Plan Priorities are:
 - People - Enabling residents to live happy, healthy productive lives.
 - Place - Creating a vibrant, safe & welcoming place where people want to live.
 - Prosperity - Supporting our economy to thrive and benefit all our residents.

- During 2020-2021 the Council was able to utilise all resources (financial and non-financial) to deliver the services it provides. The non-financial performance of service delivery is set out on Page 7 of the Statement of Accounts with commentary provided where there is a significant variance. This non-financial performance together with the delivery of the routine services within the approved budget means that the Council has delivered the outcomes and value planned when the budget was set in line with the Council Plan priorities.

3.3.3 Finances

- The General Fund services are funded by Council Tax, Business Rates and government grants. The outturn was balanced with a net contribution into reserves of £6.033m:
 - £5.324m for planned items included COVID-19 business rate reliefs as these must be carried forward into the relevant precepting year.
 - £709k being the net of service expenditure and income for the year; this is expanded in **Appendix 2** and was allocated against existing identified needs:
 - £162k for the restructure, organisational development and service efficiencies
 - £397k for major projects
 - £150k to support COVID-19 income losses and additional costs
- The Housing Revenue Account was balanced with a net contribution into reserves of £1.62m which will be used to meet future demands, particularly housing maintenance where delivery was impacted by COVID-19.
- The authority's share of the Collection Fund for 2020-2021 is a deficit of £94k for Council Tax and a deficit of £4.602m for Business Rates; due to the impact of COVID-19 the distribution of these are now spread over three years from 2021-2022 along with the preceptors proportions.
- The authority's net worth has increased from £117.6m to £124m from changes in asset values, pension liabilities, cash, borrowings, debtors and creditors.
- Usable reserves have increased by £10.75m:
 - Capital £2.17m
 - Housing Revenue Account £2.54m
 - General Fund COVID-19 £4.83m; **Appendix 3**
 - General Fund other reserves £1.2m; **Appendix 3**
- Capital investment of £2.266m was delivered through the capital programme for 2020-2021, this was fully funded with no new borrowing.
- The Council managed its cash, deposits and debt internally, with external support and advice. The authorised limit for borrowing during 2020-2021 was £55m and this was not breached. At 31 March 2021 the Council had £35.5m of fixed rate loans from the Public Works Loan Board.
- The outturn was reported to the Executive Committee held on the 15 September 2021.

3.3.6 Key Opportunities and Financial Resilience

- Balanced the General Fund medium term finances and planned drawdown of reserves to support delivery of the major projects programme and organisational change.
- Balanced the medium term Housing Revenue Account finances and reviewed future maintenance requirements.
- Refreshed the Council Plan and priorities with support from the Local Government Association.
- Initiated an organisational development programme with the Local Government Association to ensure the effective use of staffing resources.
- Participated in the Government consultation on the fairer funding review and business rate retention review.
- Participated in the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership and is linked with projects included in the Strategic Economic Plan which sets out how Local Growth Funding will be spent to boost the local economy in the County. The economic impacts of the Strategic Economic Plan are beneficial to the longer term finances of the Council.
- Reacted positively to the financial challenges by taking the opportunity to do things differently. The broad strategy is to concentrate on three issues; generating income, transforming services to make them more efficient and cost effective, and supporting economic growth and development.
- Development of Marina Village continues to be a priority and external funding opportunities are being pursued.
- Major funding opportunities including, Town Deal, Heritage Action Zone, Heritage Lottery Fund, European Structural and Investment Fund, Levelling-Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund and the Brownfield Land Release Fund.
- The arrangements for providing services from the Park Leisure Centre changed in 2022, from an external provider to a wholly owned local authority trading company; a wholly owned subsidiary. The transition between providers was completed with the new arrangements commencing on 1 February 2022. The financial statements for 2021-2022 will include group accounts to recognise the wholly owned subsidiary.
- Participated in the Government's COVID-19 monthly data submission process the financial impacts of COVID-19 in order to obtain emergency funding.

3.3.7 The authority is working towards vesting day whereupon Barrow Borough Council becomes part of Westmorland and Furness Council.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Consultation is not relevant to this report which is a presentation of outturn and the conclusion of a statutory process.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options to recommend but Members are encouraged to raise any questions.

6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities

6.1 In order to be able to deliver Council Plan Priorities the Council must be financially resilient and have good financial management. The opinion of the appointed auditor informs financial management and the value for money conclusion focusses on the Council's use of resources.

7.0 Implications

7.1 Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Local Government Reorganisation

7.3.1 There are no impacts on the process of Local Government Reorganisation; the Council's finances will be aggregated into the Westmorland and Furness Council upon vesting day.

7.4 Equality and Diversity

7.4.1 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No, the report has no direct Equality and Diversity implications.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
The Statement of Accounts with the Annual Governance Statement are not published.	Reputational risk. Impact on closing 2021-2022.	Plan and timetable. Liaison with appointed auditors.

Contact Officers

Director of Resources directorsadmin@barrowbc.gov.uk

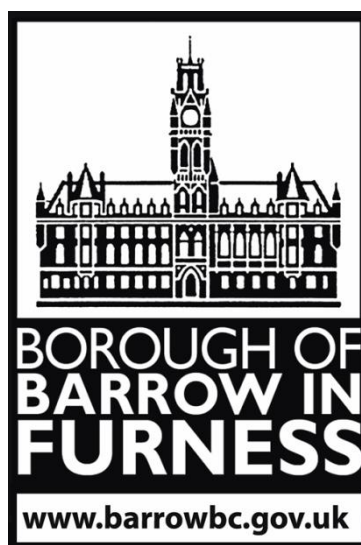
Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Statement of Accounts 2020-2021

Background Documents Available

Name of Background document	Where it is available
1 Council Finances	https://democracy.barrowbc.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MId=642&Ver=4

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Statement of Accounts 2020/21

Contents:

	Page
Narrative Report	1-18
Statement of Responsibilities	19
Main Accounting Statements	
• Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	20
• Movement in Reserves Statement	21-22
• Balance Sheet	23
• Cash Flow Statement	24
Index of Notes to the Main Accounting Statements	25
Notes to the Main Accounting Statements	26-88
Supplementary Statements	
• Housing Revenue Account and Notes	89-95
• Collection Fund and Notes	96-99
Independent Auditor's Report to Members	100
Cost Centres by Division	101
Glossary	102-109

1. Introduction

The Statement of Accounts summarises the authority's transactions for the 2020/21 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2021. Figures for the previous year are included to assist in the interpretation of the accounting statements.

The purpose of the Statement of Accounts is to give readers clear information about the authority's finances. It shows the cost of the authority's services in the year, where the money came from to pay for its services, and what the assets and liabilities were at the year-end.

The Narrative Report aims to provide a concise and understandable guide for readers of the accounts of the most significant aspects of the authority's financial performance, year-end position, and economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources over the year.

Throughout the Narrative Report the authority outlines the value created to the community. The value added is considered to be the services delivered and the achievement and outcomes of the corporate priorities.

The financial statements are prepared and presented based on material grounds taking into account the specific materiality for the authority as used by our Appointed Auditors. They are produced on a going concern basis which illustrates the continuation of services for the foreseeable future. This takes account of the replacement of the authority with a new Unitary Council from 1st April 2023. Further details are shown in Section 21 of this narrative.

The authority uses rounding to the nearest thousand pounds in the financial statements; some notes and narrative are presented in millions of pounds as an aid to readability.

2. About the Authority

Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council (Barrow Borough Council) is a North West non-metropolitan local government district situated in south Cumbria at the tip of the Furness peninsula, close to the Lake District; it is bordered by Morecambe Bay, the Duddon Estuary and the Irish Sea. It is the smallest geographic district in the County at just under 78 km² but is the most densely populated with 886 people per km² at the 2011 Census.

Walney Island lies to the West of Barrow, and is connected to Barrow by the narrow Jubilee Bridge. Walney Island has two nature reserves, the 130 hectare South Walney Nature Reserve and 650 hectare North Walney Nature Reserve. Both nature reserves have national designations, as do the Duddon Estuary and Sandscale Haws to the north of the Borough. The Borough also includes 270 listed buildings, including 8 Grade I buildings of exceptional interest, including the medieval Furness Abbey and Piel Castle.

Barrow is the most deprived district in the County and the 27th most deprived local authority district in England; this is based on income, employment, health, education, housing, crime and living environment. The dwellings in the Borough are primarily in council tax band A at 59%, with 30% in bands B and C, and 11% in bands D to F.

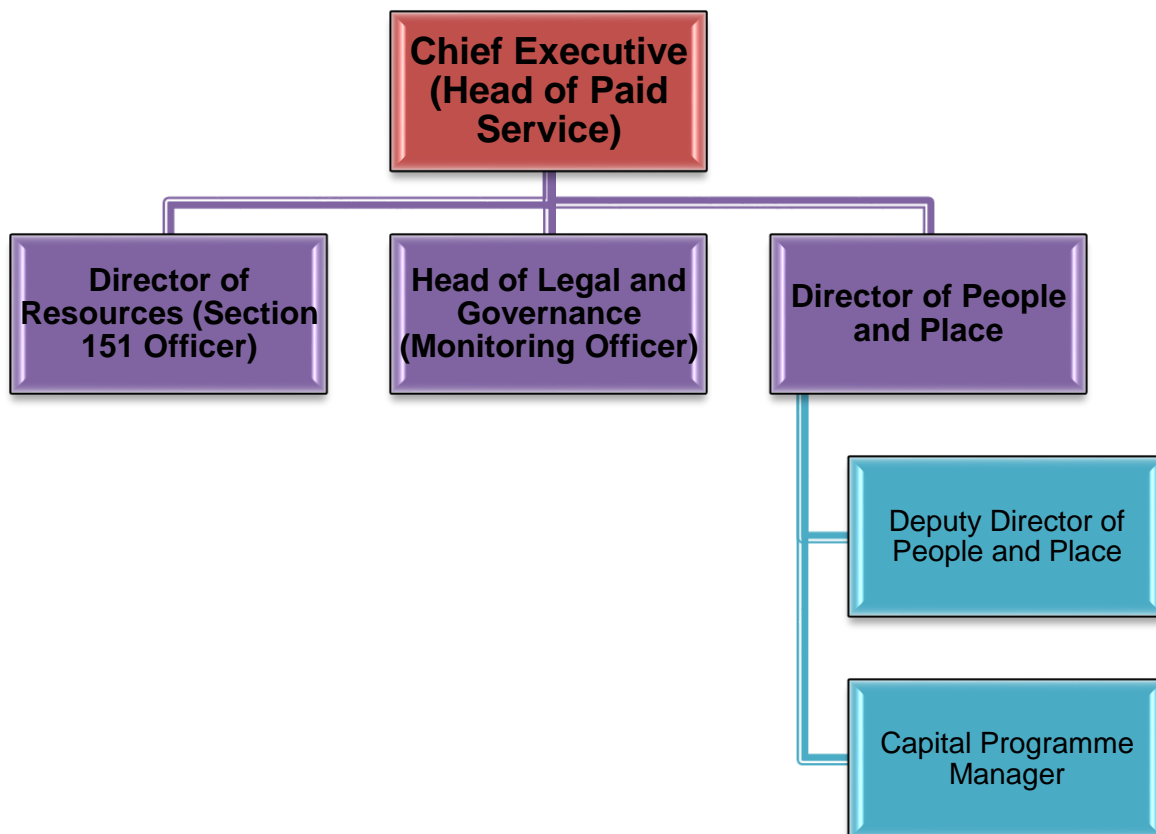
Urban regeneration has been a major project in Barrow since the 1980s with developments on various former industrial sites in the centre of Barrow, including the dry dock, the Barrow Jute Works and Barrow Steel Works. Barrow's most popular free-entry tourist attraction is the Dock Museum, built upon and around an old graving dock. Manufacturing is the largest employment sector, with BAE Systems being the single largest employer.

The Borough and surrounding Furness area is on the verge of a sustained period of economic growth from BAE Systems' submarine programme, GlaxoSmithKline's biopharmaceutical plant, Orsted (formerly DONG Energy) offshore wind farm, Sellafield and other investments.

The Full Council comprises 36 elected Councillors and is responsible for taking all decisions, but to make this manageable it gives four committees covering planning, licensing, audit and governance, and finance and policy (executive) responsibility to carry out most of its functions.

By law the authority is responsible for delivering housing services, revenues and benefits, planning and building control, environmental health and licensing services, refuse collection, street cleansing and waste collection services to the public. In addition the authority chooses to deliver leisure, economic development and regeneration services. All services are supported by finance, IT, HR, corporate, legal and other central support functions.

Following a restructure of the management team in March 2021, the Senior Management Team comprises the Chief Executive, the Director of People and Place, the Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer), and Head of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer). The wider Management Team includes the Deputy Director of People and Place, and the Capital Programme Manager:



3. Corporate Aims and Achievements

The authority delivers services to people who live in, work in and visit the Borough. The authority has an overarching Council Plan which sets the focus for the priorities and direction for the use of the available resources. This has been enhanced with the Growing Forward report which contains the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and is intended to capture the benefits and opportunities that the experience has identified to improve services and the ways that the Council Plan impacts can be achieved with the most positive effects.

The authority's Local Code of Corporate Governance sets out the framework within which the authority conducts its business and affairs, and is based on the principles of good governance. The authority produces an Annual Governance Statement with the Statement of Accounts which reports on the extent of the authority's compliance with its principles and practices of good governance, including the arrangements for monitoring effectiveness.

In order to effectively implement corporate priorities and meet legal obligations, the authority must maintain a financially stable position, be able to demonstrate value for money, good governance, transparency and must establish values and behaviours. The authority has identified the following cross-cutting objectives that are being implemented:

- financial resilience and financial stability;
- strong procurement and effective contract management;
- organisational development;
- customer focus; and
- consistent and professional project management.

Our values are set out below and our behaviours have been identified in terms of what our colleagues would see, hear and feel when those values were being displayed:

- community focus – provide excellent service for all customers and colleagues;
- honesty and integrity – do the right thing; we are open and confident to challenge and be challenged;
- our team – all work together to achieve our shared vision and goals;
- aim high – encourage creativity and embrace change; and
- proud – celebrate who we are and our achievements.

The authority's vision is for our Borough to be a great place to live, work and visit.

The priorities that will deliver tangible long term benefits to the community are focussed on the following themes; the Council Plan for 2020/24 can be viewed in full on the Council's website. The Growing Forward reports are contained in the Executive Committee papers published on the Council's website.

Priority 1: People

Enabling residents to live happy, healthy productive lives.

Putting people at the centre of all that we do is a key priority for the Council. We will do this by helping them to have the best start in life, enjoy healthy and active lifestyles, and have opportunities to improve their well-being by building strong communities. We will actively encourage people to work with us to design activities that meet their needs. We will work with our communities so that people can enjoy good health and live in a safe environment where they can be happy and reach their full potential.

Priority 2: Place

Creating a vibrant, safe & welcoming place where people want to live.

Our Borough is a great place to live, work and have fun. There is an abundance of natural beauty and heritage, but there is also an opportunity to offer people more. We want a varied housing offer to retain our residents and attract new people to settle here. We want to build on existing strengths and encourage more people to visit the town centres in Barrow and Dalton by making them more vibrant so that residents and visitors enjoy a positive and memorable experience. We want to protect our natural environment.

Priority 3: Prosperity

Supporting our economy to thrive and benefit all our residents.

Barrow's manufacturing heritage and its pivotal role in the defence industry is a source of local pride and tradition. Our world-class manufacturing expertise is recognised worldwide, however to enable inclusive growth we will seek to diversify our economy to secure opportunities for our residents by supporting other key industries including the growing renewable energy sector. In particular, we have the opportunity to secure continued investment in the Borough and ensure our residents have the skills and services to allow them to benefit from the growing economy. We will deliver our ambitions through effective joint working with public and private sector partners, by offering a clear policy framework, proactive steps to promote the role and opportunities within the Borough, and by securing additional public and private investment.

Council Plan 2020/24 targets includes:

- Stronger links established with the community, third sector, health and police authorities;
- Greater engagement with public health;
- Commitment to support the Leisure Centre for the wellbeing of our residents;
- Continued support for the welfare benefits advice available to residents;
- Continued support for low income households through council tax support and discretionary housing payments;
- Development of the Brilliant Barrow Board to enable delivery of the Town Investment Plan;
- Levelling Up Fund and other bids submitted;
- Delivery of funded projects in respect of Low Carbon Barrow, Heritage Action Zone and National Heritage Lottery Fund;
- Council dwellings continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard;
- Climate Change Action Plan implementation;
- Continued economic growth work with Lancaster City Council and South Lakeland District Council;
- New Waterfront Gateway Managed Business Centre occupied;
- Continued programme of work to prepare the Marina Village site for remediation and development;
- Implementation of governance arrangements actions identified by a peer review by the Local Government Association;
- Key roles created – Deputy Director of People and Place and Capital Programme Manager

4. Impacts of COVID-19

Prior to presenting the results for 2020/21 it is appropriate to set out the impacts of COVID-19 on the authority, its operations and finances.

COVID-19 restrictions commenced in March 2020. The restrictions impacted the authority directly as well as the wider communities of the Borough. The various restriction levels set nationally and locally created challenges and opportunities. As an employer the authority has a duty to protect employees and measures were introduced to achieve this and continue to deliver essential services.

The introduction of temporary arrangements for agile and flexible working were quickly established and the technology to allow and control remote working was deployed at pace. Fortunately over the previous 12 months the authority established an online presence which was used to full potential as an additional resource for messages and information.

Venues were required to close as part of the restrictions and face to face customer service was also withdrawn, apart from emergencies such as homelessness support; additional telephone support was made available. Public meetings moved onto the Barrow Borough Council YouTube channel and all other meetings became virtual.

The Borough response was coordinated by the Barrow Community Local Resilience Forum which includes the Borough and County Council, community and voluntary sectors among others. The Forum identified the community needs and the partners collaborated to meet those needs.

On several occasions volunteers were called for from the authority's staff to provide support to the community helpline, to make deliveries, to distribute information, to steward vaccination centres and prepare other facilities, among other requests. Officers rose to these challenges without hesitation and many have been nominated by colleagues for the authority's Be Proud recognition awards.

There are several duties assigned to local authorities that continue into 2021/22; Track and Trace, COVID compliance, the administration and distribution of various iterations of business support grants, administration of self-isolation payments, the management of Council Tax and hardship relief and the award of extended Business Rate reliefs. These new burdens required significant staff resources, the establishment of appropriate systems and processes to meet Government requirements and internal assurance, and have an ongoing audit and reconciliation burden with MHCLG.

In financial terms there were additional costs incurred and income from services was significantly impacted along with Council Tax and Business Rates.

The Government provided funding for COVID-19 additional costs, new burdens, income losses for the authority to retain, and specific funds for distribution. The allocations of specific funds for distribution were on-account payments based on the best basis that Government could use; for business support grants the Valuation Office rating list was used. The rating list includes hereditaments (properties) that are used in personal use and others that are not used for the purpose recorded in the rating list (for example an office operating from premises recorded as a shop on the rating list).

The authority distributed COVID-19 funds in an agent capacity, where criteria and amounts were set nationally. The individual amounts received and distributed are shown in Note 6 to the Main Accounting Statements:

- **Funds received £25,965k**
- **Funds distributed £17,219k**
- **Funds reconciled and repaid £4,950k**
- **Balance at 31 March 2022 £3,787k**

There were also COVID-19 funds where the authority acted as the principal where some criteria and amounts were set locally. The individual amounts received and distributed are shown in Notes 6 to the Main Accounting Statements:

- **Funds received £3,547k**
- **Funds distributed £2,696k**
- **Balance at 31 March 2022 £851k**

The funding received to directly fund the additional expenditure and irrecoverable losses impacting the authority was largely used within the year with the Contain Outbreak Management Fund being the only carry forward into 2021-2022, this is to be spent on specific COVID-19 activities. The individual amounts received and used are shown in Note 6 to the Main Accounting Statements:

- **Funds received £3,248k**
- **Funds used £3,050k**
- **Balance at 31 March 2022 £198k**

The final COVID-19 grant relates to the Business Rate reliefs that were extended from the retail relief scheme. The grant due for the year is included in the financial statement and carried forward to be matched against the distribution of the Collection Fund deficit under the precepting arrangements. The funding received for these reliefs was 100% of the estimated awards as an aid to cash flow as the collection and recovery of local taxes was impacted by COVID-19. The intentional over-funding results in a significant balance at 31 March 2022 which will be reconciled and repaid during 2021-2022:

- **Funds received for retail and nursery reliefs £9,200k**
- **Funds applied/awarded £3,929k**
- **Balance at 31 March 2022 £5,271k**

Together these grants come to £41.9m of cash received with £31.8m spent and paid out and £10.1m held on the Balance Sheet at 31 March 2022. In addition there are funds related to the Collection Fund surplus/deficit distributions that are recognised in 2020-2021 and then carried forward within earmarked reserves to be released to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to match the precepting distributions from the Collection Fund:

- **Earmarked reserves £4,680k:**
 - **Tax Income Guarantee Scheme £751k**
 - **Business Rate Reliefs (COVID-19) £3,929k**

As noted, further information on the accounting arrangements for these grants and the funding provided to support the authority's own additional costs and income losses are set out in Note 6 within the Notes to the Main Accounting Statements.

5. Service Performance

The Council received the majority of its funding from taxation - Council Tax of £4.8m and Business Rates £4.2m. The amount attributable to Business Rates has been significantly affected by the Covid pandemic and now consists of income collected from ratepayers and Section 31 grant received from Government. It also received funding from Central Government in the form of specific grants such as Revenue Support Grant, Section 31 Grants (for other specific uses) and Housing Benefit Administration Grant.

As well as core funding sources, the Council also relies heavily on income from fees and charges and rental income from its commercial asset portfolio. These provide a valuable source of funding that can be used to supplement the service delivery for the residents of the Borough.

In the light of reducing support from central government the Council has over the past few years become increasingly efficient in the way it deploys the resources it has, to ensure that it can maintain an acceptable level of service delivery. It has a good history of achieving the transformational savings it requires and as such has managed to continue to set a balanced budget.

In 2020/2021 the Council was able to utilise all resources (financial and non-financial) to deliver the services it provides. The non-financial performance of service delivery follows with commentary provided where there is a significant variance.

This non-financial performance together with the delivery of the routine services within the approved budget means that the Council has delivered the outcomes and value planned when the budget was set in line with the Council Plan priorities.

The authority uses service performance indicators to provide an overview of operations.

Where there is no national or contracted performance level or target, local targets are set which consider recent years' outturn, known constraints, and desired improvements.

2019/20	Description	2020/21	Target
	Planning decisions determined within set timescale:		
69.20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> major applications 	68.80%	60%
77.40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> other applications 	73.30%	70%
248	Food safety inspections	260	289
60,785	Forum theatre attendance	3,222	60,785
100%	Playground maintenance inspections	100%	100%
93%	Waste containers delivered within 7 working days	94%	100%
0.45%	Assisted list waste collections missed	0.15%	0%
74%	Fly tips collected within 1 working day of being reported	40.1%	100%
137	Number of disabled facilities grants awarded	99	120
26.5 days	Average time to process new housing benefit claims	25 days	20 days
5.6 days	Average time to process housing benefit claims changes	4 days	6 days
0.07%	Percentage of missed waste or recycling collections	0.03%	0%
24.30%	Percentage of household waste sent for recycling	24.05%	24.3%
73%	Corporate complaints dealt with within timescale	86%	90%
96.10%	Council tax collected	95.26%	96.40%
97.20%	Business rates collected	97.87%	98.30%
8.57 days	Long term sickness averaged per employee	6.88 days	8.57 days
2.49 days	Short term sickness averaged per employee	1.08 days	2.49 days

The majority of the performance indicators have been impacted by the effects of COVID-19, in particular those in the Revenues and Benefits Department where business support grants, extended Business Rate relief, Council Tax relief and Self-isolation Payments have hugely increased workloads.

6. The Financial Headlines

The headlines of this year's accounts are set out below and detailed in the following paragraphs:

- The General Fund has made a net contribution to reserves of £6.033m, some which is specifically due to COVID-19; see paragraph 8.
- The Housing Revenue Account is balanced with a net contribution to reserves of £1.62m; see paragraph 9.
- The authority's share of the Collection Fund for 2020/21 is a deficit of £94k for Council Tax and a deficit of £4.602m for Business Rates; due to the impact of COVID-19 the distribution of these are now spread over three years from 2021/22 along with the preceptors proportions; see paragraph 13.
- The authority's net worth has increased from £117.6m to £124.0m; see paragraph 7.
- Usable reserves have increased by £10.75m; see paragraphs 9 and 10 and the Movement in Reserves Statement page 21.

- Capital investment of £2.266m was delivered through the capital programme for 2020/21; see paragraph 11.

7. Net Assets of the Authority

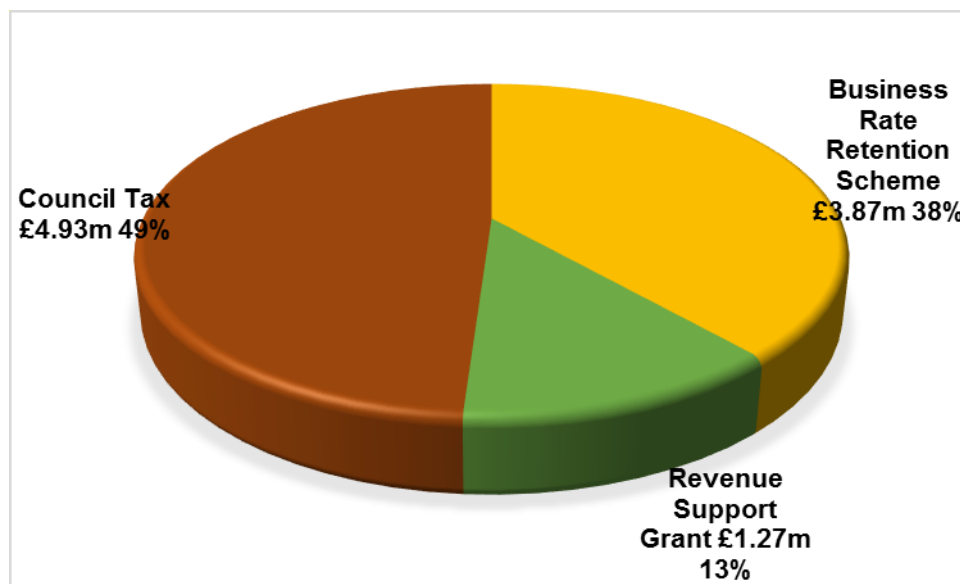
The authority has net assets of £124.0m; this is the difference between its assets and liabilities. This shows the cash balance that would have been left if the Council was to have realised its assets (selling its land and buildings and other assets) and settled its liabilities (paid its creditors and repaid its borrowing).

This increase in the net assets of the authority from £117.6m to £124.0m is attributable to the increase in the value of property, plant, equipment and heritage assets +£0.1m, the change in the value of other long term pension liabilities of -£-1.1m; the increase in short term investments and cash of +£7.7m; the decrease in long term borrowing of +£1m; and the change in debtors and creditors of -£1.3m.

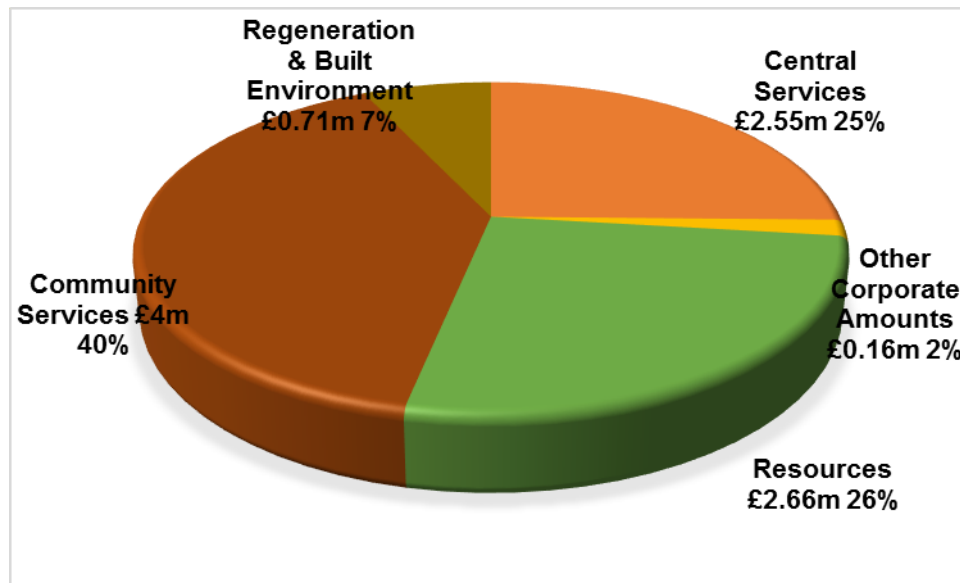
8. General Fund Outturn

The General Fund budget for 2020/21 was originally approved by Full Council on the 27 February 2020 as £10.09m. The estimated movement in reserves for 2020/21 was an addition of £613k at the time the budget was set.

The budgeted total financing came from:



The net expenditure was split between the reporting divisions as follows:



The other corporate amounts include treasury, pension funding, technical accounting and reserves.

The actual outturn for 2020/21 had no impact on the General Fund balance. The outturn before movements in earmarked reserves was £6.033m, with the £6.033m being contributed to reserves for the year. The use of reserves changes during the financial year and is reported as part of the quarterly financial monitoring reports. The authority operates its financial reserves in accordance with the Reserves and Balances Policy.

A net £5.324m of reserves were used as planned and in accordance with matters reported to the Executive Committee for 2020/21 and year-end transactions including COVID-19 income that relates to 2021/22. An unplanned £0.709m was added to reserves as the net of service expenditure and income for 2020/21; some of this is due to the use of COVID funding to cover existing staffing costs.

Details of the movements in earmarked reserves were presented to the authority's Executive Committee on the 15 September 2021. The earmarked reserves are contained in Note 9.

Recurring savings and reductions are taken into account when setting the budget for future years and for review in the current year 2021/22. The 2021/22 General Fund budget was prepared in December 2020 and has incorporated some of the savings and reductions identified as part of the outturn comparison. Key areas of the outturn comparison for 2020/21 will be reassessed against the 2021/22 budget and those impacts from COVID-19 set aside.

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis in the Notes to the Accounts (Note 7) shows the outturn expenditure and how it has been funded. To analyse the General Fund unplanned addition to reserves, the elements attributable to the Housing Revenue Account are removed.

The following table identifies the net of under and over spends by division. Some items do not recur such as employee costs where posts have been subsequently recruited or deleted, but all variances are reviewed.

Division	Employee costs	Supplies and Services	External Income	Other Items	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Resources	(22)	51	49	68	146
Community Services	(12)	56	(118)	87	13
Regeneration and Built Environment	133	53	(24)	16	178
Central Services	221	29	4	(29)	225
Corporate Amounts	-	-	-	147	147
Earmarked Reserves	-	-	-	(709)	(709)
Total	320	189	(89)	(420)	0

A detailed analysis of the variances by division was presented to the authority's Executive Committee on the 15 September 2021.

9. Housing Revenue Account Outturn

The original Housing Revenue Account budget was approved by Full Council on the 27 February 2020 as a balanced budget; the income matching the expenditure forecast including a contribution to reserves of £0.11m. The actual outturn for the Housing Revenue Account resulted in a balanced account after a contribution to reserves of £1.62m; £1.51m more than originally estimated. The funds reserved relate to maintenance and repairs £0.560m, £0.207m from additional income, reduced bad debt provision requirement £0.331m, and £0.522m reduced costs.

10. Revenue Reserves and Balances

The authority held the following General Fund financial reserves during 2020/21:

1 April 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
2,300	General Fund balance	2,300
1,517	Transformation reserve	2,043
726	Renewals reserve	726
101	Insurance reserve	101
862	Losses reserve	862
2,851	Budget contingency reserve	4,656
35	Apprentices reserve	35
-	COVID-19 Business Rate reliefs reserve	3,929
668	Welfare support reserve	610
587	Earmarked revenue grants	418
9,647		15,680

The £3.929m COVID-19 Business Rate reliefs reserve contains the extended retail and nursery relief awarded to businesses during 2020/21. The Business Rate deficit is distributed in future years and the reserve will be used to fund that impact.

The budget contingency reserve also contains COVID-19 income from the Tax Income Guarantee scheme of £751k which will fund the deficit impact of 2020/21 Council Tax and Business Rates.

The unplanned additions to reserves from the General Fund result have been allocated against existing identified needs:

- £162k added to the transformation reserve to support the restructure, organisational development and service efficiencies.
- £397k added to the transformation reserve to support major projects.
- £150k added to the budget contingency reserve to support COVID-19 income losses and additional costs outside the budget assumptions.

Details of the movements in earmarked reserves were presented to the authority's Executive Committee on the 15 September 2021. The earmarked reserves are contained in Note 9.

The authority held the following Housing Revenue Account financial reserves during 2020/21:

1 April 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
1,000	Housing Revenue Account Balance	1,000
2,843	Major repairs reserve	3,771
2,768	General reserve	4,388
6,611		9,159

11. Capital Expenditure and Financing

During 2020/21 the authority's capital expenditure was £2.266m:

Investment	Expenditure	Source	Financing
	£000		£000
Public sector housing	1,123	Major repairs reserve	(1,123)
Private sector housing	476	Reserves/revenue	-
Public buildings/properties	6	Capital grants	(868)
Other public assets	661	Capital receipts	(275)
Programme	2,266	Financing	(2,266)

The movement in capital receipts and grants held and unapplied at the 31 March 2021 are:

- Capital receipts
 - At 1 April 2020 £2.75m
 - Plus usable receipts of £0.43m from:
 - Repaid Cluster of Empty Homes loans
 - 5 dwellings under the Right to Buy
 - Less receipts used in financing and payments to the Pool in 2020/21 £0.47m
 - At 31 March 2021 £2.71m
- Capital grants
 - At 1 April 2020 £3.13m
 - Plus grants of £2.28m from:
 - Disabled Facilities Grant
 - Accelerated Towns Fund and Low Carbon Barrow grants
 - Less grants used in financing in 2020/21 of £0.07m
 - At 31 March 2021 £5.34m

12. Treasury Management

The authority managed its cash and investments in-house during 2020/21. As at 31 March 2021, £18m of investments and cash of £12.3m were managed in-house. The authority has 20 Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans outstanding at 31 March 2021; 15 of these, £13.1m, relate to the Housing Revenue Account self-financing settlement. The balance outstanding is £35.5m; in total, £22.1m belonging to the Housing Revenue Account and £13.3m to the General Fund. One loan is repayable in 2021/22; £1m. The authorised limit for borrowing in 2020/21 was £55m and this was not breached. These items complied with the authority's Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/21, which was approved by Full Council on 27 February 2020.

13. Collection Fund

The Collection Fund showed a net deficit for 2020/21 of £12.253m, made up of a deficit on council tax of £0.748m and a deficit on NNDR of £11.505m. The significant increase in the NNDR deficit is due to COVID-19. The council tax deficit is recoverable across 2021/22 and 2023/24 to Cumbria County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria and the General Fund £94k. The NNDR deficit will be recovered from central government, Cumbria County Council and the General Fund £4.602m across 2021/22 to 2022/23. These distributions are dealt with by precepting arrangements.

The accumulated amounts held at the 31 March 2021 for the authority are:

- £132k deficit for council tax; and
- £4.385m deficit for the business rate retention scheme.

14. Business Rates Retention Scheme

From 1 April 2013, the local government finance regime was revised with the introduction of the Business Rates Retention Scheme. Whilst this did not impact on businesses paying business rates, it was a fundamental change to local authority funding. The main aim of the scheme is to give authorities a greater incentive to grow businesses in the Borough. It does, however, increase the financial risk due to non-collection and volatility of the NNDR tax base. The scheme allows the authority to retain a proportion of the total NNDR received. The Borough share is 40%, the County share is 10%, and the remainder is paid to central government. The Business Rates Retention Scheme is reflected in these accounts, principally in the Collection Fund and the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account.

15. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme

From 1 April 2013, the authority's local council tax reduction scheme replaced council tax benefits. Council tax benefits were awarded by the billing authority and reimbursed by the Department for Work and Pensions. When council tax reductions became a local scheme, the central funding (now from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) was reduced by 10%. It was left to individual authorities, in consultation with the major preceptors, to design a scheme that either sought to recover some, all or none of the shortfall in funding. The scheme adopted for the Borough does not seek to recover any of the funding shortfall from claimants so that they receive the same financial support as they would under the council tax benefit scheme.

16. Material Assets and Liabilities

During 2020/21 the authority has not acquired any material assets or incurred any material liabilities.

17. Pensions Reserve

International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19 requires the authority to account for its liability under the pension (defined benefits) scheme as it arises. The authority is a member of the Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme Fund. At 31 March 2021, the actuarial valuation showed a net liability of £30.5m (2019/20 £29.2m). This is explained in detail in Note 36 to the accounting statements. Part of the authority's employer contributions to the Fund is to recover this deficit. The deficit on the pension scheme has varied substantially in recent years and reflects the volatile nature of financial markets. The deficit at 31 March 2021 was £30.5m, an increase of £1.3m during 2020/21.

The net pension liability included in the Balance Sheet is matched by the pensions reserve at the Balance Sheet date. There is no overall effect from the authority's pension liability on the council tax or housing rent levels. The accounting costs of retirement benefits that are included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and Housing Revenue Account are adjusted to a funding basis in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

18. Material and Unusual Charges and Credits

During 2020/21 the authority received significant grant receipts and payments relating to COVID-19. Where the authority has determined that it acted as an agent for Government, the grants do not appear in the financial statements and conversely where the authority acted as principal, those grants are included in the financial statements along with the grant funding.

The COVID-19 funding for the authority's own purposes and for specific additional costs is included within the financial statements along with the associated grant funding.

19. Accounting Policies

The authority's accounting policies are explained fully in the first note to the main accounting statements (pages 26 to 39).

20. Provisions and Contingencies

The provision established in 2012/13 for the Municipal Mutual Scheme of Arrangement reflects the 25% levy due by the authority for the estimated outstanding claims.

The authority established a provision for business rate appeals in 2013/14 with the introduction of the Business Rate Retention Scheme. The provision reflects the authority's share of the estimated settlement of appeals lodged at the 31 March 2021.

21. Material Events After the Accounting Date

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Director of Resources on the 30 July 2021 and is now authorised for issue on 27 April 2022 after incorporating revisions from the audit. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the accounting statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date regarding conditions at 31 March 2021 have occurred their impact should be shown in the Statement. No such events have been identified.

Local Government Reorganisation has identified an east, west split for the county of Cumbria, creating two unitary authorities. The vesting date is 1 April 2023 and implementation and transition plans are underway. The east unitary is called Westmorland and Furness Council and comprises Barrow Borough Council, South Lakeland District Council, Eden District Council and the relevant proportion of Cumbria County Council services and functions. The reform agenda established by The Bay unitary submission that this authority supported will be pursued in the establishment of the new authority.

22. Key Opportunities and Financial Resilience

The authority has been subject to significant reductions in its financial settlement from the Government since 2011/12. As the formula reductions resulted in a percentage drop greater than the cap set by the Government for the years 2011/12 to 2015/16, the authority was awarded Transition Grant and then Efficiency Support Grant. The Transition Grant was to reduce the authority's net revenue expenditure to the level of future Government financial settlement projections in that Spending Review period. The Efficiency Support Grant was ring-fenced to four key themes and within those expenditure was incurred where a reduction in cost or increase in income could be achieved.

The authority has taken a number of major steps to ensure it remains financially resilient:

- Balanced the General Fund medium term finances and planned drawdown of reserves to support delivery of the major projects programme and organisational change.
- Balanced the medium term Housing Revenue Account finances and reviewed future maintenance requirements.
- Refreshed the Council Plan and priorities with support from the Local Government Association.
- Initiated an organisational development programme with the Local Government Association to ensure the effective use of staffing resources.
- The authority has participated in the Government consultation on the fairer funding review and business rate retention review.
- The authority is part of the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership and is linked with projects included in the Strategic Economic Plan which sets out how Local Growth Funding will be spent to boost the local economy in the County. The economic impacts of the Strategic Economic Plan are beneficial to the longer term finances of the authority.
- The authority has chosen to react positively to the financial challenges by taking the opportunity to do things differently. The broad strategy is to concentrate on three issues; generating income, transforming services to make them more efficient and cost effective, and supporting economic growth and development.
- The authority continues working with South Lakeland District Council and Lancaster City Council to progress the shared vision of economic growth for the Morecambe Bay region.
- The development of Marina Village continues to be a priority and external funding opportunities are being pursued.
- The authority is involved with and bidding for a number of major funding opportunities including, Town Deal, Heritage Action Zone, Heritage Lottery Fund, European Structural and Investment Fund, Levelling-Up Fund, Community Renewal fund and the Brownfield Land Release Fund.
- The arrangements for providing services from the Park Leisure Centre changed in 2022, from an external provider to a wholly owned local authority trading company; a wholly owned subsidiary. The transition between providers was completed with the new arrangements commencing on 1 February 2022. The financial statements for 2021/22 will include group accounts to recognise the wholly owned subsidiary.
- The authority has provided information regarding the financial impacts of COVID-19 to the government in order to obtain emergency funding. The impacts of COVID-19 are expanded in paragraph 4.

At the end of 2020/21 the authority held a General Fund balance of £2.3m and earmarked reserve of £0.9m for losses; these core reserves are important in the financial resilience of the authority and required to address any unexpected spending pressures and to cushion any cash flow impacts.

The authority's ability to replenish its reserves is very limited, with any service surpluses in the revenue account being carried to meet known liabilities such as the business rate retention scheme income volatility, the commercial estate and the cremator rebuild.

The authority has continued to deliver a capital programme, funded from grants and asset sale receipts as well as the use of reserves. The programme is much reduced from previous years and is financed to limit the on-going costs of borrowing on the General Fund revenue account. During 2020/21 the authority considered the future capital projects it wished to deliver and the resources available to achieve its agreed priorities in addition to incorporating the external major funding when it is secured.

The capital programme was last approved by Full Council on the 22 March 2021. For the financial years 2021/22 to 2023/24, the programme contains:

Investment	Expenditure	Source	Financing
Public sector housing	£8.7m	Major repairs reserve	£8.7m
Private sector housing	£5.1m	Reserves/revenue	0
Public buildings/properties	£0.9m	Capital grants	£5.5m
Other public assets	£3.9m	Capital receipts	£4.4m
Programme	£18.6m	Financing	£18.6m

In terms of treasury management and cash flow, the interest payable on external borrowing in 2021/22 is £1.4m; there are small annual reductions in this amount for loans that are maturing. The cash flow has increased by £8.8m to £12.3m at the 31 March 2021; the cash flow is split between investing (capital and treasury), financing and operating activities on page 24. There is no indication that any new borrowing will be required in the medium term.

23. Key Risks

The Council maintains a Corporate Risk Register which is reported to members on a quarterly basis. The key risks currently on the register are as follows:

- The risk to the future financial stability and sustainability of the authority.
- The risk of significant changes arising from legislative changes.
- The risk of not having effective workforce planning.
- The risk of an Information Technology security breach.
- The risk if H&S arrangements are not effective and maintained.
- The risks of a major incident affecting service delivery, including the risk of a pandemic.
- The risk of ineffective project management.
- The risk of a change in political priorities.
- The risk of not having effective internal and external communications.
- The risk of failing to achieve efficiency savings, maximising income or performance targets.
- The risk of failing to deliver the objectives of the Council Plan.

These risks are monitored to ensure they are mitigated and managed as far as possible.

24. Value for Money

The authority recognises its responsibility to achieve value for money in service delivery and seeks to incorporate the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, in delivering services by taking account of costs, quality of services and local context.

25. Workforce

The authority's establishment consists of 274 posts; 223 in the General Fund and 51 in the Housing Revenue Account. The posts are worked by 240.617 full time equivalent (FTE) staff; 194.15 FTE in the General Fund and 46.46 FTE in the Housing Revenue Account:

	Headcount	FTE
Resources	64	56.42
Community Services	49	37.70
Regeneration and the Built Environment	52	48.90
Housing Revenue Account	51	46.46
Central Services	58	51.13

The authority recognises the value and importance of the workforce and is working with the Local Government Association to establish a programme of organisational development to include, leadership development, enabling transformation and change, succession planning, effective two-way engagement and enhancing the health and wellbeing of staff. The authority is committed to growing its own professional and technical officers and offering opportunities through training and development.

26. Key Sections in the Statement of Accounts

The 2020/21 accounting statements have been prepared in compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounts in the United Kingdom which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (the Code) and consist of:

- **Statement of Responsibilities** (page 19) this precedes the accounting statements and sets out the responsibilities of the authority and of the Director of Resources in respect of the Statement of Accounts. The purpose of the Statement of Responsibilities is to confirm that the Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with proper practices.
- **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement** (page 20) – this shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from local taxation. Authorities raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations and this may be different from the accounting cost. The local taxation position is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.
- **Movement in Reserves Statement** (pages 21 and 22) – this shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the authority, analysed into 'usable reserves' (those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation), and unusable reserves. The (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the authority's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance for council tax setting, and the Housing Revenue Account for dwelling rent setting purposes. The Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves line shows the statutory General Fund Balance and Housing Revenue Account Balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the authority.
- **Balance Sheet** (page 23) - this shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the authority. The net assets of the authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by reserves held by the authority. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, those reserves that the authority may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve may only be used to fund

capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category of reserves is those that the authority is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and the reserves that hold the timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations'.

- **Cash Flow Statement** (page 24) – this shows the changes in the authority's cash and cash equivalents during the year. It shows how the authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying the 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 operations of the authority are funded by way of local taxation and grant income, or from the recipients of services provided by the authority. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the authority's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (borrowing) to the authority.
- **Notes to the Main Accounting Statements** (pages 25 to 88) – these include a summary of the significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.
- **Housing Revenue Account and Notes** (pages 89 to 95) – this reflects the statutory obligation to maintain a revenue account for local authority housing provision in accordance with Part 6 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. It essentially contains income from house rents and expenditure related to managing and maintaining council dwellings. The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents. Authorities charge rents to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis of which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the HRA Statement.
- **Collection Fund and Notes** (pages 96 to 99) – this is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for the authority, as a billing authority, to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The Statement shows the transactions for council tax and non-domestic rates and the way these have been distributed; the council tax preceptors being Cumbria County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria and the General Fund; the non-domestic rates being shared proportionately between central government (50% share), Cumbria County Council (10%) and the General Fund (40%).

27. Level of Reserves and Balances

I am satisfied that the authority's reserves and balances are adequate. The levels of reserves and balances will be kept under review taking into account the realisation of the Medium Term Financial Plan assumptions and the financial settlement from the Government.

28. Materiality

In preparing these accounts consideration has been given to any item that is thought would be of significance to the reader of the accounts in the context of the activities of the Council. In particular, the Council has applied the following limits on what will be deemed as immaterial in taking decisions regarding their accounting treatment and presentation:

- Accounting Policies are disclosed for individual or groups of similar transactions that make up the entries in the Statement of Accounts. Where such transactions are individually or cumulatively below £50,000 per annum the policy has not been disclosed.
- Capital expenditure or receipts under £10,000 will be charged to revenue apart from Council dwellings which will all be treated as capital receipts. Receipts above £10,000 are accounted for as capital receipts.

- Leases as lessor for periods under 10 years accounted for as operational and not finance. Leases over 10 years subjected to assessment.

29. Acknowledgement and Influences

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work involved in completing the Statement of Accounts and to pass on my thanks to all the officers who have contributed.

Looking ahead, financial stability and financial resilience for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account remains a focus for the authority. Funding continues to be a major influence for the authority and there is a risk that local government finances may reduce further in upcoming years. The major projects, in particular the Town Deal, will ensure the effective delivery and development of key aspects of the Council Plan. The authority aims to deliver the priorities within the Council Plan whilst continuing to deliver the day to day services for residents, businesses and visitors.

Financially the main impacts of COVID-19 have appeared in the 2020/2021 financial statements and will continue onwards. The non-financial impacts began with lockdown in March 2020 and as a small authority resource allocation, goodwill and team work were key factors in our response. It has been a privilege to see the commitment of our staff in supporting the wider community during the pandemic. The positives learnt from the work with the wider community, as well as the ways of working that were deployed at pace, will be reviewed and retained where possible as part of the organisational development programme. I would particularly like to thank the staff of the Finance Department in achieving the closedown of 2020/21 professionally and efficiently.

S M Roberts CPFA, ACMA
Director of Resources
Section 151 Officer

The Authority's Responsibilities

The authority is required to:

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

The Director of Resources' Responsibilities

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

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Director of Resources 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 Director of Resources has also:

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

I certify that the Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the authority for 2020/21 and of its expenditure and income for the year ended 31 March 2021.

S M Roberts CPFA, ACMA
Director of Resources
Section 151 Officer
30 July 2021
Revised 27 April 2022

Councillor Mrs A Burns
Audit and Governance Committee Chair
Revised 27 April 2022

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

2019/20					2020/21		
Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure		Notes	Gross Expenditure	Gross Income	Net Expenditure
£000	£000	£000			£000	£000	£000
20,727	(16,675)	4,052	Resources		22,638	(16,346)	6,292
8,876	(3,592)	5,284	Community Services		7,383	(2,327)	5,056
4,571	(3,211)	1,360	Regeneration and the built environment		7,100	(3,060)	4,040
9,713	(11,669)	(1,956)	Housing Revenue Account		7,756	(11,248)	(3,492)
2,601	(5)	2,596	Central Services		2,621	(9)	2,612
46,488	(35,152)	11,336	Cost of Services		47,498	(32,990)	14,508
1,264	(414)	850	Other operating expenditure	10	394	(16)	378
4,344	(2,504)	1,840	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	11	4,203	(2,286)	1,917
5,631	(18,588)	(12,957)	Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	12	5,288	(23,555)	(18,267)
57,727	(56,658)	1,069	(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services		57,383	(58,847)	(1,464)
(1,177)	-	(1,177)	(Surplus) or Deficit on revaluation of Non-Current Assets		(5,123)	-	(5,123)
(2,534)	-	(2,534)	Remeasurements of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)		157	-	157
(3,711)	0	(3,711)	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		(4,966)	0	(4,966)
54,016	(56,658)	(2,642)	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure		52,417	(58,847)	(6,430)

Movement in Reserves Statement

2019/20	Reserves held for revenue purposes		Reserves held for capital purposes			Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Council Reserves
	General Fund	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied			
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2019 brought forward	(10,184)	(3,241)	(2,511)	(2,672)	(2,645)	(21,253)	(93,684)	(114,937)
Movement in Reserves during 2019/20								
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	1,960	(891)	-	-	-	1,069	-	1,069
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3,711)	(3,711)
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	1,960	(891)	0	0	0	1,069	(3,711)	(2,642)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (Note 7)	(1,423)	364	(332)	(81)	(489)	(1,961)	1,961	0
Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	537	(527)	(332)	(81)	(489)	(892)	(1,750)	(2,642)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves (Note 8)	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
(Increase) / Decrease in 2019/20	537	(527)	(332)	(81)	(489)	(892)	(1,750)	(2,642)
Balance at 31 March 2020 carried forward	(9,647)	(3,768)	(2,842)	(2,753)	(3,134)	(22,144)	(95,435)	(117,579)

At the 31 March 2020, the General Fund comprises a Fund balance of £2.3m and general earmarked reserves of £7.347m; at 31 March 2019 these were £2.3m and £7.884m respectively. As at 31 March 2020 the HRA Fund Balance comprises a Fund balance of £1.0m and earmarked reserves of £2.768m at 31 March 2019 these were £1.0m and £2.241m respectively.

Movement in Reserves Statement

2020/21	Reserves held for revenue purposes		Reserves held for capital purposes			Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	Total Council Reserves
	General Fund	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied			
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2020 brought forward	(9,647)	(3,768)	(2,842)	(2,753)	(3,134)	(22,144)	(95,435)	(117,579)
Movement in Reserves during 2020/21								
(Surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	730	(2,194)	-	-	-	(1,464)	-	(1,464)
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-	-	(4,966)	(4,966)
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	730	(2,194)	0	0	0	(1,464)	(4,966)	(6,430)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis under regulations (Note 7)	(6,763)	574	(928)	40	(2,206)	(9,283)	9,283	0
Net (Increase)/Decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	(6,033)	(1,620)	(928)	40	(2,206)	(10,747)	4,317	(6,430)
Transfers to/(from) Earmarked Reserves (Note 8)	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	0
(Increase) / Decrease in 2020/21	(6,033)	(1,620)	(928)	40	(2,206)	(10,747)	4,317	(6,430)
Balance at 31 March 2021 carried forward	(15,680)	(5,388)	(3,770)	(2,713)	(5,340)	(32,891)	(91,119)	(124,010)

At the 31 March 2021, the General Fund comprises a Fund Balance of £2.3m, general earmarked reserves of £9.451m, and £3.929m of Covid related Business Rate Grants that are specifically required to meet the Collection Fund deficit in 2021/22. At 31 March 2020 the Fund Balance was £2.3m, the general reserves were £7.347m and there was no Business Rate Grants reserve as this was only introduced in 2020/21. As at 31 March 2021 the HRA Fund Balance comprises a Fund balance of £1.0m and earmarked reserves of £4.388m; at 31 March 2020 these were £1.0m and £2.768m respectively.

31 March 2020		Notes	31 March 2021
£000			£000
161,832	Property, Plant and Equipment	14	161,331
700	Heritage Assets	15	1,573
984	Long Term Debtors	27	790
163,516	Long Term Assets		163,694
19,063	Short Term Investments	18	18,046
30	Inventories		26
6,569	Short Term Debtors	19	12,325
3,494	Cash and Cash Equivalents	20	12,257
29,156	Current Assets		42,654
(1,494)	Short Term Borrowing	18	(1,494)
(7,415)	Short Term Creditors	21	(14,467)
(8,909)	Current Liabilities		(15,961)
(512)	Provisions	22	(600)
(35,478)	Long Term Borrowing	18	(34,479)
(30,194)	Other Long Term Liabilities	24	(31,299)
(66,184)	Long Term Liabilities		(66,378)
117,579	Net Assets		124,010
(22,144)	Usable Reserves	Page 22	(32,891)
(95,435)	Unusable Reserves	23	(91,119)
(117,579)	Total Reserves		(124,010)

These accounts were originally authorised for issue on the 30 July 2021 and have been subsequently re-authorised for issue on 27 April 2022.

S M Roberts CPFA, ACMA
Director of Resources
Section 151 Officer

2019/20		Notes	2020/21
£000			£000
1,069	Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services		(1,464)
(8,606)	Adjustments to net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	28	(11,950)
2,082	Adjustments for items included in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	29	2,484
(5,455)	Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities		(10,930)
3,853	Investing Activities	31	(1,919)
1,066	Financing Activities	32	4,086
(536)	Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(8,763)
2,958	Cash and cash equivalents at start of the reporting period	20	3,494
3,494	Cash and cash equivalents at end of the reporting period	20	12,257
(536)	Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(8,763)

Note	Name	Page
1	Accounting Policies	26
2	Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted	40
3	Critical Judgements in applying Accounting Policies	40
4	Assumptions made about the future and other major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty	41
5	Events after the Balance Sheet Date	43
6	COVID-19 grants	44
7	Expenditure and funding analysis	47
8	Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations	51
9	Transfer (to) / from earmarked reserves	54
10	Other Operating Expenditure	55
11	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure	55
12	Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income	55
13	Grant Income	56
14	Property, Plant, Equipment and Vehicles	57
15	Heritage Assets	63
16	Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing	65
17	Leases	66
18	Financial Instruments	68
19	Short Term Debtors	72
20	Cash and Cash Equivalents	73
21	Short Term Creditors	73
22	Provisions	73
23	Unusable Reserves	74
24	Other Long Term Liabilities	78
25	Contingent Liabilities	78
26	Contingent Assets	79
27	Long Term Debtors	79
28	Cash Flow Statement – Adjustments to the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	79
29	Cash Flow Statement – Adjustments for items included in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities	80
30	Cash Flow Statement – Operating Activities	80
31	Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities	80
32	Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities	80
33	Related Parties	81
34	Members Allowances	81
35	Officers Remuneration	82
36	Defined Benefit Pension Scheme	83
37	External Audit Costs	88
38	Trust Funds	88

Note 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES**a. General Principles**

The Statement of Accounts summarises the authority's transactions for the 2020/21 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2021. The authority is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The Regulations require the Accounts to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21 and the Service Reporting Code of Practice 2020/21, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards and Financial Reporting Standards.

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.

The accounting statements have been prepared on a going concern basis, the assessment of which has taken account of the continuation of the provision of the services provided by the authority through the establishment of a new authority from 1 April 2023.

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 authority 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 authority.
- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the authority 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 authority.
- Revenue from leasehold properties is recognised on an averaged basis where leases contain rent free periods and the first year requires an adjustment of over £10k.
- Revenue from non-exchange transactions is recognised when it is probable that the benefit will flow and the amount can be measured reliably, further details are included in accounting policy d. Council Tax and Business Rate Transactions.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue for the income that might not be collected. For housing benefit overpayments a full provision is made for the possible non-collection of this debt. However, it is the authority's policy to pursue all debtors where possible, however as the amounts and timing of recovery are not certain, they are not recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

c. Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

d. Council Tax and Business Rate Transactions

As the billing authority, Barrow Borough Council accounts for its own share of the council tax and business rates transactions in the Balance Sheet and its share of the collection fund balance is held in the Collection Fund Adjustment Account. The precepting authorities' share of the council tax or business rate transactions as well as their share of the collection fund balance is accounted for as a debtor or creditor with those bodies. The County Council and Government share of the business rate transactions as well as their share of the council tax is accounted for as a debtor or creditor with those bodies. The Police & Crime Commissioner for Cumbria share of the council tax is also accounted for as a debtor or creditor.

e. Exceptional Items

When items of income and expense are material, their nature and amount is disclosed separately, 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 authority's financial performance.

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

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

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

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

g. Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services and support services are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding fixed 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.

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

h. Employee BenefitsBenefits Payable During Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (for example, cars) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the authority. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, such as time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end which employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the authority 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 relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the authority is demonstrably committed to the termination of 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 or Housing Revenue Account balance to be charged with the amount payable by the authority to the pension fund 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 pension enhancement termination benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the authority are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, run by Cumbria County Council.

The scheme provided defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees worked for the authority.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

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

- The liabilities of the Cumbria pension fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – that is 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 and other factors, and projections of projected earnings for current employees.
- Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using the applicable discount rate based on the indicative rate of return on AA rated corporate bonds.
- The assets of the Cumbria pension fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:
 - quoted securities – current bid price
 - unquoted securities – professional estimate
 - unitised securities – current bid price
 - property – market value.

- The change in the net pensions liability is analysed into the following components:
 - Service cost comprising:
 - current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked
 - past service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non Distributed Costs
 - net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), that is, net interest expense for the authority – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.
 - Re-measurements comprising:
 - the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure
 - actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure
 - contributions paid to the Cumbria 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 and Housing Revenue Account Balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Authority to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are transfers to and from the Pensions Reserve to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Discretionary Benefits

The authority 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.

i. 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; and, those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts

is not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

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

j. Financial Instruments

Financial Liabilities

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

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

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

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

Where premiums and discounts have been charged to the Housing Revenue Account, regulations state that the impact on the Housing Revenue Account Balance must be spread over the term that was remaining on the loan against which the premium was payable or discount receivable when it was repaid, restricted to a term of 10 years.

Financial Assets

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

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

The authority's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are therefore classified as amortised cost, except for those whose contractual payments are not solely payment of principal and interest (i.e. where the cash flows do not take the form of a basic debt instrument).

Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

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

However, the authority has made interest free loans using Cluster of Empty Homes funding to two private landlords at less than market rate (soft loan). When soft loans are made, a loss is recorded in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (debited to the appropriate service) for the present value of the interest that will be foregone over the life of the instrument, resulting in a lower amortised cost than the outstanding principal. Interest is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at a higher effective rate of interest than the rate receivable from the private landlord, with the difference serving to increase the amortised cost of the loan in the Balance Sheet. Statutory provisions require that the impact of soft loans on the General Fund Balance is the interest receivable for the financial year – the reconciliation of amounts debited and credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the net gain required against the General Fund Balance is managed by a transfer to or from the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Upon repayment, the Cluster of Empty Homes funding is recognised as a capital receipt.

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

The authority recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost, either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the authority. Impairment losses are calculated to reflect the expectation that the future cash flows might not take place because the borrower could default on their obligations. Where credit risk has increased significantly since an instrument was initially recognised, losses are assessed on a lifetime basis. Where credit risk has not increased significantly or remains low, losses are assessed on the basis of 12-month expected losses.

In accordance with the Treasury Strategy, the authority does not trade in stocks, shares or gilts.

k. 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 authority when there is reasonable assurance that:

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

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

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

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

I. Inventories and Long Term Contracts

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The authority's inventories are stocks purchased for internal issue and for sale as merchandise.

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

m. Leases

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

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

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

The Authority as Lessee

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 authority are added to the carrying amount of the asset. Premiums paid on entry into a lease are applied to writing down the lease liability. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

- a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property, plant or equipment – applied to write down the lease liability, and
- a 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 (where ownership of the asset does not transfer to the authority at the end of the lease period).

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

Operating Leases

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

Vehicles and equipment that are contained within a contractual arrangement are deemed to be an operating lease where the Council does not significantly control the physical assets and where the term of the contract is less than the expected useful life of the assets.

The Authority as Lessor

Operating Leases

Where the authority grants an operating lease over a property, the asset is retained in the Balance Sheet. Rental income is credited to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Credits are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (for example, there is a premium paid at the commencement of the lease).

All operating leases, including peppercorn leases, are recognised by the authority for disclosure purposes, building leases not less than 10 years and land leases not less than 50 years are assessed for evidence of a finance lease. Vehicle and equipment operating leases are deemed to be immaterial.

n. 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. In accordance with the Code of Practice they are excluded from the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and associated notes, with the exception of a charge to the Housing Revenue Account.

The total absorption costing principle is used – the full cost of overheads and support services are shared between users in proportion to the benefits received, with the exception of:

- Corporate and Democratic Core – costs relating to the authority's status as a multifunctional, democratic organisation.
- Non Distributed Costs – the cost of discretionary benefits awarded to employees retiring early.

These two cost categories are defined in the Service Reporting Code of Practice 2020/21 and accounted for as separate headings in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement: these now form part of the Corporate and Democratic Services heading which remains part of Net Expenditure on Continuing Services.

o. 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.

The Council holds a number of assets acquired to enhance the built environment, support the local economy and provide the type of property needed for business development in the Borough. Collectively, these are regeneration assets and they continue to be held by the authority for the same purpose as at acquisition. Regeneration assets are recognised as Other Land and Buildings within the Balance Sheet. The rental stream from these assets is credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Disposal proceeds from appropriate regeneration assets are subject to Government funding claw back consideration.

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 authority 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 (repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred. Acquisitions under £10,000 are de minimus and are not considered to create an asset.

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 authority does not capitalise borrowing costs.

The cost of assets acquired other than by purchase is deemed to be its current value, unless the acquisition does not have commercial substance (which will not lead to a variation in the cash flows of the authority). In the latter case, where an asset is acquired via an exchange, the cost of the acquisition is the carrying amount of the asset given up by the authority.

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

- infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost
- dwellings – current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV-SH)
- surplus assets – the current value measurement base is fair value, estimated at highest and best use
- all other assets – current value – in existing use (EUV) or where the asset is of a specialist nature and has no active market, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of fair value

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

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

Where decreases in value are identified, they are accounted for by:

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

The Revaluation Reserve contains 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.

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment with a value over £150,000 has major components whose cost is not less than 20% of the total cost of the asset, the components are treated as separate assets. For existing assets, the components are recognised on replacement until a revaluation is performed.

Impairment

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

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

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

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

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant, Equipment and Vehicle 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 (such as freehold land and certain Community Assets) and assets that are not yet available for use (assets under construction).

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- dwellings and other buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer
- plant, equipment and vehicles – straight-line allocation over the useful life of each class of assets in the Balance Sheet, as advised by a suitably qualified officer
- infrastructure – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the asset.

Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment with a value over £150,000 has major components whose cost is not less than 20% of the total cost of the asset, the components are depreciated separately. For existing assets, the components are recognised on replacement until a revaluation is performed.

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.

Disposals and Non-current Assets Held for Sale

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. The asset is revalued immediately before reclassification and then carried at the lower of this amount and fair value less the costs of sale. Where there is a subsequent decrease to fair value the loss is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the (Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

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

Council dwellings are available for sale to sitting tenants under the provisions of the Right to Buy legislation. The authority does not classify these as held for sale unless there is a formal exchange date available at the year end.

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

When an asset is disposed of, decommissioned or derecognised, 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 (that is netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

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

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

p. Heritage Assets

All heritage assets are held with the objective of increasing knowledge, understanding, culture and appreciation of our heritage; with the Dock Museum's heritage policies and comprehensive asset database facilitating the management, recording, preservation and conservation (exhibition led rolling programme) of assets.

The only items that are not reported within the Balance Sheet are items of a de minimus level plus the Graving Dock, Cenotaph and Stone Fountain where, following advice, it is deemed impracticable, due to their diverse nature, to obtain purchase costs or valuations. One further class of asset is reported at cost.

Recognition

New assets are recognised when they are donated or received by the authority at a valuation set at the time of receipt.

Measurement

All non-operational heritage asset valuations, as implemented by the 2011/12 code, are carried out by Bonhams, International Auctioneers and Valuers.

Revaluations

There is no prescribed minimum period between heritage valuations; however, the carrying amount is reviewed with sufficient frequency ensuring the valuations remain current and at least every ten years.

Depreciation

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

- Historic Collections include social history, ship models, boats, industrial history, art & sculpture, ceramics & glass, furniture, silverware, regalia and old statues: no depreciation as assets are deemed to have indeterminate lives.
- New Statues: 25 years straight line depreciation.
- War Memorials: 25 years straight line depreciation.

q. Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent AssetsProvisions

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

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

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will 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, this is only recognised as income for the relevant service if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the authority settles the obligation.

Contingent Liabilities

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

r. Fair value measurement

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

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

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

The authority uses appropriate valuation techniques for each circumstance, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs. This takes into account the three levels of categories for inputs to valuations for fair value assets at:

- Level 1 - quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the authority 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

s. Reserves

The authority sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then appropriated back into the General Fund Balance 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, pensions and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the authority – these reserves are explained in the relevant policies.

t. Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

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

u. 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.

v. Rounding

The Council accepts that minor rounding differences of between £1k and £2k may occur within its Statement of Accounts, these amounts are not material and the Council does not intend to alter any totals where this occurs.

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

The Code requires the authority to disclose information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted. The authority shall provide known or reasonably estimable information relevant to assessing the possible impact that application of the new standard will have on the authority's financial statements in the period of initial application. This requirement applies to accounting standards that come into effect for financial years commencing on or before 1 January of the financial year in question, i.e. on or before 1 January 2020 for 2020/21 (i.e. on or before 1 January 2021 for 2021/22). For this disclosure the standards introduced by the 2021/22 Code include:

- Definition of a Business: Amendments to IFRS3 Business Combinations This is currently not applicable to the Council as we have no group accounts although this will change in 2021/22 when the arrangements for the Leisure Centre result in a subsidiary arrangement.

Both of the following reforms relate to the transition in the UK away from the London InterBank Offered Rate (Libor) to the Sterling OverNight Index Average (Sonia) by the end of 2021:

- Interest Rate Benchmark Reform: Amendments to IFRS9, IAS39 and IFRS7 This concerns issues affecting financial reporting in the period before replacement of existing interest rate benchmarks with an alternative
- Interest Rate Benchmark Reform – Phase 2:-Amendments to IFRS9, IAS39, IFRS7, IFRS4 and IFRS16. This concerns issues that might affect financial reporting when an existing interest rate benchmark are replaced with an alternative.

The Council does not have any financial instruments that make use of interest rate benchmarks so the change will have no impact on its accounts.

The following change was identified in the previous year but is included here as it will impact from 1 April 2022:

- IFRS16 Leases will require local authorities that are lessees to recognise most leases on their balance sheets as right-of-use assets with corresponding lease liabilities (there is recognition for low-value and short-term leases). Implementation of IFRS16 for local government has now been deferred to 1 April 2022. Due to the effect of dealing with COVID-19 on the workload of the Council it has not been possible to identify and estimate the impact of this change.

Note 3. CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

In applying the accounting policies set out in Note 1, the authority 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 authority has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the authority's assets might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision. The authority has prepared the accounting statements on a going concern basis which assumes continued operation for the foreseeable future.
- The authority is deemed to control assets that fall within contractual and other arrangements which involve the provision of a service using specific underlying assets and which therefore are considered to contain a lease. The accounting treatment for leases has been applied to these arrangements to determine whether the lease contained within them is a finance lease or an operating lease. The vehicles within the waste management contract are included in the accounting statements as an embedded lease.

- The values of non-current assets and net defined pension liability are material figures on the balance sheet reliant on the input of experts to provide valuations. Suitably qualified professionals are used to provide these values. Differences in opinion between professionals could produce different results. Statutory provisions are in place to prevent these revaluations having an impact on the Council's usable reserves.
- Whilst suitably qualified professionals are used to provide values for assets and liabilities the nature and timing of Covid-19 has led to increased uncertainty this year end as the full impact remains unknown and unquantifiable. Individual notes give further details.
- The authority has considered whether any property should be classed as an investment property or property, plant and equipment. The authority does not hold any assets for capital appreciation but does hold some assets let to commercial tenants that were specifically funded by Government urban regeneration programmes; The authority holds a number of assets acquired to enhance the built environment, support the local economy and provide the type of property needed for business development in the Borough. Collectively, these are regeneration assets and are accounted for as Property, Plant and Equipment.
- The authority has considered which of its assets should be classified as heritage assets.

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

The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the authority 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 used.

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

Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment (with the exception of infrastructure, community assets, assets under construction and equipment) are revalued on a periodic basis and tested annually for indicators of impairment. Judgements are required to make an assessment as to whether there is an indication of impairment. The impairment tests include examination of capital expenditure incurred in the financial year to ascertain whether it has resulted in an increase in value or an impairment of an asset. Advice has been provided by the authority's external valuers.

If the actual results differ from the assumptions the value of the property, plant and equipment will be over or understated. This would be adjusted when the assets were next revalued. For instance if council dwellings were not impaired in 2020/21, but it was subsequently determined that the impairment to the value should have been 10%, their value in the Balance Sheet would be overstated by £7.22m and the depreciation charged to the HRA for 2020/21 would be overstated by £234k.

In addition a number of assets are valued on the basis of Depreciated Replacement cost and the assumptions made can have a significant impact on the final valuation. This is particularly the case when consideration is given to the nature of the replacement such as the Town Hall which has significant architectural value.

The valuer has recommended that valuations are kept under frequent review in the light of COVID-19. In reality the majority of assets are revalued every year and this issue will be addressed as part of this annual process.

Depreciation of Property, Plant and Equipment

Assets are depreciated based on useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to maintain the expenditure on repairs and maintenance resulting in uncertainty in the useful lives assigned to assets by the valuers. If the useful life of assets is reduced depreciation increases and the carrying amount of assets falls. Some of the authority's assets are carried at an impaired value (revaluation loss), awaiting an improvement in their market; these are council dwellings and some properties rented out on a commercial basis. The impaired values then have useful lives applied to calculate the depreciation charge. If the impairment increased or if there was a reversal of the previous loss, the value of the asset and the related depreciation would be over or under stated. For instance if the useful life of the council dwellings was determined to be 25 years, rather than the current 30 years, the depreciation charge to the HRA for 2020/21 would be £2.51m rather than £2.09m.

Fair Value Estimations

When the fair values of financial assets and liabilities (Surplus Assets or Assets Held for Sale) cannot be measured based on quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets (where transactions take place with sufficient frequency and volume to provide pricing information on an ongoing basis i.e. Level 1 inputs) their fair value is measured using the following valuation techniques:

- Level 2 inputs, quoted prices that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (i.e. as prices) or indirectly (i.e. derived from prices)
- Level 3 inputs, that are based on unobservable data; or observable market valuation data adjusted as necessary for the specific asset or liability.

If possible, the inputs to these valuation techniques are based on observable data, but where this is not possible, judgement is required in establishing fair values. Changes in assumptions used, consequently, could affect the fair value of the authority's assets and liabilities i.e. resulting in a significantly lower or higher fair value measurement.

Where Level 1 inputs are not available, the authority employs relevant experts to identify the most appropriate valuation techniques to determine fair value. All valuations are carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Information about the valuation techniques and inputs used in determining the fair value of these assets is set out in Note 14.

Pensions liability

Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the expected rate of price inflation, the rate at which salaries and pensions are expected to increase, mortality rates and rate of commutation of pensions. A firm of actuaries are engaged to provide the authority with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.

The effects of the net pensions liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. These assumptions interact in complex ways, but some examples of their sensitivity based on 31 March 2021 figures are:

- +0.1% per annum increase in the discount rate assumption would result in a decrease in the net pensions liability of £2.053m; or,
- +0.1% per annum increase in the inflation assumption would result in an increase in the net pensions liability of £2.086m; or,
- +0.1% per annum increase in the pay growth assumption would result in an increase in the net pensions liability of £0.205m; or,
- 1 year increase in the member's life expectancy assumption would result in an increase in the net pensions liability of £4.098m; or,
- +/- 0.1% change in the investment returns would result in a decrease or increase in the net pensions liability of £1.021m

These changes would affect the net pensions liability and the pensions reserve carried in the Balance Sheet, they would not impact on the General Fund or HRA balance.

Financial instruments

The authority's external borrowing is all from the Public Works Loan Board and is included in the accounting statements at amortised cost. The fair value of the authority's external borrowing is estimated by the Public Works Loan Board. The calculation is independently calculated by the authority's treasury advisors to check the reasonableness of the fair value calculated.

If interest rates had been 1% higher with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be to decrease the fair value of fixed rate borrowing liabilities by £5.43m. A 1% fall would increase the fair value by the same amount. Borrowings are not carried at fair value, so nominal gains and losses on fixed borrowings would not impact on the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

Note 5. EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Director of Resources on the 30 July 2021 and is now authorised for issue on 27 April 2022 after incorporating revisions from the audit. . Where any other events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at the 31 March 2021 the figures in the accounting statements and notes should be adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information. No events have been identified.

Local Government Reorganisation has identified an east, west split for the county of Cumbria, creating two unitary authorities. The vesting date is 1 April 2023 and implementation and transition plans are underway. The east unitary is called Westmorland and Furness Council and comprises Barrow Borough Council, South Lakeland District Council, Eden District Council and the relevant proportion of Cumbria County Council services and functions. The reform agenda established by The Bay unitary submission that this authority supported will be pursued in the establishment of the new authority.

Note 6. COVID-19 GRANT FUNDING

During 2020/21 the authority received various COVID-19 funding streams. Some of these were for distribution to businesses and residents, and some were for the authority to retain to support additional costs and income losses.

The funding for distribution falls into two categories in terms of inclusion in the financial statements, agency or principal. The treatment of Business Rate relief is covered by existing accounting arrangements – these are treated as part of the principal accounting and are shown separately.

In order to determine the principal or agent basis for accounting, the following controls were considered and concluded:

Grant	Does the LA set the amount to award?	Does LA set eligibility criteria?	Reconciliation to ensure fully funded?	LA responsible for any overpayments?	Conclusion
Council Tax Hardship	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Principal
Small Business Grants	No	No	Yes	No	Agent
Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants	No	No	Yes	No	Agent
Local Authority Discretionary Grants	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Principal
Self-isolation Payments	No	No	Yes	No	Agent
Local Restriction Support Grants - Closed	No	No	Yes	No	Agent
Local Restriction Support Grants - Open	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Principal
Additional Restrictions Grant	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Principal

Where the authority is acting as an agent for Government and follows established criteria – Government set the amount of grant, Government set the scheme eligibility, there is a reconciliation which includes a top-up if required, the Government will cover any overpayments (subject to certain conditions).

For the scheme where the authority is the principal, the schemes have been locally determined in some aspects. There are certain expectations from Government and no scheme was entirely within the authority's gift but substantially the principal control is deemed to be present.

The COVID-19 grants received and distributed as an agent for Government are not included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement; the amount of grants distributed is matched against an equal amount of funding received. The balance of unspent funding at 31 March 2021 is held on the Balance Sheet within short term creditors:

The COVID-19 grants received and distributed as a principal, in these terms, are included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as gross expenditure within the Resources division and as gross income within Taxation and non-specific grant income. The balance of unspent funding at 31 March 2021 is held on the Balance Sheet within creditors (as receipts in advance):

Grant Stream	Funding Received	Distributed	Balance 31 March 2021
	£000	£000	£000
Council Tax Hardship	798	640	158
Local Authority Discretionary Grants	337	337	-
Local Restriction Grants - Open	474	250	224
Additional Restrictions Grant	1,937	1,469	468
	3,546	2,696	850

In terms of the COVID-19 funding received for additional expenditure and income losses, all of the grants are included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement within Taxation and non-specific grant income. The grant streams are contained in the following table and the balance of unspent funding at 31 March 2021 is held on the Balance Sheet within creditors (as receipts in advance):

Grant Stream	Funding Received	Allocated	Balance 31 March 2021
	£000	£000	£000
Emergency funding	1,370	1,370	-
Sales, fees and charges compensation	613	613	-
Tax Income Guarantee scheme (for 2021/22)	751	-	751
New burdens	268	268	-
Contain Outbreak Management Fund	201	3	198
Compliance and enforcement	44	44	-
	3,247	2,298	949

The allocation of those sums used within the year is split between the divisions and subjective headings as follows:

Division	Employee costs	Supplies and Services	Contracted Services	External Income	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Resources	189	300	-	157	646
Community Services	-	34	535	799	1,368
Regeneration and the built environment	-	-	-	183	183
Central Services	-	62	-	-	62
Other income and expenditure	-	-	-	39	39
	189	396	535	1,178	2,298

Also included within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the Taxation and non-specific grant income, is the amount due for the year in respect of Section 31 grant for the COVID-19 Business Rate reliefs awarded to the retail and nursery hereditaments. The retail relief scheme was extended as part of the COVID-19 response. The following table includes the total amount of the retail and nursery reliefs as it is not possible to separate the relief awarded pre-extension; for context the relief pre-extension was originally estimated to be £150k. The balance of the on-account payments received from Government at 31 March 2021 is held on the Balance Sheet within creditors:

The Tax Income Guarantee Scheme and Business Rate Relief grants are carried forward within earmarked reserves as those will be released to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to match the precepting distributions from the Collection Fund:

- **Earmarked reserves £4,680k:**
 - **Tax Income Guarantee Scheme £751k**
 - **Business Rate Reliefs (COVID-19) £3,929k**

Totalling all of these grants together identifies the total of £41.9m received in 2020/21, £31.8m has been spent either directly by the authority or in grants distributed. The £10.1m balance is carried forward within the Balance Sheet as:

- **Creditors £9,058k:**
 - **Agent – Grants £3,787k**
 - **Principal - Business Rates £5,271k**
- **Creditors (as receipts in advance):**
 - **Principal - Grants £1,049k**

Having these funds paid upfront at the beginning of the financial year and ahead of the grant schemes, removed any cash flow concerns from reduced collections (Council Tax and Business Rates).

The additional costs and income losses have been covered by the COVID-19 grants received. There has been no requirement to call on the authority's financial reserves as a result of COVID-19.

The authority continued the distribution of COVID-19 grants and reliefs into 2021/22 and continues to monitor income recovery through normal budget procedures.

Note 7. EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS – adjustments between funding and accounting basis

The expenditure and funding analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) in comparison with those resources consumed and earned in accordance with generally accepted accounting practice. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's divisions. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practice is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2019/20	As reported for resource allocation	Adjustments to arrive at the net amount chargeable to the General fund & HRA	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund & HRA	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Resources	2,459	465	2,924	1,128	4,052
Community Services	2,618	968	3,586	1,698	5,284
Regeneration and the Built Environment	238	441	679	681	1,360
Housing Revenue Account	(1,988)	(527)	(2,515)	559	(1,956)
Central Services	2,018	116	2,134	462	2,596
Net cost of Services	5,345	1,463	6,808	4,528	11,336
Other income and expenditure	(5,345)	(1,453)	(6,798)	(3,469)	(10,267)
(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	0	10	10	1,059	1,069

2020/21	As reported for resource allocation	Adjustments to arrive at the net amount chargeable to the General fund & HRA	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund & HRA	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Resources	6,059	5	6,064	228	6,292
Community Services	4,017	(7)	4,010	1,045	5,056
Regeneration and the Built Environment	150	460	610	3,430	4,040
Housing Revenue Account	(1,974)	(1,620)	(3,594)	102	(3,492)
Central Services	2,204	(0)	2,204	408	2,612
Net cost of Services	10,456	(1,162)	9,294	5,214	14,508
Other income and expenditure	(10,456)	(6,490)	(16,946)	974	(15,972)
(Surplus) or Deficit on Provision of Services	0	(7,652)	(7,652)	6,188	(1,464)

Note 7a. Adjustments from the General Fund and HRA to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts:

2019/20					2020/21			
Adjustments for capital purposes	Net changes for the Pensions Adjustments	Other differences	Total Adjustments between funding and Accounting Basis		Adjustments for capital purposes	Net changes for the Pensions Adjustments	Other differences	Total Adjustments between funding and Accounting Basis
£000	£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000	£000
(9)	1,126	11	1,128	Resources	0	183	45	228
1,526	166	6	1,698	Community Services	920	106	19	1,045
438	231	12	681	Regeneration and the Built Environment	3,233	154	43	3,430
114	429	16	559	Housing Revenue Account	(58)	124	36	102
171	272	19	462	Central Services	189	178	41	408
2,240	2,224	64	4,528	Net Cost of Service	4,284	745	184	5,214
(3,026)	(625)	182	(3,469)	Other income and expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(4,009)	436	4,547	974
(786)	1,599	246	1,059	Difference between General Fund Surplus or Deficit & Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	275	1,181	4,731	6,188

Note 7b. Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

2019/20					2020/21					
Cost of Service	Other operating expenditure (Note 9)	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure (Note 10)	Taxation and Non-specific Grant income (Note 11)	Surplus or Deficit on provision of services		Cost of Service	Other operating expenditure (Note 9)	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure (Note 10)	Taxation and Non-specific Grant income (Note 11)	Surplus or Deficit on provision of services
£000	£000	£000		£000		£000	£000	£000		£000
					Expenditure					
9,747	-	-	-	9,747	Employee expenses	9,225	-	-	-	9,225
32,189	48	-	-	32,237	Other service expenses	31,449	50	-	-	31,499
-	-	-	-	0	Support service recharges	-	-	-	-	0
4,552	-	-	-	4,552	Depreciation, amortisation, impairment & revaluation	6,825	-	-	-	6,825
-	-	4,344	-	4,344	Interest payments	-	-	4,202	-	4,202
-	546	-	5,631	6,177	Precepts and levies	-	344	-	-	344
-	670	-	-	670	Derecognised non current assets	-	-	-	-	0
46,488	1,264	4,344	5,631	57,727	Total Expenditure	47,499	394	4,202	0	52,095
					Income					
(18,302)	-	-	-	(18,302)	Fees, charges and other service income	(16,010)	-	-	-	(16,010)
-	-	(2,504)	-	(2,504)	Interest and investment income	-	-	(2,286)	-	(2,286)
-	-	-	(13,457)	(13,457)	Income from council tax and NDR	-	-	-	384	384
(16,850)	-	-	(5,131)	(21,981)	Government grants and contributions	(16,981)	-	-	(18,650)	(35,631)
-	(414)	-	-	(414)	Gain on disposal of Fixed Assets	-	(16)	-	-	(16)
(35,152)	(414)	(2,504)	(18,588)	(56,658)	Total Income	(32,991)	(16)	(2,286)	(18,267)	(53,560)
11,336	850	1,840	(12,957)	1,069	(Surplus) / Deficit on Provision of Services	14,508	378	1,916	(18,267)	(1,464)

Note 8. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER REGULATIONS

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

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

General Fund Balance

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

Housing Revenue Account Balance

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

Major Repairs Reserve

The authority is required to maintain the Major Repairs Reserve, which controls the application of the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA). The MRA is restricted to being applied to new capital investment in HRA assets or the financing of historical capital expenditure by the HRA. The balance shows the MRA that has yet to be applied at the year-end.

Capital Receipts Reserve

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

Capital Grants Unapplied

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

Notes to the Main Accounting Statements

Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations 2019/20	Usable Reserves						Movement in Unusable Reserves
	General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Movement in Usable Reserves	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adjustments primarily involving:							
Capital Adjustment Account:							
Reversal of items debited or credited in the CIES							
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(1,964)	(2,092)	-	-	-	(4,056)	4,056
Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(144)	(342)	-	-	-	(486)	486
Capital grants and contributions applied	2,555	-	-	-	-	2,555	(2,555)
Revenue funded from Capital under Statute (REFCUS)	(757)	-	-	-	-	(757)	757
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	(1,104)	(725)	-	-	-	(1,829)	1,829
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CIES							
Statutory provision for the financing of capital expenditure	731	-	-	-	-	731	(731)
Voluntary revenue provision for financing of capital expenditure	-	817	-	-	-	817	(817)
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Capital Grants Unapplied Account:							
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the CIES	509	-	-	-	(509)	0	0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	-	-	-	-	20	20	(20)
Capital Receipts Reserve:							
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	620	953	-	(1,573)	-	0	0
Cluster of Empty Homes loan repayment	-	-	-	(221)	-	(221)	221
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	-	1,291	-	1,291	(1,291)
Contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance the payments to the Government capital receipts pool	(422)	-	-	422	-	0	0
Major Repairs Reserve:							
Reversal of Major Repairs Reserve credited to the HRA	-	2,092	(2,092)	-	-	0	0
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	1,760	-	-	1,760	(1,760)
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account:							
Amount by which finance costs charged to the CIES are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	59	-	-	-	-	59	(59)
Pensions Reserve:							
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the CIES	(3,169)	(752)	-	-	-	(3,921)	3,921
Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	1,893	429	-	-	-	2,322	(2,322)
Collection Fund Adjustment Account:							
Amount by which council tax and NNDR income credited to the CIES is different from that calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(182)	-	-	-	-	(182)	182
Accumulated Absences Account:							
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(48)	(16)	-	-	-	(64)	64
Total Adjustments	(1,423)	364	(332)	(81)	(489)	(1,961)	1,961

Notes to the Main Accounting Statements

Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations 2020/21	Usable Reserves						
	General Fund Balance	Housing Revenue Account	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied	Movement in Usable Reserves	Movement in Unusable Reserves
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adjustments primarily involving:							
Capital Adjustment Account:							
Reversal of items debited or credited in the CIES							
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(2,037)	(2,051)	-	-	-	(4,088)	4,088
Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(2,301)	42	-	-	-	(2,259)	2,259
Capital grants and contributions applied	799	0	-	-	-	799	(799)
Revenue funded from Capital under Statute (REFCUS)	(476)	0	-	-	-	(476)	476
Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	0	(193)	-	-	-	(193)	193
Insertion of items not debited or credited to the CIES							
Statutory provision for the financing of capital expenditure	736	-	-	-	-	736	(736)
Voluntary revenue provision for financing of capital expenditure	-	816	-	-	-	816	(816)
Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund and HRA balances	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Capital Grants Unapplied Account:							
Capital grants and contributions unapplied credited to the CIES	2,275	-	-	-	(2,275)	0	0
Application of grants to capital financing transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	-	-	-	-	69	69	(69)
Capital Receipts Reserve:							
Transfer of cash sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES		209	-	(209)	-	0	0
Cluster of Empty Homes loan repayment	-	-	-	(221)	-	(221)	221
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	-	275	-	275	(275)
Contribution from the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance the payments to the Government capital receipts pool	(195)	-	-	195	-	0	0
Major Repairs Reserve:							
Reversal of Major Repairs Reserve credited to the HRA	-	2,051	(2,051)	-	-	0	0
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	-	-	1,123	-	-	1,123	(1,123)
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account:							
Amount by which finance costs charged to the CIES are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	51	-	-	-	-	51	(51)
Pensions Reserve:							
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the CIES	(2,263)	(498)	-	-	-	(2,761)	2,761
Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	1,344	234	-	-	-	1,578	(1,578)
Collection Fund Adjustment Account:							
Amount by which council tax and NNDR income credited to the CIES is different from that calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(4,547)	-	-	-	-	(4,547)	4,547
Accumulated Absences Account:							
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(148)	(36)	-	-	-	(184)	184
Total Adjustments	(6,763)	574	(928)	40	(2,206)	(9,283)	9,283

Note 9. TRANSFERS (TO)/FROM EARMARKED RESERVES

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund and HRA balances in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2020/21. Grants and contributions for revenue purposes are recognised as income immediately and carried forward as earmarked grants (reserves) where they are unspent at the year-end date.

	Balance at 1 April 2019	Transfers out 2019/20	Transfers in 2019/20	Balance at 31 March 2020	Transfers out 2020/21	Transfers in 2020/21	Balance at 31 March 2021
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
MTFP reserve	(1,458)	1,612	(154)	0	-	-	0
Transformation reserve	(390)	136	(1,263)	(1,517)	302	(828)	(2,043)
Renewals reserve	(2,008)	1,432	(150)	(726)	10	(10)	(726)
Insurance reserve	(101)	23	(23)	(101)	-	-	(101)
Losses reserve	(862)	-	-	(862)	-	-	(862)
Budget contingency reserve	(1,950)	1,077	(1,978)	(2,851)	197	(1,251)	(3,905)
Apprentices reserve	(35)	-	-	(35)	-	-	(35)
Welfare support reserve	(382)	57	(343)	(668)	58	-	(610)
Section 31 Business Rate Reliefs reserve	-	-	-	0	-	(3,929)	(3,929)
Tax Income Guarantee	-	-	-	0	-	(751)	(751)
Earmarked revenue grants	(698)	322	(211)	(587)	253	(84)	(418)
Total General Fund earmarked reserves	(7,884)	4,659	(4,122)	(7,347)	820	(6,853)	(13,380)
HRA earmarked reserves	(2,241)	-	(527)	(2,768)	-	(1,620)	(4,388)
Total earmarked reserves	(10,125)	4,659	(4,649)	(10,115)	820	(8,473)	(17,768)

The Council has the following general fund earmarked reserves:

MTFP reserve – this reserve has now been closed with the majority of the balance transferring to the Transformation reserve.

Transformation reserve - this reserve holds the funds set aside for service transformation and major projects.

Renewals reserve - this reserve holds the revenue funds set aside for capital projects and cyclical renewal of major items.

Insurance reserve - this reserve holds the funds set aside for excesses payable over the medium term.

Losses reserve - this reserve holds the funds set aside for the partial exemption VAT threshold, the MMI scheme of arrangement and any uninsured losses.

Budget contingency reserve – this reserve holds the funds set aside to cover one-off items that are not set in the revenue budget, including business rate volatility and the 2020/21 COVID-19 tax income guarantee scheme.

Apprenticeships reserve – this reserve holds the funds set aside for the five apprentice positions created in 2014/15.

Welfare support reserve – this reserve holds the funds set aside to support discretionary housing payments, transitional assistance for supported welfare organisations and other welfare support.

Section 31 Business Rate Reliefs – the Government granted business rate relief to various sectors during 2020/21 and compensated Councils for these reliefs with a Section 31 grant. These reliefs are shown as a deficit in the Council's share of the Collection Fund Adjustment Account while the grant income must be shown in the Council's General Fund. This reserve is not available for any other purpose.

Earmarked revenue grants – this reserve holds the revenue grants income which have no claw-back conditions attached and are yet to be applied to matching expenditure.

Note 10. OTHER OPERATING EXPENDITURE

The authority's other operating expenditure shown below the Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement consists of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
124	Parish Council precepts	148
422	Payments to the Government Housing Capital Receipts Pool	196
48	Pension administration expenses	50
670	Derecognised non-current assets	-
1,159	Carrying value of disposed non-current assets	193
(1,573)	Sale proceeds from the disposal of non-current asset	(209)
850	Total	378

The gain on the disposal of non-current assets for 2020/21 is £16k; for 2019/20 this was £414k.

Note 11. FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The authority's financing and investment income and expenditure shown below the Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement consists of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
1,443	Interest Payable and similar charges	1,419
2,901	Interest on pension liabilities	2,784
(2,191)	Interest on plan assets	(2,104)
(313)	Interest receivable and similar income	(182)
1,840	Total	1,917

Note 12. TAXATION AND NON SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME

The authority's taxation and specific grant income shown below the Cost of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement holds a number of grants and contributions that are used on a corporate basis. The grants and contributions are as follows:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(4,682)	Council Tax income	(4,797)
(8,474)	Business rate retention	(4,232)
5,142	Business rate tariff	5,171
489	Business rate levy	117
(301)	Business rate pool	(107)
(1,252)	Revenue Support Grant	(1,272)
-	Non-ring fenced grants Covid 19	(9,675)
(1,553)	Non-ring fenced grants other	(870)
(2,326)	Capital grants and contributions	(2,602)
(12,957)	Total	(18,267)

Note 13. GRANT INCOME

The authority credited the following grants and contributions to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
	Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income	
(1,252)	Revenue Support Grant	(1,272)
(3)	New Homes Bonus Grant	(11)
(68)	New Burdens Grants	(176)
(509)	MHCLG Grants	(2,581)
(960)	MHCLG Business Rates	(679)
(55)	MHCLG Covid 19 Business Rates, New Burdens and Support	(9,675)
(106)	MHCLG Coastal Communities Fund Grant	-
(1,817)	ERDF Grant	-
(361)	Other contributions	(25)
(5,131)	Total	(14,419)
	Credited to Services	
(15,484)	Housing benefits subsidy	(15,500)
(336)	Benefits administration	(338)
(738)	Disabled Facilities Grant	(472)
(97)	Cabinet Office	(14)
(37)	Cumbria County Council	(130)
(6)	Other local authorities	(35)
0	MHCLG Other Grants	(4)
(135)	MHCLG Homelessness	(173)
(17)	Other grants	(315)
(16,850)	Total	(16,981)

Note 14. PROPERTY, PLANT, EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

Movement on Balances in 2019/20	Council Dwellings	Other Land and Buildings	HRA Other Land and Buildings	Vehicle, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	HRA Plant, Furniture & 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	£000	£000	£000
At 1 April 2019	71,503	60,072	3,115	3,936	175	1,604	10,366	4,040	10,919	165,730
additions and enhancements	1,760	(21)	-	96	-	-	-	-	3,034	4,869
reclassification start of year	-	(1)	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	0
revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(11)	862	184	-	-	-	-	142	-	1,177
revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(341)	(154)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(495)
eliminate depreciation on revaluation	(1,917)	(1,593)	(193)	-	-	-	-	(2)	-	(3,705)
de-recognitions / scrapped	-	(671)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(671)
eliminate depreciation on derecognitions / scrapped	-	(14)	-	(235)	-	-	-	-	-	(249)
disposals	(725)	(59)	-	-	-	-	-	(375)	-	(1,159)
eliminate depreciation on disposals	-	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1)
At 31 March 2020	70,269	58,420	3,106	3,797	175	1,604	10,367	3,805	13,953	165,496
Accumulated Depreciation and Revaluation										
At 1 April 2019	0	(342)	(56)	(1,961)	(96)	(689)	(424)	0	0	(3,568)
depreciation charge	(1,917)	(1,550)	(137)	(304)	(39)	(56)	(47)	(2)	-	(4,052)
eliminate depreciation on revaluation	1,917	1,593	193	-	-	-	-	2	-	3,705
eliminate depreciation on derecognition / scrapped	-	14	-	235	-	-	-	-	-	249
eliminate depreciation on disposals	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
At 31 March 2020	0	(284)	0	(2,030)	(135)	(745)	(471)	0	0	(3,665)
Net Book Value at 31 March 2020	70,269	58,136	3,106	1,767	40	859	9,896	3,805	13,953	161,832

Notes to the Main Accounting Statements

Movement on Balances in 2020/21	Council Dwellings	Other Land and Buildings	HRA Other Land and Buildings	Vehicle, Plant, Furniture & Equipment	HRA Plant, Furniture & 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	£000	£000	£000
At 1 April 2020	70,269	58,420	3,106	3,797	175	1,604	10,367	3,805	13,953	165,496
additions and enhancements	1,123	67	-	212	-	69	-	-	319	1,790
reclassification in year	-	3,866	-	-	-	-	-	-	(3,866)	0
eliminate depreciation on transfer	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	854	3,449	171	-	-	-	-	4	-	4,478
revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services	42	(2,527)	(7)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(2,492)
eliminate depreciation on revaluation	(1,874)	(1,895)	(24)	(229)	-	-	-	(1)	-	(4,023)
de-recognitions / scrapped	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
eliminate depreciation on derecognitions / scrapped	-	-	-	(6)	-	-	-	-	-	(6)
disposals	(193)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(193)
eliminate depreciation on disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
At 31 March 2021	70,221	61,380	3,246	3,774	175	1,673	10,367	3,808	10,406	165,050
Accumulated Depreciation and Revaluation										
At 1 April 2020	0	(284)	0	(2,030)	(135)	(745)	(471)	0	0	(3,665)
depreciation charge	(1,874)	(1,611)	(138)	(315)	(40)	(56)	(47)	(1)	-	(4,082)
eliminate depreciation on revaluation	1,874	1,895	24	229	-	-	-	-	-	4,022
eliminate depreciation on derecognition / scrapped	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
At 31 March 2021	0	0	(114)	(2,110)	(175)	(801)	(518)	(1)	0	(3,719)
Net Book Value at 31 March 2020	70,221	61,380	3,132	1,664	0	872	9,849	3,807	10,406	161,331

Depreciation

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

- Council Dwellings: the buildings are depreciated on a straight line basis over 30 years
- Other Buildings: the buildings are depreciated on a straight line basis over various lives between 3 to 75 years
- Plant, Equipment and Vehicles: 3-25 years straight line depreciation
- Infrastructure: 3-50 years straight line depreciation depending on the asset type, infrastructure land is not depreciated

All land assets and land that is part of an overall asset (a component) is not depreciated.

Capital Commitments

At the 31 March 2021, the authority has entered into a number of contracts for the construction or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2020/21 and future years budgeted to cost £138k. Similar commitments at the 31 March 2020 were £443k. The major commitments are:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
402	Industrial & commercial properties	88
41	Equipment	50
443	Total	138

Revaluations

The authority carries out a rolling programme that ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment required to be measured at current value is revalued at least every four years. Valuations were carried out externally by Lambert Smith Hampton Group Limited. In particular the Valuation report and Valuations were prepared by Christiaan Flatley MRICS (RICS Registered Valuer) and assisted by Tom Tawn MRICS (RICS Registered Valuer) Iain Crompton MRICS (RICS Registered Valuer) Jessica Hilton MRICS (RICS Registered Valuer) and Sarah Penny MRICS (RICS Registered Valuer).

Valuations of land and buildings are carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). Assumptions and methods are specifically considered for each individual asset valuation: with general agreed assumptions and bases of valuation being adopted overall. Valuations of vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment are based on current prices where there is an active second-hand market or latest list-prices adjusted for the condition of the asset. The effective date of the Authority's asset revaluations is 31 March (moved from 1 April for the first time in 2019/20) unless a specific circumstance, such as a Code of Practice requirement or an economic or environmental reason is deemed evident.

Not all assets were revalued in 2020/21. Each year the Authority's initial asset valuation list is reviewed. At this stage assets not due to be revalued are added where there is evidence of a recent material change. A subsequent review of valuation changes is also undertaken: this includes those changes arising from environmental, impairment or asset related expenditure factors.

HRA dwellings, garages and any HRA or General Fund assets using the Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) method are revalued/reviewed for revaluation each year.

There is a significant value of the DRC valuations contained within a small number of assets. To support these valuations the gross internal areas are being remeasured to ensure these match the historic data

held by the authority. If these remeasurements create a significant, material difference in the DRC valuation the authority will reflect that in the final Statement.

The valuation for 2020/21 was performed by Lambert Smith Hampton Group Limited and produced a net book value at 31 March 2021 of £138.891m. The valuations took place at the time that COVID-19 had impacted on the UK. The valuers have been asked for their opinion on if and how this might affect the valuations at 31 March 2021 and have said the following:

“Market activity is being impacted in many sectors. As at the valuation date, we consider that we can attach less weight to previous market evidence for comparison purposes, to inform opinions of value. Indeed, the current response to COVID-19 means that we are faced with an unprecedented set of circumstances on which to base a judgement.

Our valuations are therefore reported on the basis of ‘material valuation uncertainty’ as per Valuation Practice Standard 3 and Valuation Practice Guidance Applications 10 of the RICS Red Book Global. Consequently, less certainty – and a higher degree of caution – should be attached to our valuation than would normally be the case. Given the unknown future impact that COVID-19 might have on the real estate market, we recommend that you keep the valuations of the properties covered by this report under frequent review.”

The latest valuations are shown in the following table.

Financial Year & Valuer	Council Dwellings	Other Land and Buildings	HRA Other Land and Buildings	Plant, Equipment and Vehicles	HRA Plant & Equipment	Infrastructure Assets	Community Assets	Surplus Assets	Assets under Construction	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2016/17; - NPS North West Limited	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
2017/18; - Lambert Smith Hampton	-	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
2018/19; - Lambert Smith Hampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2019/20; - Lambert Smith Hampton	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
2020/21; - Lambert Smith Hampton	70,221	61,361	3,132	-	-	-	-	3,807	-	138,521
Asset carried at current value (MV-EUV and FV)										138,540
Assets carried at historical cost	-	-	-	973	-	872	9,849	-	10,406	22,100
Finance Leases	-	-	-	691	-	-	-	-	-	691
Net Book Value as at 31 March 2020										161,331

Surplus Assets

Valuation techniques

The fair value for the authorities' surplus assets are determined using the most appropriate technique for the asset. These include 1. the market approach; using current market conditions, recent sales prices and other relevant information for similar assets in the local authority area; and 2. the gross development appraisal method which includes both market (sales) and cost based approaches for a proposed development scheme i.e. construction costs, rates, professional fees, finance costs, developer profit, statutory cost and development periods for similar properties in the same local area.

Properties with significant observable inputs are deemed to be Level 2 but others, where the comparable information requires the authority to factor in assumptions and professional adjustments, are classified as Level 3.

The following table shows the fair value measurements of surplus assets.

Asset type	Valuation techniques used to measure fair value	Level 2 – significant other observable inputs	Level 3 – significant unobservable inputs	Total
		£000	£000	£000
Land & property	Market comparison	390	120	510
Land & property	Market comparison / Gross Development Appraisal i.e. market comparison of GDV (Gross Development Value) & site transactions with viability assessment leading to residual value / Professional judgement	2,450	815	3,265
Land & property	Professional judgement	-	30	30
	Fair value as at 31 March 2020	2,840	965	3,805

Asset type	Valuation techniques used to measure fair value	Level 2 – significant other observable inputs	Level 3 – significant unobservable inputs	Total
		£000	£000	£000
Land & property	Market comparison	392	120	512
Land & property	Market comparison / Gross Development Appraisal i.e. market comparison of GDV (Gross Development Value) & site transactions with viability assessment leading to residual value / Professional judgement	2,450	815	3,265
Land & property	Professional judgement	-	30	30
	Fair value as at 31 March 2021	2,842	965	3,807

Highest and best use of surplus assets

These surplus assets are made up of 12 areas of land and 1 property (2019/20 - 12 areas of land and 1 property) which are presently in the process of being reviewed or being developed for their highest and best use. Some sites are held because of the lack of being able to accommodate them at their highest and best use i.e. due to the present national economy, public sector funding reductions or local market conditions; others because of pending decisions or resources and others subject to contract/planning decisions.

The valuer's role in this process is to undertake the valuations by assessing all major inputs to the valuation process. The authority's valuation expert works closely with finance and estate officers, reporting on a regular basis regarding all valuation matters. The following table shows quantitative information about the fair value measurement of surplus assets using significant unobservable inputs (Level 3):

Property type	Surplus assets – property and land
As at 31 March 2021	£0.965m (£0.965m as at 31 March 2020)
Valuation technique used to measure fair value	Market comparison / gross development appraisal (GDV) i.e. market comparison to GDV (gross development value) and site transactions with viability assessment leading to residual value / professional judgement
Unobservable inputs	Adjustment for size and/or type of specific land area; professional judgement
Range of unobservable inputs	£5.29 to £131.58 per square metre
Sensitivity	Significant changes to adjustments made to comparable evidence or professional judgement will result in a significantly lower or higher fair value. This will be variable by site according to circumstances i.e. residential/brownfield/amenity site location and condition.

Transfer between levels of the fair value hierarchy

Within the period there has been no transfers between the levels. Where an event or change in circumstance are significant in relation to the specific asset, resulting in a change in level, the date of any such transfer will be deemed to be at the end of the reporting period. The table below presents the movements during the year of Level 3 property and land surplus assets held at fair value.

Surplus Land & Properties	Reason for movement	£000
Opening Balance - 1 April 2020		965
Sales/disposals	Land disposal	-
Transfers in to level 3	Property vacant and reclassified as surplus	-
Transfers out of level 3	Land comparable valuation, now observable inputs	-
Total gains/losses recognised in revaluation of property within other comprehensive income	CIES Line - Resources	-
Total gains/losses recognised in revaluation of property within the revaluation reserve		-
Closing Balance as at 31 March 2021		965

The effect of the fair value measurements were nil revaluation gain. The surplus or deficits used in the assessment are directly affected by the variations and assumptions used. For example, if the unobservable input valuation is too prudent the revaluation gain will be overstated.

Note 15. HERITAGE ASSETS

The authority's Dock Museum, Town Hall and Town area have a variety of collections that relate to the history of Barrow-in-Furness, the surrounding district and beyond. Collections include furniture, silverware, civic regalia, artwork, sculptures, social and industrial history, and more specific assets relating to Barrow's history, such as several ship models, boats and historic statues. Further information detailing the authority's heritage assets can be found on the Council's website.

New asset valuations were obtained in March 2021, on the measurement basis of market value with future years depreciation being charged in line with the Authority's property, plant and equipment policies. These valuations were completed by Bonhams International Auctioneers & Valuers.

Due to the nature of these assets it is unlikely that COVID-19 will impact on their values .

Notes to the Main Accounting Statements

2019/20						2020/21				
Historic Collection	New Statues	Herbert-Leigh-Boat	War Memorials	Total	Movement on Heritage Assets Balances	Historic Collection	New Statues	Herbert-Leigh-Boat	War Memorials	Total
£000	£000	£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
					Cost or Valuation					
0	0	0	14	14	Cost at 1 April	0	0	0	14	14
616	79	20	-	715	Valuation at 1 April	627	79	20	-	726
616	79	20	14	729	At 1 April	627	79	20	14	740
11	-	-	-	11	Additions	-	-	-	-	0
-	-	-	-	0	Valuation Gains	739	127	12	-	878
-	-	-	-	0	depreciation written back	-	(22)	(7)	-	(29)
627	79	20	14	740	At 31 March	1,366	184	25	14	1,589
					Accumulated Depreciation and Revaluation					
0	0	0	(8)	(8)	Cost at 1 April	0	0	0	(9)	(9)
-	(22)	(5)	0	(27)	Valuation at 1 April	-	(25)	(6)	0	(31)
0	(22)	(5)	(8)	(35)	At 1 April	0	(25)	(6)	(9)	(40)
-	(3)	(1)	(1)	(5)	depreciation charge	-	(3)	(1)	(1)	(5)
-	-	-	-	0	depreciation written back	-	22	7	0	29
0	(25)	(6)	(9)	(40)	At 31 March	0	(6)	0	(10)	(16)
0	0	0	5	5	Net Book Value 31 March - Cost	0	0	0	4	4
627	54	14	0	695	Net Book Value 31 March - Valuation	1,366	178	25	0	1,569
627	54	14	5	700	Total Net Book Value at 31 March	1,366	178	25	4	1,573

Revaluations

Financial year	Valuer	Value	Total
		£000	£000
Total value of assets valued in 2020/21			
2020/21	Bonhams International Auctioneers & Valuers	1,569	1,569
Assets carried at historical cost		-	4
Net Book Value at 31 March 2021			1,573

Heritage Assets – Summary of transactions

	2019/20	2020/21
	£000	£000
Opening Gross Book Value at 1 April	729	740
Value of Heritage Assets Acquired/Donation/Valuation		
Historic Collection	11	739
New Statues and Herbert Leigh	-	139
Depreciation written out on reval	-	(29)
Total at 31 March	740	1,589
Accumulated Depreciation and Revaluation		
Opening balance at 1 April	(35)	(40)
New Statues and Herbert Leigh	(4)	(4)
War Memorials (Cost)	(1)	(1)
Depreciation written out on reval	-	29
Total Accumulated Depreciation & Revaluation 31 March	(40)	(16)
Net Book Value at 31 March – Valuation	695	1,569
Net Book Value at 31 March – Cost	5	4
Total Net Book Value 31 March	700	1,573

Note 16. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND CAPITAL FINANCING

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below, 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 authority, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement, a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the authority that has yet to be financed.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
39,002	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	37,675
	Capital Investment:	
4,869	Property, Plant and Equipment	1,790
757	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	476
	Sources of finance:	
(1,291)	Capital receipts reserve	(275)
(2,575)	Government grants and other contributions	(868)
(1,760)	Use of Major Repairs Reserve	(1,123)
(506)	Minimum Revenue Provision from General Fund	(504)
(817)	Voluntary Revenue Provision from the Housing Revenue Account	(816)
	Cluster of Empty Homes	
221	Cluster of Empty Homes loan repayment	221
	Finance lease	
(225)	Finance lease embedded in waste management contract (Note 17)	(230)
37,675	Closing Capital Financing Requirement	36,346
	Explanation of movements in year:	
(506)	Decrease in underlying General Fund need to borrow	(504)
(817)	Decrease in underlying Housing Revenue Account need to borrow	(816)
221	Cluster of Empty Homes loan	221
(225)	Finance lease embedded in waste management contract (Note 17)	(230)
(1,327)	Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	(1,329)

Note 17. LEASES

The introduction of the new leasing accounting standard from 1 April 2022 will result in a full review of property agreements to clarify their status in 2021/22.

Authority as Lessee - Finance Leases

The authority has one group of assets embedded in a contractual arrangement which are vehicles and equipment in relation to the authority's waste and street cleaning services: this lease commenced on 1 April 2017 and runs for seven years. The actual vehicle fleet includes: five single compartment refuse collection vehicles, three twin pack refuse collection vehicles, three caged tippers, three sweepers and two supervisor vans.

The authority is committed to making minimum lease payments under this lease to settle the long-term liability for the interest in the assets acquired by the authority. The table below reconciles the future minimum lease payments to their present value

As at 31 March 2020				As at 31 March 2021		
Minimum lease payment	Finance charges	Present Value	All amounts £000	Minimum lease payment	Finance charges	Present Value
251	21	230	Not more than one year	251	15	236
754	32	722	Later than one year and not later than five years	502	16	486
-	-	0	Later than five years	-	-	0
1,005	53	952		753	31	722

Authority as Lessee - Operating Leases

The authority has leases in allotments and other land and buildings.

The authority has 4 non-specialist vehicles and 24 photocopiers on short term agreements utilised across a number of departments. These are considered deminimus and are not included in the following lease figures.

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

As at 31 March 2020		As at 31 March 2021
£000		£000
94	Not more than one year	58
67	Later than one year and not later than five years	9
-	Later than five years	-
161	Total	67

The expenditure charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement during the year in relation to the non-embedded leases is:

As at 31 March 2020		As at 31 March 2021
£000		£000
6	Minimum lease payments	6
(23)	Sublease receipts	(23)
(17)	Total	(17)

Authority as Lessor - Operating Leases

The authority leases out property under operating leases for the provision of community services and for economic regeneration purposes to provide suitable affordable premises for local businesses. From August 2018 the Park Leisure Centre was leased to Life Leisure as the new operator of the facility on a 15 year peppercorn lease although this arrangement is due to end in 2021 when the service will be provided by a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Council.

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

As at 31 March 2020		As at 31 March 2021
£000		£000
(974)	Not more than one year	(932)
(1,878)	Later than one year and not later than five years	(1,150)
(360)	Later than five years	(331)
(3,212)	Total	(2,413)

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. In 2020/2021 £12k of contingent rents were receivable by the authority (£12k in 2019/20).

Note 18. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTSCategories of Financial Instruments

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

Non-Current 31 March 2020	Current 31 March 2020	Amortised Cost	Non-Current 31 March 2021	Current 31 March 2021
£000	£000		£000	£000
-	22,557	Investments: cash, cash equivalents and investments	-	30,303
845	1,867	Debtors: loans and receivables	666	2,043
845	24,424	Total Financial Assets	666	32,346
139	4,702	Debtors that are not financial instruments	124	10,282
984	29,126	Total	790	42,628
(35,478)	(1,494)	Borrowings: financial liabilities at amortised cost	(34,479)	(1,494)
(722)	(230)	Other liabilities: finance lease liabilities	(486)	(235)
-	(1,422)	Creditors: financial liabilities carried at contract amount	-	(1,914)
(36,200)	(3,146)	Total Financial Liabilities	(34,965)	(3,643)
(29,472)	-	Other long term liabilities that are not financial instruments	(30,813)	-
-	(5,763)	Creditors that are not financial instruments	-	(12,318)
(65,672)	(8,909)	Total	(65,778)	(15,961)

Material Soft Loans Made by the Authority

The long term debtor relates to two interest free loans advanced from the Cluster of Empty Homes funding for the purpose of bringing empty homes back into use. A loan of £312k was advanced in 2013/14 and £1.9m in 2015/16 and both are repayable over 10 years; these are represented on the Balance Sheet at the 31 March 2021 as:

31 March 2020	Cluster of Empty Home loans	31 March 2021
£000		£000
845	Long term debtor for principal due beyond the next 12 months	666
171	Short term debtor for repayments due in the next 12 months	179
170	Financial Instrument Adjustment Account for the interest on remaining payments	119
1,026	Usable Capital receipts	1,248
2,212	Total advance	2,212

The interest rate at which the fair value of these soft loans has been made is arrived at by assessing that an unsubsidised interest rate would have been 5%.

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

2019/20				2020/21		
Measured at amortised cost				Measured at amortised cost		
Financial liabilities	Financial assets	Total		Financial liabilities	Financial assets	Total
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
			Total expense in (Surplus) or deficit in the Provision of Services:			
1,443	-	1,443	Interest expense	1,418	-	1,418
-	(313)	(313)	Interest income	-	(182)	(182)
1,443	(313)	1,130	Net (gain)/loss for the year	1,418	(182)	1,236

Fair Values of Assets and Liabilities

Financial liabilities, financial assets represented by loans and receivables and long-term debtors and creditors are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that will take place over the remaining term of the instruments, using the following assumptions:

- The fair value of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans of £45.386m is based on new borrowing rates from the PWLB as the authority has a continuing ability to borrow at concessionary rates from the PWLB rather than from the markets. A supplementary measure of the additional interest that the authority will pay as a result of its PWLB commitments for fixed rate loans is to compare with the premature redemption borrowing rates available from the PWLB. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £34.479m would be valued at £51.558m. If the authority were to seek to avoid the projected loss by repaying the loans to the PWLB, the PWLB would raise a penalty charge for early redemption in addition to charging a premium for the additional interest that will not now be paid. The exit price for the PWLB loans including the penalty charge would be £16.6m.
- the fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

The fair value of the PWLB loan is determined using level 2 inputs – i.e. inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the financial asset/liability. The fair values calculated are as follows:

31 March 2020			31 March 2021	
Carrying amount	Fair Value		Carrying amount	Fair Value
£000	£000		£000	£000
845	845	Loans and receivables long-term	666	666
24,423	24,423	Loans and receivables short-term	32,344	32,344
(35,478)	(44,155)	Borrowings long-term	(34,479)	(45,386)
(1,494)	(1,497)	Borrowings short-term	(1,494)	(1,497)
(722)	(722)	Other long-term liabilities	(486)	(486)
(230)	(230)	Other short-term liabilities	(235)	(235)
(1,422)	(1,422)	Creditors	(1,914)	(1,914)
(14,078)	(22,758)	Total	(5,598)	(16,508)

The fair value of the liabilities is higher than the carrying amount because the authority's portfolio of loans includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate payable is lower than the prevailing rates at the Balance Sheet date. This shows a notional future gain (based on economic conditions at 31 March 2021) arising from a commitment to pay interest to lenders below current market rates.

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

Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

The authority'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 authority;
- liquidity risk – the possibility that the authority might not have funds available to meet its commitments to make payments;
- market risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the authority as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates.

The authority's overall Treasury Management Strategy focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the resources available to fund services. Treasury risk management is carried out by the Director of Resources under policies approved by Council in the annual Treasury Management Strategy. The authority provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as written policies covering specific areas, such as interest rate risk, credit risk and the investment of surplus cash.

Credit Risk

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

The risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria, as laid down by Fitch and Moody's Ratings Services. The Annual Investment Strategy also imposes a maximum sum to be invested with a financial institution located within each category.

The credit criteria in respect of financial assets held by the authority are as detailed below:

- Minimum credit rating of F1 short-term (Fitch or equivalent)
- UK institutions provided with support from the UK Government
- Building societies limited by value based on their asset size.

The authority's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in building societies of £19m cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of irrecoverability applies to all of the authority's deposits, but there was no evidence at the 31 March 2021 that this was likely to crystallise.

No credit limits were exceeded during the reporting period. The potential expected credit loss for the authority's investments held at the 31 March 2021 has been estimated as £7k; this is de minimus and is not included in the authority's financial statements. There is no history of default from the Cluster of Empty Homes loans and these loans are secured; no credit loss has been recognised in the financial statements.

The authority does not generally allow credit for customers, but some of the current balance is past its due date for payment. The past due amount can be analysed by age as follows at 31 March 2021:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
305	Less than three months	192
421	Three to six months	102
141	Six months to one year	118
111	More than one year	662
978	Outstanding debt	1,074
516	Provision for expected credit loss	513
53%	Percentage of provision	48%

At 31 March 2021 the provision includes a higher expected credit loss for some particular debts. At this stage there is no evidence that COVID-19 is adversely affecting payments and no additional loss allowance has been made. This situation is being monitored but until the economy returns to a firmer footing it is difficult to predict what impact there might be.

Liquidity Risk

The authority has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. If unexpected movements happen, the authority has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and the Public Works Loan Board. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. Instead, the risk is that the authority will be bound to replenish a significant proportion of its borrowings at a time of unfavourable interest rates.

The authority sets limits on the proportion of its fixed rate borrowing during specified periods to reduce exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, through a combination of careful planning of new loans taken out and (where it is economic to do so) making early repayments.

The maturity analysis of financial liabilities is as follows:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
1,000	Less than 1 year	1,000
1,000	Between 1 and 2 years	1,000
3,000	Between 2 and 5 years	3,000
5,000	Between 5 and 10 years	4,350
5,850	Between 10 and 15 years	11,500
8,239	Between 15 and 20 years	2,239
-	Between 20 and 25 years	-
-	Between 25 and 30 years	-
12,390	Between 30 and 35 years	12,390
-	Between 35 and 40 years	-
36,479		35,479

This maturity analysis includes the long and short term PWLB debt outstanding at the Balance Sheet dates.

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

Market Risk*Interest Rate Risk*

The authority is exposed to risk in terms of its exposure to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the authority. For instance, a rise in borrowing at fixed interest rates would cause the fair value of the liabilities to fall.

Borrowings are not carried at fair value, so nominal gains and losses on fixed borrowings would not impact on the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments that have a quoted market price will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

The authority has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk:

- The Treasury Management Strategy sets an indicator to provide the maximum limits for fixed and variable interest rate exposure.
- The Director of Resources monitors market and forecast interest rate and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate investments may be taken for longer periods to secure better long term returns, similarly the drawing of longer term fixed rate borrowing would be postponed.

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

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
(5,257)	Decrease in fair value of fixed rate borrowings liability	(5,429)

There would be no impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. The impact of a 1% fall would increase the fair values by the same amount.

Price Risk

The authority does not invest in equity shares or marketable bonds so has no exposure to loss from movements in the stock market.

Foreign Exchange Risk

The authority has no financial assets or liabilities denominated in foreign currencies so has no exposure to loss from movements in exchange rates.

Note 19. SHORT TERM DEBTORS

The short term debtors held by the authority consist of:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
2,217	Central Government bodies	6,539
1,833	Other Local Authorities	3,191
2,519	Other entities and individuals	2,595
6,569	Total	12,325

Within the debtors amounts are provisions for credit losses of £3.3M in 2020/21 (£3.2M in 2019/20) These are re-assessed each year and adjustments made where necessary. An assessment has been made of the impact of COVID-19 on credit losses and increased provisions have been made. The situation continues to be monitored but until the economy returns to a firmer footing it is difficult to predict what the final impact will be.

Note 20. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

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

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
1	Cash held by the Authority	2
3,493	Bank current accounts	12,255
3,494	Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	12,257

Note 21. SHORT TERM CREDITORS

The short term creditors held by the authority consist of:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
(1,750)	Central Government bodies	(10,644)
(1,533)	Other Local Authorities	(219)
(4,132)	Other entities and individuals	(3,604)
(7,415)	Total	(14,467)

Note 22. PROVISIONS

The provisions held by the authority consist of:

	Business Rate Appeals Provision	MMI Provision	Total
	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 31 March 2020	(511)	(1)	(512)
Increase in provision in 2020/21	(148)	(2)	(150)
Amounts used in 2020/21	26	1	27
Reduction in provision in 2020/21	35	-	35
Balance at 31 March 2021	(598)	(2)	(600)

The business rate appeals provision established in 2013/14 reflects the Council's proportionate liability (40%) for repayments of successful business rate appeals. The impact of all open appeals against the 2010 List have been estimated and an estimate for appeals against the 2017 List has been calculated based on the potential appeals against the new rateable values that have increased. There is currently no evidence that COVID-19 will impact on the level of appeals but this provision will need to be kept under constant review to identify if trading losses lead to increased appeals.

The Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) provision was established in 2012/13 when the Scheme of Arrangement was triggered. The provision holds the 25% due by the authority for the estimated outstanding claims, the levy is payable when claims are settled.

Note 23. UNUSABLE RESERVES

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
(45,442)	i Revaluation Reserve	(49,115)
(79,413)	ii Capital Adjustment Account	(77,443)
170	iii Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	119
29,163	iv Pensions Reserve	30,503
(29)	v Collection Fund Adjustment Account	4,517
116	vi Accumulated Absences Account	300
(95,435)	Total Unusable Reserves	(91,119)

i. Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the authority arising from increases in the value of its Property, Plant and Equipment. The balance on the reserve 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.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(46,760)	Balance at 1 April	(45,442)
(4,747)	Upward revaluation of assets	(5,481)
3,570	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services	358
(1,177)	(Surplus) or deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(5,123)
1,278	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	1,450
1,217	Accumulated gains on assets sold & derecognised	-
2,495	Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account	1,450
(45,442)	Balance at 31 March	(49,115)

ii. 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 authority as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and enhancement. The Account contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 April 2007, the date the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains. Note 8 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the Capital Adjustment Account, apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(77,092)	Balance at 1 April	(79,413)
	Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES):	
4,056	▪ Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	4,088
486	▪ Revaluation (gains) and losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	2,259
757	▪ Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	476
1,829	▪ Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	193
(2,495)	Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(1,450)
4,633	Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	5,566
	Capital financing applied in the year:	
(1,291)	▪ Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(275)
(1,760)	▪ Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance capital expenditure	(1,123)
(2,555)	▪ Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(799)
(20)	▪ Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	(69)
221	▪ Unapplied grants released to Capital Receipts Reserve	221
(731)	▪ Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balance	(736)
(817)	▪ Voluntary provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the HRA Fund balance	(816)
-	▪ Use of earmarked reserves to finance new capital expenditure	-
(6,953)	Total financing	(3,597)
(79,413)	Balance at 31 March	(77,443)

iii. Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements of accounting for income and expenses relating to certain financial instruments and for bearing losses or benefitting from gains per statutory provisions.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
229	Balance at 1 April	170
(59)	Amount by which finance costs charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(51)
170	Balance at 31 March	119

iv. 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 authority 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 authority makes employer's contributions to pension funds, or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the authority has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits are to be paid.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
30,099	Balance at 1 April	29,163
(2,535)	Actuarial (gains) or losses on pensions assets and liabilities	157
3,921	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	2,761
(2,322)	Employer's pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(1,578)
29,163	Balance at 31 March	30,503

International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19 requires the authority to account for its liability under the pension (defined benefits) scheme as it arises. The authority is a member of the Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme Fund. At 31 March 2021, the actuarial valuation showed a net liability of £30,503m (2019/20 £29.163m). This is explained in detail in Note 36 to the accounting statements. Part of the authority's employer contributions to the Fund is to recover this deficit. The deficit on the pension scheme has varied substantially in recent years and reflects the volatile nature of financial markets. The deficit at 31 March 2021 was £30,503m, an increase of £1.340m during 2020/21

v. Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of council tax and non-domestic rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from council tax payers and business rate payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund. The large increase in Business Rates is due to the reduced income as a result of COVID-19 arrangements. The reduced amount will be met in future years from the earmarked Section 31 Business Rates Reliefs reserve and through the normal funding arrangements.

2019/20				2020/21		
Council Tax	Business Rates	Total		Council Tax	Business Rates	Total
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
(1)	(211)	(212)	Balance at 1 April	(1)	(28)	(29)
-	183	183	Amount by which council tax and non-domestic rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax and non-domestic rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	133	4,413	4,546
(1)	(28)	(29)	Balance at 31 March	132	4,385	4,517

vi. Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, such as annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account. The significant increase in 2020/21 is due to the impact of COVID-19 on the working arrangements for all staff.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
52	Balance at 1 April	116
64	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to Comprehensive Income and Expenditure on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	184
116	Balance at 31 March	300

Note 24. OTHER LONG TERM LIABILITIES

The other long term liabilities held by the authority consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(29,163)	Pension scheme liabilities	(30,503)
(309)	Compulsory purchase proceeds	(309)
(722)	Finance lease liability	(487)
(30,194)	Total	(31,299)

Three properties, that the Council acquired by compulsory purchase order during 2007/08, were sold during 2009/10 and 2010/11. A fourth property has been sold in 2019/20. In all cases the owners of the properties cannot be traced, so the funds are held as a deferred liability which will be held for the statutory period of 12 years; thereafter the Council may allocate these funds for normal spending.

Note 25. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

A contingent liability is a potential liability which depends on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events. The authority has identified the following contingent liabilities as at 31 March 2021:

MMI Scheme of Arrangement

The Scheme of Arrangement was enacted in 2012/13. The liability upon the authority as a scheme creditor cannot be fully estimated at this stage for unknown claims incurred but not reported between 1974 and 1992. Whilst the authority has considered the financial impact in producing its Statement of Accounts there is a risk that the authority's financial liability could increase from this level. The Council has set aside £0.44m in reserves against potential future claims and the potential increase in the 25% levy set by the Scheme administrators; the levy is set to achieve a solvent run off for MMI.

Business Rate Appeals

The authority has made a provision for Business Rate Appeals based upon its best estimates of the actual liability as at the year-end in known appeals against the 2005 and 2010 Rating Lists. The authority has added a prudent provision for appeals against the 2017 Rating List; no appeals are currently lodged. It is not possible to quantify appeals that have not yet been lodged with the Valuation Office Agency and the 2017 Rating List brought a new process for lodging appeals; there is little experience of this in operation. There is a risk to the authority that national and local appeals may have a future impact on the accounts. COVID-19 may also impact on the level of appeals and is also reflected in Note 22 on Provisions.

Contractual matters

The authority has a potential contractual liability that cannot yet be reasonably estimated. Work to quantify the value is in progress and any liability will be recognised and incorporated into the financial statements in a subsequent year.

Note 26. CONTINGENT ASSETS

A contingent asset is an asset that may be received but only if a future event occurs that is not under the control of the authority. The authority's contingent assets represent proceeds to the authority where a dwelling sold under the tenant's Right to Buy is sold on within 5 years of the purchase from the authority. There is a statutory calculation to claw back a proportion of the discount originally awarded to the tenant that purchased the dwelling from the authority.

Note 27. LONG TERM DEBTORS

The long term debtors held by the authority consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
139	Property rents	124
845	Cluster of Empty Homes loan principal	666
984	Total	790

Note 28. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – ADJUSTMENTS TO THE NET (SURPLUS) OR DEFICIT ON THE PROVISION OF SERVICES FOR NON-CASH MOVEMENTS

The adjustments to the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(4,056)	Depreciation	(4,088)
(485)	Revaluation losses and gains on previous losses	(2,260)
(494)	(Increase)/decrease in impairment for bad debts	189
73	(Increase)/decrease in provisions	(88)
(2,571)	(Increase)/decrease in creditors	(8,711)
2,298	Increase/(decrease) in debtors	4,337
(2)	Increase/(decrease) in inventories	(4)
(1,599)	Movement in pension liability	(1,183)
(1,830)	Carrying amount of non-current assets sold or derecognised	(193)
59	Clusters of Empty Homes soft loan interest	51
(8,606)	Total	(11,950)

Note 29. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – ADJUSTMENTS FOR ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE NET (SURPLUS) OR DEFICIT ON THE PROVISION OF SERVICES THAT ARE INVESTING AND FINANCING ACTIVITIES

The adjustments for items included in the net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
1,573	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	209
509	Other receipts from investing activities	2,275
2,082	Total	2,484

Note 30. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – OPERATING ACTIVITIES

The cash flows for operating activities include cash paid to suppliers, cash paid to employees, cash paid for other operating expenses, cash receipts from customers and the following items:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(232)	Interest received	(149)
1,417	Interest paid	1,397

Note 31. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – INVESTING ACTIVITIES

The investing activities consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
5,156	Purchase of property, plant and equipment	1,786
38,000	Purchase of short-term investments	24,000
(1,573)	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	(209)
(37,000)	Proceeds from short-term investments	(25,000)
(509)	Other receipts from investing activities	(2,275)
(221)	Cluster of Empty Homes loan repayments	(221)
3,853	Net cash flows from investing activities	(1,919)

Note 32. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – FINANCING ACTIVITIES

The financing activities consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(164)	Agency transactions relating to business rates and council tax (billing authority)	2,851
230	Principal transactions relating to finance lease	235
1,000	Loan repayment - PWLB	1,000
1,066	Net cash flows from financing activities	4,086

Note 33. RELATED PARTIES

The authority is required to disclose material transactions with related parties – bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the authority or to be controlled or influenced by the authority. Disclosure of these transactions allows readers to assess the extent to which the authority 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 authority.

Central Government

Central government has effective control over the general operations of the authority – it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the authority operates and provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the authority has with other parties (such as council tax bills and housing benefits). Grant receipts outstanding at 31 March 2021 are disclosed in Note 19 and grant income for 2020/21 is disclosed in Note 13.

Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the authority's financial and operating policies. One member is the treasurer for Barrow & District Disability Association, and one member is employed as a counsellor of Women's Community Matters. Barrow Borough Council awarded grants of £15k to Barrow & District Disability Association and £28k was spent on services provided by Women's Community Matters. The members were not involved in the decisions that led to the grants being awarded or services procured.

The total of members' allowances paid in 2020/21 is shown in Note 34. There are no balances outstanding at the 31 March 2021. Details of the entities that members are involved with are recorded in the Register of Members Interests which can be found on the Council's website listed under each member.

Officers

Officers of the Council have direct control over the authority's finances and operational decisions. There are no balances outstanding at the 31 March 2021.

Note 34. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The authority paid the following amounts to members of the Council during the year.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
92	Basic allowances	91
33	Extra responsibility allowance	34
7	Expenses	7
132	Total	132

The Mayor of the Borough also receives an honorarium for their year of office to cover mayoral duties and civic receptions. The honorarium for 2020/21 was £3k (£4k for 2019/20).

Note 35. OFFICERS' REMUNERATION

The remuneration paid to the authority's senior employees is as follows:

		Salary & car allowance	Employers Pension Contribution	Total
		£000	£000	£000
Chief Executive (1)	2019/20	91	14	105
	2020/21	104	21	125
Director of Resources	2019/20	80	13	93
	2020/21	82	17	99
Director of People and Place (2)	2019/20	-	-	0
	2020/21	83	17	100

(1) The authority's previous Executive Director retired on 15 March 2019 and was not replaced in 2018/19.

A new Executive Director was appointed with effect from 6 May 2019 and the position was retitled Chief Executive at Council on 12 November 2019. In addition to the amounts shown above the Chief Executive received £4.8k in relocation expenses during 2020/21. This comprised a lodging allowance of £0.8k and reimbursement of legal, estate agency and removal expenses of £4k.

(2) The authority appointed a Director of People and Place with effect from 10 March 2020 but remuneration for this post was below £50,000 in 2019/20. In addition to the amounts shown above the Director of People and Place received £7.1k in relocation expenses during 2020/21. This comprised a lodging allowance of £6.4k and a disturbance allowance of £0.7k.

Relocation expenses are paid in accordance with the Council's Relocation Policy, on the rental or purchase of a property within the Barrow travel to work area.
The figures shown above are the actual amounts paid in the year.

Remuneration Bands

The authority's other employees receiving more than £50,000 remuneration for the year (excluding employer's pension contributions) based on the actual amount paid or an annualised salary for the relevant part-time workers or employees that were present for only part of the year, were paid the following amounts:

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

The Director of People and Place appears in this table for 2019/20 and the salary for this post was included in the £75,000 to £79,999 band; this post appears on the Senior Employees table for 2020/21. The Council appointed a Head of Legal and Governance with effect from 13 July 2020. The total remuneration for 2020/21 includes a contract period, plus employment from 13 July 2020, resulting in the £70,000-£74,999 band. Ordinarily the salary for this post will appear in the £50,000-£54,999 band.

The remaining changes to the table reflect the effects of inflation.

Exit Packages

The numbers of exit packages with total cost per band are set out in the table below:

2019/20		Exit package cost band	2020/21	
Number	Cost		Number	Cost
	£000			£000
2	4	£0 - £20,000	2	11
-	-	£20,001 - £40,000	1	25
-	-	£40,001 - £60,000	-	-
-	-	£60,001 - £80,000	-	-
-	-	£80,001 - £100,000	-	-
2	4	Total	3	36

Termination Benefits

The authority agreed the departure of 3 employees in 2020/21, incurring liabilities of £36k (2 employees in 2019/20 incurring liabilities of £4k).

Note 36. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES

Participation in Pension Schemes

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

The authority participates in the Local Government Pensions Scheme, run by Cumbria County Council – this is a funded defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the authority and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension liability with investment assets. The benefits payable in respect of service from 1 April 2014 are based on career average revalued earnings and the number of years of eligible service.

Transactions Relating to Post-Employment Benefits

The authority 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 the authority is 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 ruling made regarding age discrimination, that was last year included as a contingent liability, is now included as a past service cost in the accounts, due to the potential amount involved and the remedy accepted by the Government.

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:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES):	
	<i>Cost of Services:</i>	
2,045	▪ current service cost	2,031
1,118	▪ past service costs	-
	<i>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</i>	
2,901	▪ interest on pension liabilities	2,784
(2,191)	▪ interest on plan assets	(2,104)
	<i>Other operating expenses</i>	
48	▪ administration expenses	50
3,921	Total Post-Employment Benefit Charged to the (Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	2,761
	<i>Other Post Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>	
(2,534)	▪ re-measurements (liabilities and assets)	157
1,387	Total Post-Employment Benefit Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account	2,918
	Movement in reserves statement:	
(3,921)	▪ reversal of net charges made to the (Surplus) or Deficit for the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(2,761)
	<i>Actual amounts charged against the General Fund balance for pensions in the year</i>	
2,322	▪ Employers' contributions payable to the scheme	1,578

Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognised in the Balance Sheet

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(118,160)	Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(133,908)
88,997	Fair value of plan assets	103,405
(29,163)	Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation	(30,503)

Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme (Plan) Assets

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
91,811	Opening fair value of scheme assets	88,997
2,191	Interest on plan assets	2,104
(3,886)	Re-measurements (assets)	15,042
(48)	Administration expenses	(50)
-	Settlements	-
2,322	Employer contributions	1,578
384	Member contributions	402
(3,777)	Benefits/transfers paid	(4,668)
88,997	Closing fair value of scheme assets	103,405

Reconciliation of the Present Value of Scheme Liabilities (Defined Benefit Obligation)

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
(121,910)	Benefit obligation at the beginning of the period	(118,160)
(2,045)	Current service cost	(2,031)
(2,901)	Interest on pension liabilities	(2,784)
(384)	Member contributions	(402)
	Re-measurements (liabilities):	
61	▪ Experience gain/(loss)	2,515
1,834	▪ Gain/(loss) on financial assumptions	(17,714)
4,526	▪ Gain/(loss) on demographic assumptions	-
(1,118)	Past service costs	-
3,777	Benefits/transfers paid	4,668
(118,160)	Benefit obligation at the end of the period	(133,908)

Pension scheme assets comprised:

Period Ended 31 March 2020				Asset category	Period Ended 31 March 2021			
Quoted prices in active market	Quoted prices not in active markets	Total	Percent of total assets		Quoted prices in active markets	Quoted prices not in active markets	Total	Percent of total assets
£000	£000	£000			£000	£000	£000	
				Equities				
8,899	-	8,899	10.0%	UK quoted	0	-	0	0.0%
0				UK equity pooled	9,514		9,514	9.2%
17,799	-	17,799	20.0%	Global quoted	0	-	0	0.0%
0				Global equity pooled	30,194		30,194	29.2%
-	6,230	6,230	7.0%	Overseas equity pooled		-	0	0.0%
				Bonds				
-	-	0	0.0%	UK corporate bonds	-	0	0	0.0%
-	20,469	20,469	23.0%	UK Government indexed pooled	-	17,889	17,889	17.3%
				Property				
-	5,251	5,251	5.9%	UK	-	5,997	5,997	5.8%
-	2,492	2,492	2.8%	Property funds	-	2,689	2,689	2.6%
				Alternatives				
-	3,293	3,293	3.7%	Private equity funds	-	5,480	5,480	5.3%
-	6,586	6,586	7.4%	Infrastructure funds	-	7,342	7,342	7.1%
-	356	356	0.4%	Real Estate debt funds	-	103	103	0.1%
-	2,848	2,848	3.2%	Private debt funds	-	4,033	4,033	3.9%
-	623	623	0.7%	Healthcare Royalties	-	1,034	1,034	1.0%
-	10,680	10,680	12.0%	Multi Asset Credit	-	15,511	15,511	15.0%
				Cash				
3,382	-	3,382	3.8%	Cash accounts	3,516	-	3,516	3.4%
-	89	89	0.1%	Net current assets	-	103	103	0.1%
30,080	58,917	88,997	100%	Total	43,224	60,181	103,405	100%

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 rates and other factors. The Local Government Pension Scheme has been assessed by Mercer Limited an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the County Council Fund being based on the latest actuarial valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2021.

The Actuary has given the following advice in relation to the impact of Covid on the Pension Fund:

“Since February 2020 there has been substantial volatility in financial markets around the world in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, and while this has reduced in recent months, the potential for further volatility remains. This may have consequences for asset values, and this will be reflected in the 2020/21 accounting figures. Over the same period, the market volatility has also extended to corporate bonds, and after an initial spike we have seen the yields on AA-rated corporate bonds reduce from previous levels. As the discount rate for accounting purposes is based on corporate bond yields, this will also impact on accounting liabilities. Finally, there has been an impact on market-implied RPI over the period, although this will in part be related to the consultation on RPI reform and demand for gilts, rather than any fundamental shift in expectations.

Regarding the impact on mortality, our view is that it is not possible at this point to draw any meaningful conclusions on the potential impact of COVID 19 on mortality rates going forward, and so it would be inappropriate to make any adjustments to mortality assumptions at this time.”

As an example of this volatility, changes to investment valuations continue to change and the values of assets and associated impacts in this statement should be viewed with caution.

The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

2019/20		2020/21
	Mortality assumptions:	
	Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:	
24.2	▪ Men	24.3
27.1	▪ Women	27.2
	Longevity at 65 for current pensioners:	
22.6	▪ Men	22.7
25.2	▪ Women	25.3
	Other Assumptions:	
2.1%	Rate of CPI inflation	2.7%
3.6%	Rate of increase in salaries	4.2%
2.2%	Rate of increase in pensions	2.8%
2.4%	Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.1%

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

Impact on the Defined Benefit Obligations in the Scheme

	Increase in Assumption	Decrease in Assumption
	£000	£000
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities (increase by 0.1%)		2,053
Rate of inflation (increase by 0.1%)	2,086	
Rate of increase in salaries (increase by 0.1%)	205	
Longevity (increase by 1 year)	4,098	
Investment returns (change of 1%)	1,021	1,021

Impact on the Authority's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. The Administering Authority's long term funding objective is for the Fund to achieve and then maintain sufficient assets to cover 100% of projected accrued liabilities. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation is due to be completed as at 31 March 2022.

The authority is expected to pay £1.578m in contributions to the scheme in 2021/22

The weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation for scheme members is 15 years, 2020/21 (15 years 2019/20).

Note 37. EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

The authority has incurred the following costs in relation to the annual audit for 2020/21.

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
39	Fees payable to external audit with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor for the year	39
10	Fees payable to external audit for additional agreed works	24
49	Total	63

The auditor also performs the certification of grant claims and returns £41k (£23k in 2019/20) and the certification of Housing Capital Receipts grant £5k (£5K in 2019/20)

Note 38. TRUST FUNDS

The authority acts as an administrator of four trust funds created for charitable purposes, they do not belong to the authority and are not included in any of the accounting statements. Their financial information is shown in aggregation below:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
79	Assets	78
(2)	Gross Income	-
4	Gross Expenditure	-
2	Net (surplus) or deficit for the year	0

Housing Revenue Account

The HRA income and expenditure statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and government grants. Authorities charge rents to cover expenditure in accordance with the legislative framework; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis upon which rents are raised, is shown in the movement on the Housing Revenue Account statement.

2019/20			2020/21
£000		Note	£000
	Expenditure		
3,488	Repairs and maintenance		2,630
3,565	Supervision and management		3,129
12	Rents, rates, taxes and other charges		14
2,259	Depreciation, impairment and revaluation of dwellings	4	1,832
176	Depreciation and revaluation of other HRA property	5	178
12	Debt management costs		12
201	Movement in the allowance for bad debts		(39)
9,713	Total Expenditure		7,756
	Income		
(9,858)	Dwelling rents		(9,827)
(391)	Non-dwelling rents		(384)
(1,420)	Charges for services and facilities		(1,037)
(11,669)	Total Income		(11,248)
(1,956)	Net Cost of HRA Services as included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		(3,492)
219	HRA services' share of Corporate and DRC		293
(1)	HRA share of other amounts included in the whole Council Cost of Services but not allocated to specific services		-
(1,738)	Net (Income)/Expenditure for HRA Services		(3,199)
	HRA share of the operating income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:		
(228)	Gain or (loss) on sale of HRA non-current assets	8	(16)
10	Pension administration expenses	10	11
910	Interest payable and similar charges		862
155	Pensions interest cost and expected return on pension assets	10	148
(891)	(Surplus) or deficit for the year on HRA services		(2,194)

Movement on the HRA Statement

The overall objectives for movement on the HRA statement and the general principles for its construction are the same as those generally for the Movement in Reserves Statement, into which it is consolidated. The statement takes the outturn on the HRA income and expenditure statement and reconciles it to the surplus or deficit for the year on the HRA balance, calculated in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

2019/20		2020/21	
£000		£000	
(1,000)	Balance on the HRA at the end of the previous year		(1,000)
(891)	(Surplus) or deficit for the year on the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement	(2,194)	
364	Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under statute	574	
(527)	(Increase) or decrease in the year on the HRA		(1,620)
527	Transfer to or (from) earmarked reserves		1,620
(1,000)	Balance on the HRA at the end of the current year		(1,000)

The adjustments between the accounting basis and funding basis under statute for the HRA are set out in Note 8 to the Main Accounting Statements.

Notes to the Housing Revenue Account

1. Dwelling Stock

The dwelling stock held by the authority consists of:

	31 March 2020	Movements	31 March 2021
1 bed house	142	-	142
2 bed house	360	-	360
3+ bed house	824	(3)	821
Total houses	1,326	(3)	1,323
1 bed flat	933	(1)	932
2 bed flat	302	(1)	301
3+ bed flat	6	-	6
Total flats	1,241	(2)	1,239
Dwelling stock	2,567	(5)	2,562

2. HRA Non-Current Assets

The Housing Revenue Account non-current assets held by the authority consist of:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
70,269	Council dwellings	70,221
3,107	Land and buildings	3,132
39	Equipment	-
73,415	HRA assets	73,353

3. Vacant Possession of Dwellings

In accordance with Government guidance, the valuation of Council dwellings has been reduced by a regional adjustment factor in recognition of their status as social housing. For the North West this is 40%. As a consequence the Council recognises dwellings at a value of £70.221m on the Balance Sheet. At vacant possession the same dwellings would have a value of £175.553m with the difference of £105.332m being the cost of providing Council housing at less than open market rents. The reduced Balance Sheet value for Council dwellings also reflects the secure tenancy rights which differ from other tenancies, including the Right to Buy and the right to assign the property or apply for a transfer.

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
70,269	Balance Sheet value EUV-SH	70,221
105,404	Difference of EUV-SH and EUV-VP	105,332
175,673	Value of dwelling stock at EUV-VP	175,553

4. Depreciation and Revaluation of Dwellings

The depreciation and revaluation of dwellings for the year consists of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
1,253	Revaluation loss	296
(911)	Reversal of previous revaluation loss	(338)
1,917	Depreciation for current year	1,874
2,259		1,832

5. Depreciation and Revaluation of Other HRA Property

The depreciation and revaluation of other HRA property for the year consists of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
176	Depreciation for current year	178
176		178

6. HRA Capital Financing Requirement

The movements in the HRA capital financing requirement for the year consist of:

2019/20		2020/21
£000		£000
18,838	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	18,021
	Capital investment:	
1,760	Council dwellings	1,123
	Source of finance:	
(1,760)	Major Repairs Reserve	(1,123)
(817)	Voluntary Revenue Provision – towards the repayment of HRA Debt	(816)
18,021	Closing Capital Financing Requirement	17,205
	Explanation of movements in year	
817	Decrease in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by Government financial assistance)	816
817	Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	816

7. Item 8 Credit and Item 8 Debit (General) Determination

The actual charges for capital in the HRA are known respectively as the "Item 8 Debit" (of part II) and the "Item 8 Credit" (of part I of schedule 4 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989). A general determination of the Item 8 credit and Item 8 debit was issued for 2012/13 onwards. A change in the general determination was established for April 2017 onwards; the end of self-financing transitional arrangements concerning the major repairs allowance.

Although the calculation was originally performed to arrive at the subsidy charges for capital, the determination remains in force and the calculation for 2020/21 is set out in the following table:

2019/20		2020/21	
£000		£000	£000
	Item 8 Credit		
(912)	Reversal of previous year revaluation loss – dwellings		(338)
-	Reversal of previous year revaluation loss – non dwellings		-
	Item 8 Debit		
833	Interest payable on external loans	813	
1,917	Depreciation of dwellings	1,874	
176	Depreciation of non-dwellings	178	
77	Interest payable on notional cash balances	49	
12	Debt management expenses	12	
1,253	Revaluation loss - dwellings	296	3,222
3,356	Item 8 Credit and Item 8 Debit		2,884

8. HRA Non-Current Asset Disposals

The HRA non-current asset disposals for the year consist of:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021	
£000		£000	
725	Carrying value of dwellings sold	193	
(953)	Sale proceeds from dwellings	(209)	
(228)	Net gain on disposals	(16)	

9. Major Repairs Reserve

The Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) represents the capital cost of keeping the authority's dwelling stock in its current condition. Authorities have the flexibility to spend MRA resources outside of the financial year in which they are allocated, enabling the more efficient planning of works or repayment of debt.

The Major Repairs Reserve (MRR) represents balances carried forward.

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
	MRR transfers in year	
(1,917)	From HRA for dwellings depreciation	(1,874)
-	Difference between MRA and dwellings depreciation	-
(1,917)	MRA for the year	(1,874)
(176)	Increase for depreciation of non-dwelling assets	(178)
1,760	Capital expenditure financed by MRR	1,123
(2,510)	Balance brought forward	(2,843)
(2,843)	Balance carried forward	(3,772)

10. Transactions Relating to Post-employment Benefits

The authority 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 the authority is required to make on the HRA is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out via the Movement on the HRA Statement. COVID-19 has had no impact on the HRA in 2020/21 although the on-going impact is an area of particular concern and, as with other areas of the accounts, the impact on pensions and future contribution rates needs to be closely monitored.

The following transactions have been made in the HRA Income and Expenditure Statement and the Movement on the HRA Statement during the year:

2019/20		2020/21	
£000		£000	£000
	HRA		
	<i>Cost of Services:</i>		
343	▪ current service cost		339
244	▪ Past service cost		-
	<i>Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure</i>		
632	▪ interest cost	606	
(477)	▪ expected return on scheme assets	(458)	148
	<i>Other operating expenditure</i>		
10	▪ pension administration expenses		11
752	Total Post Employment Benefit Charged to the HRA Income and Expenditure Account		498

Movement in Reserves Statement		
(752)	• reversal of net charges made to the (Surplus) or Deficit for the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(498)
	<i>Actual amounts charged against the HRA balance for pensions in the year</i>	
429	• employers' contributions payable to scheme	234

11. Rent Arrears

At 31 March 2021 the HRA rent arrears and the provision in respect of credit losses was:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
969	Arrears at year end	943
727	Allowance for impairment	742
75%	Percentage of provision	79%

The amounts for credit losses are re-assessed each year and adjustments made where necessary. At this stage there is no evidence that COVID-19 is adversely affecting payments and no additional loss for this has therefore been made. This situation is being monitored but until the economy returns to a firmer footing it is difficult to predict what impact there might be.

12. HRA Balance

The financial reserves required by the HRA have been reviewed and a HRA fund balance together with a separate general earmarked reserve has been agreed as the most appropriate method for holding the financial reserves.

The general earmarked reserve will contain the funds available to the HRA for restructuring costs, service development costs, insurance premiums, uninsured losses, one-off items of spend that meet the Reserves and Balances Policy, budget support and budget volatility.

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
(1,000)	HRA fund balance	(1,000)
(2,768)	HRA earmarked reserves	(4,388)

The Collection Fund

2019/20				2020/21		
Council Tax	Business Rates	Total		Council Tax	Business Rates	Total
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
			Income			
(37,002)	-	(37,002)	Income from Council Tax	(38,338)	-	(38,338)
-	(21,631)	(21,631)	Income collectable from business ratepayers	-	(11,990)	(11,990)
-	761	761	Transitional Protection Payment	-	704	704
(37,002)	(20,870)	(57,872)	Total Income	(38,338)	(11,286)	(49,624)
			Expenditure			
			<i>Precepts demand & shares:</i>			
-	10,514	10,514	- Central Government	-	10,838	10,838
27,041	2,102	29,143	- Cumbria County Council	28,423	2,168	30,591
4,719	8,528	13,247	- Barrow Borough Council	4,892	8,834	13,726
5,010	-	5,010	- Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner	5,240	-	5,240
			<i>Charged to the Collection Fund</i>			
(187)	(63)	(250)	- Write off of uncollectable amounts	(93)	(61)	(154)
717	7	724	- Impairment of debts	624	703	1,327
-	(172)	(172)	- Impairment of appeals	-	219	219
-	91	91	- Costs of collection	-	90	90
37,300	21,007	58,307	Total Expenditure	39,086	22,791	61,877
298	137	435	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year	748	11,505	12,253

Council Tax	Business Rates	Total	Collection Fund balances	Council Tax	Business Rates	Total
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
(14)	(527)	(541)	Balance brought forward at 1 April	(7)	(71)	(78)
(291)	319	28	Distribution of previous years (surplus)/deficit	305	(471)	(166)
298	137	435	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year (as above)	748	11,505	12,253
(7)	(71)	(78)	Balance carried forward at 31 March	1,046	10,963	12,009
			<i>Allocated to</i>			
(1)	(28)	(29)	- Barrow Borough Council	132	4,385	4,517
(3)	(7)	(10)	- Cumbria County Council	772	1,096	1,868
-	(36)	(36)	- Central Government	-	5,482	5,482
(3)	-	(3)	- Cumbria Police & Crime Commissioner	142	-	142
(7)	(71)	(78)	Balance carried forward at 31 March	1,046	10,963	12,009

Notes to the Collection Fund

1. Collection Fund General Note

The Collection Fund is an agent 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 and distribution to local government bodies and the Government of council tax and non-domestic rates.

The authority has a statutory requirement to operate the Collection Fund as a separate account to the General Fund. The purpose of the Collection Fund, therefore, is to isolate the income and expenditure relating to the Council Tax and Non-Domestic Business Rates. The administrative costs associated with the collection process are charged to the General Fund.

The national code of practice followed by Local Authorities in England stipulates that a Collection Fund Income and Expenditure account is included in the authority's accounts. The Collection Fund balance sheet meanwhile is incorporated into the authority's Balance Sheet.

The amounts for credit losses shown in the following notes are re-assessed each year and adjustments made where necessary. An assessment has been made of the impact of COVID-19 on credit losses and increased provisions have been made for both Council tax and Business Rates. The situation continues to be monitored but until the economy returns to a firmer footing it is difficult to predict what the final impact will be.

2. Income from Business Ratepayers

The Council collects National Non-Domestic Rates for its area based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) multiplied by a uniform business rate set nationally by central Government.

The scheme allows the authority to retain a proportion of the total NNDR received; the authority's share is 40% with the remainder paid to the precepting bodies, central Government (50%) and Cumbria County Council (10%).

The business rates payable for 2020/21 were estimated before the start of the financial year as £10.838m to Central Government, £2.168m to Cumbria County Council and £8.834m to this authority. These sums have been paid in 2020/21 and charged to the collection fund in year. Barrow Borough Council also received £163k renewable energy scheme retained by the billing authority.

During 2020/21 the Government paid significant additional Section 31 grants to Councils to recompense them for reduced Business Rate income due to COVID-19. This results in a deficit on the Collection Fund as the grant income is credited to the Councils General Fund. The deficit is recovered in future years and will be partly offset by the earmarked reserve in the General Fund; see Note 8 to the Main Statement.

In addition to the local management of business rates, authorities are expected to finance appeals made in respect of rateable values as defined by VOA and hence business rates outstanding as at 31 March 2021. As such authorities are required to make a provision for these amounts. Appeals are charged and provided for in the proportion of the precepting shares. The total net increase in the provision charged to the collection fund for 2020/21 has been calculated at £219k.

The total non-domestic rateable value at the 31 March 2021 was £54.25m (£54.47m at the 31 March 2020).

The national non-domestic rate multiplier for 2020/21 was 51.2 pence in the pound (50.4 pence in the pound for 2019/20).

A small business rate relief scheme was also introduced on the 1 April 2005 whereby, providing certain conditions are met, occupiers of properties with a rateable value of less than £15k pay a reduced rate of 49.9 pence in the pound (49.1 pence in the pound for 2019/20) and can also qualify for rate relief.

3. Bad and Doubtful Debts

Provision has been made for the potential credit losses of the Collection Fund. The arrears at the year-end together with the aggregate Balance Sheet provision and overall percentage provisions are:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
	Council Tax	
4,464	Arrears	5,250
2,283	Provision for possible credit losses	2,721
51%	Percentage of provision	52%
	Business ratepayers	
1,794	Arrears	2,173
1,119	Provision for possible credit losses	1,699
62%	Percentage of provision	78%

These balances relate to the total Collection Fund transactions for the year. The council tax and business rate transactions are apportioned between the precepting authorities and form part of the debtor for Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Police and Crime Commissioner and Central Government with the authority's share contained in the relevant Balance Sheet headings. See the General Note above for commentary on the impact of COVID-19.

The Council's share of the balances are:

31 March 2020		31 March 2021
£000		£000
	Council Tax	
566	Arrears	656
290	Provision for possible credit losses	340
51%	Percentage of provision	52%
	Business ratepayers	
718	Arrears	869
447	Provision for possible credit losses	680
62%	Percentage of provision	78%

4. Cumbria Business Rates Pool

From 1 April 2014, the authority participated in the Cumbria Business Rates Pool. The pool consists of Barrow Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, Carlisle City Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council, Eden District Council and South Lakeland District Council. The levy for 2020/21 is paid into the Cumbria Business Rates Pool and together the members share the levy and it is redistributed. Without the Pool the levy would be paid to DCLG and not retained in the area.

The total estimated amount of retained growth kept by the Pool in 2020/21 is £5.6m. The retained levy for the authority paid into the pool was £117k and the distribution of the retained levy to the authority was £70k, these are shown within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

5. Council Tax Base

Council Tax income derives from charges raised according to the value of residential properties, which have been classified into valuation bands for this specific purpose. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken by the authority for the forthcoming year and dividing this by the Council Tax base.

The Council Tax base is the number of properties against which the Council Tax can be collected. All properties on the valuation list are split into eight bands, A to H, and each band is given a standard factor to convert it to a band D equivalent. The total of the band D equivalent, net of discounts and adjustments, is then multiplied by an assumed collection rate to give the tax base for the area.

The Council Tax base for 2020/21 was 19,731 (19,520 for 2019/20). The tax base for 2020/21 was approved by Council on 27 February 2020. The collection rate was assumed to be 99% for 2020/21 (99% in 2019/20).

The Council Tax base for the year was set as:

2019/20 Band D equivalent number of chargeable dwellings	Band	Standard factor	2020/21 Band D equivalent number of chargeable dwellings
20	Disabled reductions		20
8,664	A	6/9	8,789
3,596	B	7/9	3,614
3,728	C	8/9	3,738
2,133	D	9/9	2,164
1,148	E	11/9	1,170
316	F	13/9	320
106	G	15/9	109
6	H	18/9	6
19,717	Equivalent chargeable dwellings		19,930
19,520	99% of which gives the Council Tax base		19,731

The total of the precepts and demands on the collection fund is divided by the tax base to arrive at the band D Council Tax, and by applying the standard factor to each band the tax figures are calculated. The following table contains the council tax bandings for the main preceptors for 2020/21.

2019/20 Council Tax £	Band	Property value	2020/21 Council Tax £
1,251.58	A	Up to £39,999	1,297.70
1,460.18	B	£40,000 to £51,999	1,514.00
1,668.77	C	£52,000 to £67,999	1,730.27
1,877.37	D	£68,000 to £87,999	1,946.56
2,294.56	E	£88,000 to £119,999	2,379.12
2,711.76	F	£120,000 to £159,999	2,811.70
3,128.95	G	£160,000 to £319,999	3,244.26
3,754.74	H	£320,000 and over	3,893.12

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

To follow on the conclusion of the audit.

Cost Centres by Division**Resources Division**

Corporate management
 Democratic representation and management
 Corporate Support
 Non distributed costs
 Cost of collection
 Council Tax Support
 Emergency planning
 General grants
 Registration of electors and elections
 Parish precepts
 Barrow BID
 KOFAC
 Coastal Communities Fund
 Housing Benefits
 Homelessness

Housing Revenue Account

HRA Income
 HRA Administration
 HRA Estates
 Property Inspectors
 RTB Administration
 Leaseholder Flats
 Housing Shops
 Community Involvement
 Mobile Caretakers
 Homeless Families & Dispersed
 Accommodation
 Warden Services
 Communal Rooms

Central Services

Finance Department
 Information technology
 Legal
 HR
 Technical support
 Barrow Town Hall
 Democratic services
 Office support - admin
 Customer services
 Internal audit
 Town Hall Stewards
 Community services management

Community Services Division

Dock museum
 The Forum
 Sports development and community recreation
 The park leisure centre
 Barrow park
 Parks and open spaces
 Playground
 Allotments
 Cemeteries
 Crematorium
 Kennels
 Public conveniences
 Street cleansing
 Streetscene unit
 Waste collection & Recycling
 The Markets
 Off street car parking

Regeneration & the Built Environment

Local land charges
 Coast protection
 Public Protection
 Community Safety
 Building control
 Work in default
 Development control
 Planning
 Regeneration
 The mall and shops
 Estates management
 Commercial properties
 Street fittings
 Footpath lighting
 Housing renewal administration
 Housing market renewal team
 Cluster Empty Homes
 Track and Trace
 Heritage Action Zone
 Marina Village
 Low Carbon Barrow
 Town Deal

Accounting Policies

Accounting policies are the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by the authority in preparing and presenting its financial statements.

Accruals Basis

The accruals principle is that income is recorded when it is earned rather than when it is received, and expenses are recorded when goods and services are received rather than when the payment is made.

Actuarial Gains and Losses (Pensions)

Actuarial gains and losses are changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations resulting from:

- experience adjustments (the effects of differences between the previous actuarial assumptions and what has actually occurred)
- the effects of changes in actuarial assumptions.

Amortisation

Amortisation is the method of allocating the cost of an intangible asset over its useful life.

Asset

An asset is a resource controlled by the authority as a result of past events and from which future economic or service potential is expected to flow to the authority.

Asset register

A detailed listing of land, buildings, vehicles and major items of plant and equipment (assets). Asset registers are an important record of the authority's ownership of major items, including land and buildings. They are also a useful basis for arranging appropriate insurance cover and substantiating insurance claims in the event of fire, theft or other loss.

Audit of Financial Statements

An audit is an examination by an independent expert of the authority's financial affairs to check that the relevant, legal obligations and codes of practice have been followed.

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value of all assets and liabilities recognised by the authority as at the Balance Sheet date.

Budget

The budget expresses the authority's service delivery plans and capital programme in monetary terms.

Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing difference arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction and enhancement of those assets under statutory provision.

Capital contributions

Capital contributions are sums contributed by external persons and bodies towards the cost of capital schemes to be carried out by the authority.

Capital expenditure

Capital expenditure is expenditure on the acquisition of an asset that will be used to provide services beyond the reporting period or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing fixed asset

Capital Financing Requirement

The capital financing requirement is the capital investment funded from borrowing which has yet to be repaid

Capital programme

The capital programme is a financial summary of the capital projects that the authority intends to carry out over a specified period of time. It also provides estimates of the capital resources available to finance the programme.

Capital receipt

A capital receipt is the proceeds from the sale of an asset. The government prescribes the amount of the receipt which must be set aside to repay debt and the usable amount which may be utilized to finance capital expenditure.

Capital Receipts Reserve

The capital receipts reserve holds the proceeds of non current assets sales available to meet future capital investment. These capital receipts are held in this reserve until such time they are used to finance capital expenditure.

Capital resources

The resources earmarked either by statute or by the authority to meet the cost of capital expenditure instead of charging the cost directly to revenue. The definition covers borrowing, capital receipts, and grants and contributions from external persons and bodies given for capital purposes. The authority may also contribute revenue resources to the financing of capital expenditure, and for as long as these are included in the capital programme; they are regarded similarly as capital resources.

Cash Flow Statement

The cash flow statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the authority during the reporting period.

Collection Fund

The Collection Fund is a separate fund recording the expenditure and income relating to council tax and non domestic rates.

Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The collection fund adjustment account is used specifically to manage the accounting processes for council tax and non domestic rates.

Community Asset

Community assets are assets that the authority intends to hold in perpetuity, that have no determinable useful life and that may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings not used for operational purposes.

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from taxation.

Contingent Asset

A contingent asset is an asset that may be received but only if a future event occurs that is not under the control of the authority.

Contingent Liability

A contingent liability is a potential liability that depends on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events.

Corporate and Democratic Core

The corporate and democratic core comprises costs relating to member representation and associated governance activities together with the costs of corporate management that provide the infrastructure that allows services to be provided. The costs of these activities are thus over and above those which would be incurred by a service of independent, single purpose, nominated bodies managing the same services.

Creditors

Amounts owed by the Council for work done, goods received or services rendered, for which payment has not been made at the date of the balance sheet.

Current Asset

A current asset is an asset that is intended to be sold within the normal operating cycle: the asset is held primarily for the purpose of trading or the authority expects to realise the asset within 12 months after the reporting date.

Debtors

These are sums of money due to the Council that have not been received at the date of the balance sheet.

Deferred Liability

A deferred liability is a sum of money that is either not payable until some point after the next reporting period or is paid over a number of reporting periods.

Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC)

Depreciated replacement cost is a method of valuation which provides the current cost of replacing the asset with its modern equivalent asset less deductions for all physical deterioration and all relevant forms of obsolescence and optimization.

Depreciation

Depreciation is the method of allocating the cost of a tangible asset over its useful life.

Donated Asset

A donated asset is an asset transferred at nil value or acquired at less than fair value.

Earmarked Reserves

Earmarked reserves are to be used to meet specific, known or predicted future expenditure.

Employee Benefits

Employee benefits are all forms of consideration given by the authority in exchange for services rendered by employees or for the termination of employment.

Events after the Reporting Period

Events after the reporting period are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the end of the reporting period and the date when the statements are 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 (adjusting events after the reporting period)
- those that are indicative of conditions that arose after the reporting period (non adjusting events after the reporting period).

Exceptional Items

Exceptional items are material items which derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the authority and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give fair presentation of the accounts.

Fair Value

Fair value is the amount for which an asset could be exchanged, or a liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arms length transaction.

Finance Lease

A finance lease is a lease that transfers substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of an asset. Title may or may not be eventually transferred.

Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

The Financial Instruments Adjustment Account provides a specific accounting mechanism to reconcile the different rates at which gains and losses are recognized under proper accounting practices for borrowing and investments and are required by statute to be met from the general fund balance.

Financial Regulations

That part of the Constitution which provides an approved framework for the proper financial management of the authority.

General Fund

The revenue fund of the authority covering day-to-day expenditure and income on all services except those covered by the Housing Revenue Account. The net cost on this account is met by Government Support and Council Tax.

Government Grants

Government grants are grants made by the government towards either revenue or capital expenditure to support the cost of the provision of the authority's services. These grants may be directed towards the cost of particular schemes or used to support the revenue spend of the authority.

Grants and Contributions

Grants and contributions are assistance in the form of transfer of resources to an authority in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the operation of activities. They exclude those forms of assistance which cannot reasonably have a value placed upon them and transactions with organisations which cannot be distinguished from the normal service transactions of the authority.

Heritage Asset

A heritage asset is a tangible asset with historical, artistic, scientific, technological, geophysical or environmental qualities that is held and maintained principally for its contribution to knowledge or culture. With regard to intangible assets, a heritage intangible asset is one with cultural, environmental or historical significance.

Housing Benefits

Housing benefits is a national system of financial assistance to individuals towards certain housing costs. Housing benefits is administered by the authority and subsidised by central government.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

The revenue account covering day-to-day expenditure and income arising from the provision of local authority housing. The expenditure and income credits are defined in statute and any balance on the account is only available for spending on the housing stock. Activities relating to the strategic housing function, as opposed to the landlord function for the authority's own housing stock, are accounted for in the General Fund outside of the Housing Revenue Account.

Impairment Loss

An impairment loss is an amount by which the carrying amount of an asset exceeds its recoverable amount.

Intangible Asset

An intangible asset is an identifiable non monetary asset without physical substance. It must be controlled by the authority as a result of past events and future economic or service benefits must be expected to flow from the intangible asset to the authority. The most common class of intangible asset in local authorities is computer software.

International Accounting Standards (IAS)

International Accounting Standards are standards for the preparation and presentation of financial statements.

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

International Financial Reporting Standards advise the accounting treatment and disclosure requirements of transactions so that the authority's accounts present fairly the financial positions of the authority.

Investing Activities

Investing activities are activities relating to the acquisition and disposal of long term assets and other investments not included in cash equivalents.

Inventory

A detailed listing of all goods, materials, furniture and equipment in the ownership or use of a particular service, other than those held in stocks and stores records. Inventories are normally maintained in sufficient detail as to description, location, age, value etc. to enable any material loss arising from a fire, theft or other event to be identified and to support any insurance claim.

Investment Strategy

A statement of policies for determining the type, value and length of investments that the authority will use to place its surplus funds and also for determining appropriate third parties with whom these investments will be placed.

Item 8 Credit and Debit (General) Determination

This refers to the actual charges for capital in the HRA. A general determination of the Item 8 debit and credit is issued for 2012/13 onwards and was revised with effect from 1 April 2017. It is based on notional debt and interest calculated in accordance with the requirement of the determination.

Lease

A lease is an agreement whereby the lessor conveys to the lessee in return for a payment or series of payments the right to use an asset for an agreed period of time.

Liability

These are amounts due to individuals or organisations which will have to be paid at some time in the future.

Major Repairs Reserve

The Major Repairs Reserve controls the element of the capital resources required to be used on HRA assets or for capital financing purposes. The reserve is credited with an amount equivalent to the total depreciation charges for all HRA assets and future capital expenditure on those assets.

Material

Omissions or misstatements of items are material if they could, individually or collectively, influence the decisions or assessments of users made on the basis of the financial statements. Materiality depends

on the nature and size of the omission or misstatement judged in the surrounding circumstances. The nature or size of the item, or a combination of both, could be the determining factor.

Members' Allowances

A scheme of payments to elected Members of the Council in recognition of the duties and responsibilities assumed by them.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

MRP is the minimum amount which must be charged each year in order to provide for the repayment of loans and other amounts borrowed by the authority.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

A Department of Central Government with an overriding responsibility for determining the allocation of general resources to Local Authorities.

Movement in Reserves Statement

The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the authority, analysed into usable reserves and other reserves.

Non Current Asset

A non current asset is an asset that does not meet the definition of a current asset and has a long term benefit to the authority.

Non Domestic Rates (NDR)

NDR is a scheme for collecting contributions from business towards the cost of local government services. Each business has a rateable value. The Government determines how much a business has to pay per £ of rateable value.

Operating Activities

Operating activities are the activities of the authority that are not investing or financing activities

Pension Reserve

The Pensions Reserve is a specific accounting mechanism used to reconcile the payment made for the year to various statutory pension schemes in accordance with those schemes' requirements and the net charge in the authority's recognized liability under IAS 19 "Employee Benefits" for the same period. A transfer is made to or from the Pensions Reserve to ensure that the charge to the General Fund balance reflects the amount to be raised in taxation. The reserve normally is at the same level as the pension liability carried on the top half of the Balance Sheet.

Precept

The amount that the authority and certain other public authorities providing services within the Barrow Borough area require to be paid from the Collection Fund to meet the cost of their services.

Provision

A provision is a liability of uncertain timing or amount.

Prudential Indicators

The Prudential Indicators are designed to support and record local decision making regarding capital investment. The CIPFA 'Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities' requires each local authority to agree and monitor mandatory prudential indicators.

Related Party

Parties are considered to be related if one party has the ability to control the other party or exercise significant influence over the other party in making financial and operational decisions or if the related party entity and another entity are subject to common control. Related parties include:

- an entity that has an interest in the authority that gives it significant influence over the authority
- key management personnel, and close family members of key management personnel.

Reporting Period

The reporting period is the length of time covered by the financial statements.

Reserves

Accumulated surplus income in excess of expenditure. Reserves are available at the discretion of the authority to meet items of expenditure in future years, and may be earmarked or held for general purposes.

Revaluation Reserve

The revaluation reserve records the unrealised revaluation gains arising from holding non current assets. The reserve increases when assets are revalued upwards, and decreases when assets are revalued downwards or are disposed of or as assets are depreciated.

Revenue Expenditure

Revenue expenditure is the day-to-day running costs relating to the reporting period.

Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute (REFFCUS)

Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute is revenue expenditure incurred that may be funded from capital resources under statutory provisions but does not result in the creation of non current assets. Items generally include grants, advances and financial assistance to others, cost of stock issues, expenditure on property not owned by the authority and amounts directed under section 16(2) of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003 by the Secretary of State.

Risk

Risk is the chance or possibility of loss, damage, injury or failure to achieve objectives caused by an unwanted action, event or occurrence.

Risk management

Risk management is the adoption of a planned and systematic approach to the identification, evaluation and management of risk.

Statement of Accounts

The authority's annual statement on its financial position for the year ending the 31 March. The report is required to be in a prescribed format and is subject to independent review.

Tangible Asset

A tangible asset is one that has physical structure.

Treasury Management

Treasury management is the management of the authority's cash flows, its borrowings and its investments, the management of the associated risks, and the pursuit of the optimum performance or return consistent with those risks. It includes the setting of and monitoring compliance with the Prudential Indicators.

Trust Funds

Trust Funds are funds administered by the authority on behalf of charitable organisations and/or specific organisations.

Usable and Unusable Reserves

Usable reserves are those reserves that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation.

Unusable reserves are those that are maintained for statutory accounting purposes.

Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP)

VRP is the amount by which the authority makes voluntary provision for the repayment of loans and other amounts borrowed by the authority.

Write off

The action taken to charge to the authority the amount due from some external party which has been found to be irrecoverable from that party. Whilst the sum remains due to the authority in law, it will no longer be shown as outstanding in the authority's accounts.

General Fund Variances

Division	Employee costs	Supplies and services	External income	Other items	Total
Resources					£145,581
Employee costs	(£22,799)				
Supplies and services		£51,403			
External income					
IER grant not received	(£16,850)				
Additional DWP grants	£56,663				
Under £10k	£9,137		£48,950		
Other items				£68,027	
Community Services					£13,178
Employee costs	(£12,359)				
Supplies and services					
Forum publicity	£10,000				
Forum professional fees	£14,944				
Grass pitches	£11,543				
Under £10k	£19,652	£56,139			
External income					
Recharges to CCC	£25,000				
Reduced recycling reward	(£115,694)				
Under £10k	(£27,785)		(£118,479)		
Other items					
Contracted works and inflation	£82,557				
Under £10k	£5,320			£87,877	
Regeneration and Built Environment					£178,413
Employee costs	£133,056				
Supplies and services					
Solicitors fees	£10,430				
Publicity	£10,645				
Under £10k	£32,151	£53,226			
External income					
Licensing	(£25,139)				
Recoverable charges	(£22,521)				
Under £10k	£23,400		(£24,260)		
Other items				£16,391	
Central Services					£225,026
Employee costs	£220,806				
Supplies and services					
Professional services	£10,507				
Under £10k	£18,135	£28,642			
External income			£4,393		
Other items				(£28,815)	
Corporate Amounts					£147,304
Other items					
Interest on internal balances	(£39,661)				
New burdens	£175,000				
Under £10k	£11,965			£147,304	
Sub total	£318,704	£189,410	(£89,396)	£290,784	£709,502
Earmarked Reserves				(£709,502)	(£709,502)
Total	£318,704	£189,410	(£89,396)	(£418,718)	(£0)

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Movement in General Fund Reserves

Item	S31 Reliefs	Transformation	Renewals	Contingency	Others	Grants	Total
Used to fund Business Rate deficit				(£188,478)			(£188,478)
Used to fund Marina Village		(£266,731)					(£266,731)
Used to fund Heritage Action Zone		(£35,094)					(£35,094)
Used to fund works to industrial units			(£9,714)				(£9,714)
Used to fund Barrow BID levy				(£8,210)			(£8,210)
Used to fund welfare support					(£56,970)		(£56,970)
Set aside for major projects		£665,000					£665,000
Set aside for cremator			£10,067				£10,067
Set aside for housing benefit subsidy				£77,131			£77,131
Set aside for pension fund volatility				£586,280			£586,280
Set aside for Council Tax deficit				£39,047			£39,047
Set aside for Business Rate volatility				£398,300			£398,300
Set aside for transformation		£162,443					£162,443
Set aside for COVID-19 revenue losses				£150,000			£150,000
COVID-19 Section 31 Business Rates relief	£3,928,796						£3,928,796
COVID-19 Section 31 Business Rates TIG*				£700,492			£700,492
COVID-19 Section 31 Council Tax TIG*				£50,674			£50,674
Movement in specific revenue grants						(£169,268)	(£169,268)
Total	£3,928,796	£525,618	£353	£1,805,236	(£56,970)	(£169,268)	£6,033,765

*Tax Income Guarantee scheme

Amounts held in relation to COVID-19	£4,829,962
Budgeted addition to reserves	£613,440
> reduction in the budgeted addition	(£119,139)
Unplanned addition to reserves	£709,502
Movement in General Fund reserves	£6,033,765

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PART ONE

Barrow Borough Council
Audit and Governance Committee
27 April 2022
Audit Findings Report

Report from: Director of Resources

Report Author: Director of Resources

Wards: None

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 1.1 The Audit Findings Report will be presented at the meeting by the Appointed Auditor, Grant Thornton.
- 1.2 The Audit Findings Report is intended to highlight any significant items arising from the audit process for the benefit of the Audit and Governance Committee.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are recommended to receive the Audit Findings Report and raise any questions; and**
- 2.2 Accept the management responses to the matters raised by the Appointed Auditors.**

3.0 Background and Proposals

- 3.1 The Audit Findings Report is attached as **Appendix 1** and will be presented at the meeting by the Appointed Auditor, Grant Thornton.
- 3.2 The Audit Findings Report is intended to highlight any significant items arising from the audit process for the benefit of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 3.3 Where matters are raised with formal recommendations to management, Members are asked to consider the management responses
- 3.4 All matters raised in the Audit Findings Report must be considered prior to the approval of the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 Consultation is not relevant to this report which is a part of a statutory process.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options to recommend but Members are encouraged to raise any questions.

6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities

6.1 In order to be able to deliver Council Plan Priorities the Council must be financially resilient and have good financial management. The opinion of the appointed auditor informs financial management and the value for money conclusion focusses on the Council's use of resources.

7.0 Implications**7.1 Financial, Resources and Procurement**

7.1.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Local Government Reorganisation

7.3.1 There are no impacts on the process of Local Government Reorganisation; the Council's finances will be aggregated into the Westmorland and Furness Council upon vesting day.

7.4 Equality and Diversity

7.4.1 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No, the report has no direct Equality and Diversity implications.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
The Statement of Accounts with the Annual Governance Statement are not published.	Reputational risk. Impact on closing 2021-2022.	Plan and timetable. Liaison with appointed auditors.

Contact Officers

Director of Resources directorsadmin@barrowbc.gov.uk

Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Audit Findings Report

The Audit Findings for Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council

Year ended 31 March 2021

Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council
April 2022



Contents



Your key Grant Thornton team members are:

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Matt Derrick

Senior Manager

Natasha Ayre

Assistant Manager

Section

1. Headlines
2. Financial statements
3. Value for money arrangements
4. Independence and ethics

Appendices

- A. Action plan
- B. Follow up of prior year recommendations
- C. Audit adjustments
- D. Fees
- E. Management Letter of Representation
- F. Audit opinion
- G. Audit letter in respect of delayed VFM work

This Audit Findings Report presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260. Its contents have been discussed with management and will be discussed with the Audit and Governance Committee.

Gareth Kelly

Name : Gareth Kelly
For Grant Thornton UK LLP

Date : 27 April 2022

Page

- 4
5
23
26

The contents of this report relate only to the matters which have come to our attention, which we believe need to be reported to you as part of our audit planning process. It is not a comprehensive record of all the relevant matters, which may be subject to change, and in particular we cannot be held responsible to you for reporting all of the risks which may affect the Council or all weaknesses in your internal controls. This report has been prepared solely for your benefit and should not be quoted in whole or in part without our prior written consent. We do not accept any responsibility for any loss occasioned to any third party acting, or refraining from acting on the basis of the content of this report, as this report was not prepared for, nor intended for, any other purpose.

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1. Headlines

This table summarises the key findings and other matters arising from the statutory audit of Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council ('the Council') and the preparation of the Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 for those charged with governance.

Financial Statements

Under International Standards of Audit (UK) (ISAs) and the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'), we are required to report whether, in our opinion:

- the Council's financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council and its income and expenditure for the year; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting and prepared in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We are also required to report whether other information published together with the audited financial statements, including the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) and Narrative Report, is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

Our audit work has been conducted remotely from October 2021 to April 2022. Our findings are summarised in this report.

We have identified five adjustments to the financial statements. These have resulted in an overall adjustment of £370,000 to the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Audit adjustments are detailed in Appendix C.

We have also raised recommendations for management as a result of our audit work in Appendix A.

Our follow up of recommendations from the prior year's audit are detailed in Appendix B.

Our work is substantially complete and there are no matters of which we are aware that would require modification of our audit opinion Appendix F or material changes to the financial statements (other than that set out above), subject to the following outstanding matters;

- Review of the final version of the financial statements
- Managements consideration of events after the reporting period
- Receipt of management representation letter.

We have concluded that the other information to be published with the financial statements is consistent with our knowledge of your organisation and the financial statements we have audited.

Our anticipated audit report opinion will be unqualified, but we will be unable to certify the audit closed until our work on the whole of government accounts, consideration of issuing statutory recommendations is complete, and we have issued our Annual Auditor's Report (covering our work on the Council's value for money arrangements).

We have included an emphasis of matter paragraph in our report in respect of the uncertainty over valuations of the Council's land and buildings given the Coronavirus pandemic. This does not affect our opinion that the statements give a true and fair view of the Council's financial position and its income and expenditure for the year.

1. Headlines

Value for Money (VFM) arrangements

Under the National Audit Office (NAO) Code of Audit Practice (‘the Code’), we are required to consider whether the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Auditors are now required to report in more detail on the Council’s overall arrangements, as well as key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit.

Auditors are required to report their commentary on the Council’s arrangements under the following specified criteria:

- Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness;
- Financial sustainability; and
- Governance

We have not yet completed all of our VFM work and so are not in a position to issue our Auditor’s Annual Report. An audit letter explaining the reasons for the delay is attached in Appendix G to this report. We expect to issue our Auditor’s Annual Report by 31 July 2022. This is in line with the National Audit Office’s revised deadline, which requires the Auditor’s Annual Report to be issued no more than three months after the date of the opinion on the financial statements.

As part of our planning work, we considered whether there were any potential risks of significant weakness in the Council’s arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. Our risk assessment regarding your arrangements to secure value for money identified the following risks of significant weakness:

- Financial sustainability
- **Procurement and contract management arrangements.**

Our work on this risk is underway and an update is set out in the value for money arrangements section of this report. We have identified significant weaknesses in the Council’s arrangements for procurement and contract management.

Statutory duties

The Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (‘the Act’) also requires us to:

- report to you if we have applied any of the additional powers and duties ascribed to us under the Act; and
- to certify the closure of the audit.

In view of the significant weaknesses identified in relation to procurement and contract management arrangements, we are currently considering whether we need to exercise any of our additional statutory powers or duties in respect of 2020/21. Whilst this should not delay us signing the opinion on the financial statements, we will delay certifying the closure of the 2020/21 audit until we have reached a decision on this.

We expect to certify the completion of the audit upon the completion of our work on the Council’s Value For Money arrangements, which will be reported in our Annual Auditor’s Report, as well as the completion of our work on the Whole of Government Accounts procedures.

Significant Matters

Management’s assumptions and estimates

The revised auditing standard in relation to estimates has led to heightened scrutiny over the estimates in the accounts, particularly property and pension valuations.

For property valuations in particular, there has been significant enquiry and challenge with the Council’s valuers and management over the inputs and assumptions applied, as discussed on pages 8 and 11 to 14, and we have reported several recommendations for improvement in Appendix A page 29.

2. Financial Statements

Overview of the scope of our audit

This Audit Findings Report presents the observations arising from the audit that are significant to the responsibility of those charged with governance to oversee the financial reporting process, as required by International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 and the Code of Audit Practice ('the Code'). Its contents have been discussed with management.

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) and the Code, which is directed towards forming and expressing an opinion on the financial statements that have been prepared by management with the oversight of those charged with governance. The audit of the financial statements does not relieve management or those charged with governance of their responsibilities for the preparation of the financial statements.

Audit approach

Our audit approach was based on a thorough understanding of the Council's business and is risk based, and in particular included:

- An evaluation of the Council's internal controls environment, including its IT systems and controls;
- Substantive testing on significant transactions and material account balances, including the procedures outlined in this report in relation to the key audit risks.

We have not had to alter our audit plan, as communicated to you in September 2021.

Conclusion

We have substantially completed our audit of your financial statements and subject to outstanding queries being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion pending satisfactory conclusion of all outstanding matters. The outstanding matters are listed on page 3. We will update the Committee verbally of progress against these matters at the meeting on 27 April 2022.

Acknowledgements

The impact of the pandemic has meant that both your finance team and our audit team faced audit challenges again in respect of remote access working arrangements i.e. video calling, verifying the completeness and accuracy of information provided remotely produced by the Council, access to key data (which we would otherwise just view in person) etc.

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance provided by the finance team and other staff, and look forward to working more face to face again in future.

2. Financial Statements



Our approach to materiality

The concept of materiality is fundamental to the preparation of the financial statements and the audit process and applies not only to the monetary misstatements but also to the disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.

Materiality levels remain the same as reported in our audit plan.

We detail in the table opposite our determination of materiality for the Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council.

	Council Amount (£)	Qualitative factors considered
Materiality for the financial statements	£0.924m	This is equivalent to approximately 1.95% of the gross revenue expenditure.
Performance materiality	£0.647m	The performance materiality has been set at 70% of financial statement materiality. This reflects a standard benchmark based on risk assessed knowledge of potential for errors arising.
Trivial matters	£0.046m	Triviality is set at 5% of materiality
Materiality for senior management remuneration	£0.020m	Senior officer remuneration due to the public interest in the disclosures.



2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

Significant risks are defined by ISAs (UK) as risks that, in the judgement of the auditor, require special audit consideration. In identifying risks, audit teams consider the nature of the risk, the potential magnitude of misstatement, and its likelihood. Significant risks are those risks that have a higher risk of material misstatement.

This section provides commentary on the significant audit risks communicated in the Audit Plan.

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Commentary

Management over-ride of controls

Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management over-ride of controls is present in all entities. The Council faces external scrutiny of its spending and this could potentially place management under undue pressure in terms of how they report performance.

We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.

Our audit work included, but was not restricted to:

- evaluating the design effectiveness of management controls over journals
- analysing the journals listing and determine the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals
- testing unusual journals made during the year and after the draft accounts are produced for appropriateness and corroboration
- gaining an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied made by management and consider their reasonableness (see detailed assessment of estimates on pages 11-17)
- evaluating the rationale for any changes in accounting policies, estimates or significant unusual transactions.

Our work in this area is complete and we have not identified any issues in respect of management override of controls.

The revenue cycle includes fraudulent transactions – rebutted

Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a rebuttable presumed risk that revenue may be misstated due to the improper recognition of revenue. This presumption can be rebutted if the auditor concludes that there is no risk of material misstatement due to fraud relating to revenue recognition.

For Barrow Borough Council we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted for other revenue streams, because:

- there is little incentive to manipulate revenue recognition
- opportunities to manipulate revenue recognition are very limited
- the culture and ethical frameworks of local authorities, including Barrow Borough Council mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable.

Following receipt of draft financial statements, we analysed the Council's material revenue and expenditure streams and identified that it was still appropriate to rebut those income streams based on the logic detailed in our audit plan.

As we do not consider this to be a significant risk for the Council, we did not undertake any specific work in this area other than our normal audit procedures.

Our testing in this area is complete. Performance of procedures to sample test income have not identified any matters to report.

2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Commentary

Valuation of land and buildings (including council dwellings)

The Council revalues its land, buildings and dwellings on a rolling basis. This valuation represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions. Additionally, management will need to ensure the carrying value of buildings and dwellings not revalued in year in the Council financial statements is not materially different from the current value or the fair value (for surplus assets) at the financial statements date.

We therefore identified valuation of land, buildings and dwellings, particularly revaluations and impairments, as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.

The Council's valuer prepared their valuations in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards using the information that was available to them at the valuation date in deriving their estimates.

We have:

- Evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work
- Evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert
- Written to the valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out
- Challenged the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding, the Council's valuer's report and the assumptions that underpin the valuation
- Tested revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the Council's asset register; and
- Evaluated the assumptions made by management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different to current value at year end.

Due to the potential impact that Covid-19 has on the value of your land, buildings and dwellings at 31 March 2021, your valuer has disclosed a material valuation uncertainty within their valuers report. Following audit, you have disclosed this material uncertainty within Note 4 of the financial statements.

We will reflect your disclosures within an "emphasis of matter" paragraph in our audit report opinion. This is not a modification or qualification of the opinion and is consistent with other audited bodies where the valuer has highlighted the same material valuation uncertainty.

We have encountered some delays in obtaining sufficient and appropriate evidence and supporting explanations for the key assumptions used by the valuer and we have identified some recommendations for improvement in Appendix A page 29.

Contract expenditure

Our previous Value for Money work and the work of Internal Audit, has identified weaknesses in the Council's procurement and contract management arrangements. In our prior year audit, whilst we did not identify any financial misstatements, we did identify several instances where the Council's processes for new contracts was not followed and we also reported that our recommendation from 2018-19 had not been addressed.

We have therefore identified the occurrence and accuracy of expenditure from contracts as a significant risk, which is one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.

In response to this risk we have:

- Evaluated the design of the associated controls and the Council's system of accounting for contract expenditure
- Completed more transactional testing by elevating the risk for categories of transactions and balances affected such as expenditure and payables
- Evaluated the adequacy of the disclosures in the financial statements of any material uncertainty that the Council has identified through the work completed by Internal Audit
- Discussed with management the implications for the audit report
- Considered whether any of the findings from our investigation work results in the use of our wider formal powers.

2. Financial Statements - Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Valuation of net pension fund liability

The Authority's pension fund net liability, as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.

The pension fund net liability is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.

The methods applied in the calculation of the IAS 19 estimates are routine and commonly applied by all actuarial firms in line with the requirements set out in the Code of practice for local government accounting (the applicable financial reporting framework). We have therefore concluded that there is not a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimate due to the methods and models used in their calculation.

The source data used by the actuaries to produce the IAS 19 estimates is provided by administering authorities and employers. We do not consider this to be a significant risk as this is easily verifiable.

The actuarial assumptions used are the responsibility of the entity but should be set on the advice given by the actuary. A small change in the key assumptions (discount rate, inflation rate, salary increase and life expectancy) can have a significant impact on the estimated IAS 19 liability.

We have therefore concluded that there is a significant risk of material misstatement in the IAS 19 estimate due to the assumptions used in their calculation. With regard to these assumptions we have therefore identified valuation of the Authority's pension fund net liability as a significant risk.

Commentary

We:

- Updated our understanding of the processes and controls put in place by management to ensure that the Council's pension fund net liability is not materially misstated and evaluate the design of the associated controls
- Evaluated the instructions issued by management to their management expert (an actuary) for this estimate and the scope of the actuary's work
- Assessed the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary who carried out the Council's pension fund valuation
- Assessed the accuracy and completeness of the information provided by the Council to the actuary to estimate the liability
- Tested the consistency of the pension fund asset and liability and disclosures in the notes to the core financial statements with the actuarial report from the actuary
- Undertook procedures to confirm the reasonableness of the actuarial assumptions made by reviewing the report of the consulting actuary (as auditor's expert) and performing any additional procedures suggested within the report; and
- Obtained assurances from the auditor of Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme as to the controls surrounding the validity and accuracy of membership data; contributions data and benefits data sent to the actuary by the pension fund and the fund assets valuation in the pension fund financial statements.

The estimate of the Council's share of assets held by the Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme was based on an estimated valuation of the pension scheme at 31 March 2021. The audited accounts have been updated to reflect this increase in value. See Appendix C for further details.

Our audit work has not identified any significant issues in relation to this significant risk.

2. Financial Statements – other risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Commentary

Covid-19 grant funding- recognition and presentation

The Council has received significant additional funding via several different schemes implemented as part of the Government's response to Covid-19.

The Council receives a number of grants and contributions and is required to follow the requirements set out in sections 2.3 and 2.6 of the Code. The main considerations are to determine whether the Council is acting as principal/ agent, and if there are any conditions outstanding, as distinct from restrictions that would determine whether the grant be recognised as a receipt in advance or income. The Council also needs to assess whether grants are specific, and hence credited to service revenue accounts, or of a general or capital nature in which case they are credited to taxation and non-specific grant income.

In response to this risk we have:

- evaluated management's processes and assumptions for determining the recognition and accounting policies for new grants
- reviewed the conditions of the grant schemes to assess whether management's assessment of whether the Council is acting as principal or agent is reasonable
- substantively tested a sample of grant income and balances on hand at year end
- Reviewed the completeness and accuracy of the disclosures.

Our work in this area is complete. We encountered some difficulty in reconciling the draft accounts disclosures in note 6 with supporting working papers.

We have identified a minor inaccuracy in the description of the Tax Income Guarantee scheme as receipts in advance and we have requested management to update the disclosures.

We also requested management amend the narrative report and the accounts disclosures to ensure clarity and consistency in respect of Covid grants recognised on a principal basis and agency basis.

2. Financial Statements – key judgements and estimates

This section provides commentary on key estimates and judgements inline with the enhanced requirements for auditors.

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Land and Buildings – Other – £61.750 million	<p>Land and buildings comprises specialised assets such as, sports and leisure centres, public conveniences and museums. These are required to be valued at depreciated replacement cost (DRC) at year end, reflecting the cost of a modern equivalent asset necessary to deliver the same service provision. The remainder of other land and buildings including car parks are not specialised in nature and are required to be valued at existing use in value (EUUV) at year end.</p> <p>Surplus assets are required to be valued annually and at fair value.</p> <p>The Council has engaged Lambert Smith Hampton Group Limited to complete the valuation of properties as at 31 March 2021.</p> <p>The Council's valuer prepared their valuations in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards using the information that was available to them at the valuation date in deriving their estimates.</p>	<p>In response to this risk we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated management's processes and assumptions for the calculation of the estimate, the instructions issued to valuation experts and the scope of their work evaluated the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the valuation expert written to the valuer to confirm the basis on which the valuation was carried out challenged the information and assumptions used by the valuer to assess completeness and consistency with our understanding, the Council's valuer's report and the assumptions that underpin the valuation tested revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the Council's asset register; and evaluated the assumptions made by management for those assets not revalued during the year and how management has satisfied themselves that these are not materially different to current value at year end. <p>The values in the valuation report have been used to inform the measurement of property assets at valuation in the financial statements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We assessed the qualifications, skills and experience of the valuer and determined the service to be appropriate. The underlying information and sensitivities used to determine the estimate was considered to be complete and accurate. The valuer prepared their valuations in accordance with the RICS Valuation – Global Standards using the information that was available to them at the valuation date in deriving their estimates. We have uplifted assets not-valued in year using Gerald Eve indices and considered local market factors to support management's assessment that there has been no material changes to the valuation of land and buildings not-valued in year. 	<p>We consider managements process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious</p>

Assessment

- **Dark Purple** We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- **Blue** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- **Grey** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- **Light Purple** We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements – key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
<p>Land and Buildings valuations (continued)</p>	<p>The Council revalues its land and buildings on a rolling programme with a maximum period of four years between revaluations. The majority of land and building assets that are subject to valuation were revalued during 2020/21. Management has considered the year end value of non-valued land and buildings, and the potential valuation change in the assets revalued at 31 March 2021, to determine whether there has been a material change in the total value of these properties.</p> <p>Management's assessment of assets not revalued has identified no material change to the value.</p> <p>The Council re-measured some of the significant assets valued using Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) and this identified significant differences in the valuations which have been amended in 2020-21.</p>	<p>Due to the potential impact that Covid-19 has on the value of your land, buildings and dwellings at 31 March 2021, your valuer has disclosed a material valuation uncertainty within their valuers report. Following audit, you have disclosed this material uncertainty within Note 4 of the financial statements.</p> <p>We will reflect your disclosures within an "emphasis of matter" paragraph in our audit report opinion. This is not a modification or qualification of the opinion and is consistent with other audited bodies where the valuer has highlighted the same material valuation uncertainty.</p> <p>We have engaged our internal specialist valuations team to review the valuations for DRC assets and concluded that the overall approach is reasonable but highlighted some of the assumptions for build costs were higher than the expected range. We have considered management's assessment of these assumptions and requested additional detail to be added to the disclosures in the accounts and we have requested specific representations in the letter of representations from management.</p> <p>We have reviewed the amended valuations for assets which were re-measured in 2020-21 and the changes to the valuations are included as adjustments to the draft accounts in Appendix C page 31. These changes also impact the prior year valuations however, we are satisfied that no prior period adjustment is required as the net impact is immaterial.</p> <p>We have encountered some delays in obtaining sufficient evidence and supporting explanations for the key assumptions used by the valuer and we have identified some recommendations for improvement in Appendix A page 29.</p>	<p>We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious</p>

Assessment

- **Dark Purple** We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- **Blue** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- **Grey** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- **Light Purple** We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements – key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate

Summary of management's approach

Audit Comments

Assessment

Land and Buildings valuations (continued)

Our work is now complete and we have obtained sufficient and appropriate audit assurance to conclude that:

- the basis of the valuation of land and buildings and council dwellings is appropriate
- the assumptions and processes used by management in determining the estimate of valuation of property are reasonable.
- the valuation of land and buildings disclosed in the financial statements is reasonable.
- management's approach to this significant estimate is appropriate; and
- management's assessment of assets not revalued is reasonable.

We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Assessment

- Dark Purple We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- Blue We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- Grey We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- Light Purple We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements – key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate

Summary of management's approach

Audit Comments

Assessment

Land and Buildings
– Council Dwellings
- £70.221 million

The Council owns dwellings and is required to revalue these properties in accordance with DCLG's Stock Valuation for Resource Accounting guidance. The guidance requires the use of beacon methodology, in which a detailed valuation of representative property types is then applied to similar properties. The Council has engaged Lambert Smith Hampton Group Limited to complete the valuation of these properties. The year end valuation of Council Dwellings was £70.221 million, a net decrease of £0.048m million from 2019/20 (£70.269 million).

- We assessed the qualifications, skills and experience of the valuer and determined the service to be appropriate.
- The underlying information and sensitivities used to determine the estimate was considered to be complete and accurate.
- The valuer prepared their valuations in accordance with DCLG's Stock Valuation for Resource Accounting guidance. The valuer used the beacon methodology using the information that was available to them at the valuation date in deriving their estimates.

Our work is complete and we have obtained sufficient and appropriate audit assurance as noted in Land, Buildings and Council Dwellings above.

We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Assessment

- Dark Purple We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- Blue We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- Grey We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- Light Purple We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate

Summary of management's approach

Audit Comments

Assessment

Net pension liability – £31.178 million

The Council's net pension liability at 31 March 2021 is £31.178m (PY £29.163m) comprising the Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme benefit obligations.

The Council uses Mercer to provide actuarial valuations of the Council's assets and liabilities derived from this scheme. A full actuarial valuation is required every three years. The latest full actuarial valuation was completed as at 31 March 2019. A roll forward approach is used in intervening periods which utilises key assumptions such as life expectancy, discount rates, salary growth and investment return. Given the significant value of the net pension fund liability, small changes in assumptions can result in significant valuation movements. There has been a £2.015m increase in the net pension liability during 2020/21.

- We have no concerns over the competence, capabilities and objectivity of the actuary used by the Council.
- We have used the work of PwC, as auditors expert, to assess the actuary and assumptions made by the actuary. See below for consideration of key assumptions made by the actuary (see table below):

Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment
Discount rate	2.1%	2.1 – 2.2%	● (G)
Pension increase rate	2.7%	2.7%	● (G)
Salary growth	4.2%	2.5%-4.2%	● (G)
Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45 / 65	45: 24.3 65: 22.7	22.5 – 24.7 20.9 – 23.2	● (G)
Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45 / 65	45: 27.2 65: 25.3	25.9 – 27.7 24.0 – 25.8	● (G)

- No issues were noted with the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate.
- There have been no changes to the valuation method since the previous year, other than the updating of key assumptions above.
- We are content with the adequacy of the disclosure of the estimate in the financial statements.

Conclusion

We are satisfied that the estimate of your net pension liability is not materially misstated.

We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Assessment

- Dark Purple We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- Blue We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- Grey We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- Light Purple We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Minimum Revenue Provision - £0.503 million	<p>The Council is responsible on an annual basis for determining the amount charged for the repayment of debt known as its Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). The basis for the charge is set out in regulations and statutory guidance and the Council's policy for the calculation of MRP is set out in its annual budget setting report presented to Council.</p> <p>The year-end MRP charge was £0.503m, a net decrease of £0.003m from 2019/20.</p>	<p>At 31 March 2021, the Council's MRP was £0.503m. At 31 March 2020 the MRP was £0.506m. The MRP represents 1.38% of the Council's overall Capital Financing Requirement. This has increased from 1.34% at 31 March 2020.</p> <p>This is measure of the pace at which charges to revenue (GF) are being made to finance capital expenditure that has not previously been financed.</p> <p>The overarching requirement is for authorities to determine a "prudent" provision, rather than to follow a particular basis of calculation. If the MRP is too low, the burden of financing capital assets will fall on future generations of taxpayers.</p> <p>We have recommended that the Council review its MRP policy to ensure the provision continues to be prudent and is sufficient to finance capital expenditure that has not previously been financed through the application of capital receipts, capital grants or direct revenue charges. See Appendix F for this recommendation.</p> <p>We consider the level of disclosure in the financial statements to be appropriate.</p>	<p>We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic</p>

Assessment

- **Dark Purple** We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- **Blue** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- **Grey** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- **Light Purple** We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements - key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Grants Income Recognition and Presentation - £31.400m	<p>The Council receives a number of grants and contributions and must determine whether the Council is acting as principal/ agent, and if there are any conditions outstanding (as distinct from restrictions) that would determine whether the grant be recognised as a receipt in advance or income.</p> <p>The Council is acting as the principal and credited the following grants to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid-19 funding • Benefits related grants • Business rates reliefs • Developer contributions <p>The Council is acting as an agent and does not recognise grant income in respect of £25.955m of Covid-19 funding to support local businesses.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Our audit work included consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the Council is acting as the principal or agent which would determine whether the authority recognises the grant at all • Completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine whether there are conditions outstanding (as distinct from restrictions) that would determine whether the grant be recognised as a receipt in advance or income • Impact for grants received, whether the grant is specific or non specific grant (or whether it is a capital grant) – which impacts on where the grant is presented in the CIES. • Adequacy of disclosure of judgement in the financial statements. <p>Our work in this area is complete. We have identified a minor inaccuracy in the description of the Tax Income Guarantee scheme as receipts in advance and we have requested management to update the disclosures.</p>	We consider managements process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

Assessment

- **Dark Purple** We disagree with the estimation process or judgements that underpin the estimate and consider the estimate to be potentially materially misstated
- **Blue** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider optimistic
- **Grey** We consider the estimate is unlikely to be materially misstated however management's estimation process contains assumptions we consider cautious
- **Light Purple** We consider management's process is appropriate and key assumptions are neither optimistic or cautious

2. Financial Statements - other communication requirements

We set out below details of other matters which we, as auditors, are required by auditing standards and the Code to communicate to those charged with governance.

Issue	Commentary
Matters in relation to fraud	We have previously discussed the risk of fraud with the Audit and Governance Committee and Internal Audit. We have not been made aware of any incidents in the period and no other issues have been identified during the course of our audit procedures.
Matters in relation to related parties	We are not aware of any related parties or related party transactions which have not been disclosed.
Matters in relation to laws and regulations	You have not made us aware of any significant incidences of non-compliance with relevant laws and regulations and we have not identified any incidences from our audit work.
Written representations	A letter of representation has been requested from the Council, which is appended at Appendix E. Specific representations have been requested from management in respect of the significant assumptions applied in the accounting estimates for valuations of land and buildings.

2. Financial Statements - other communication requirements



Issue	Commentary
Confirmation requests from third parties	We requested from management permission to send confirmation requests to those organisations with which it banks, borrows and in which it invests. This permission was granted and the requests were sent. All of these requests were returned with positive confirmation.
Accounting practices	We have evaluated the appropriateness of the Council's accounting policies, accounting estimates and financial statement disclosures. Our review found no material omissions in the financial statements: see Appendix C for the most significant amendments made to disclosures. In addition a small number of amendments were made to improve clarity for the reader.
Audit evidence and explanations/ significant difficulties	<p>Management has been co-operative in providing information throughout the course of the audit.</p> <p><u>Management's assumptions and estimates</u></p> <p>The revised auditing standard in relation to estimates has led to heightened scrutiny over the estimates in the accounts, particularly property and pension valuations.</p> <p>For property valuations in particular, there has been significant enquiry and challenge with the valuers over the inputs and assumptions applied, as discussed on pages 8 and 12.</p>

2. Financial Statements - other communication requirements



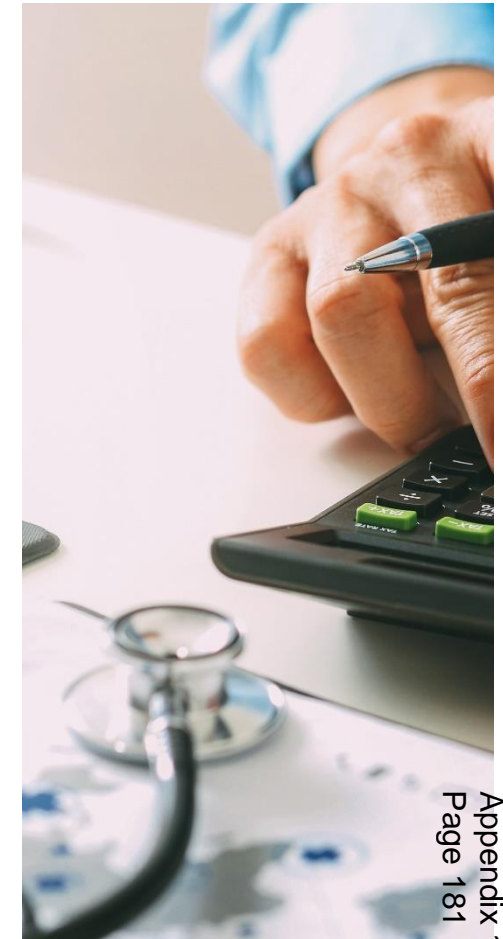
Our responsibility

As auditors, we are required to “obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence about the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern assumption in the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and to conclude whether there is a material uncertainty about the entity's ability to continue as a going concern” (ISA (UK) 570).

Issue	Commentary
Going concern	<p>In performing our work on going concern, we have had reference to Statement of Recommended Practice – Practice Note 10: Audit of financial statements of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2020). The Financial Reporting Council recognises that for particular sectors, it may be necessary to clarify how auditing standards are applied to an entity in a manner that is relevant and provides useful information to the users of financial statements in that sector. Practice Note 10 provides that clarification for audits of public sector bodies.</p> <p>Practice Note 10 sets out the following key principles for the consideration of going concern for public sector entities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the use of the going concern basis of accounting is not a matter of significant focus of the auditor's time and resources because the applicable financial reporting frameworks envisage that the going concern basis for accounting will apply where the entity's services will continue to be delivered by the public sector. In such cases, a material uncertainty related to going concern is unlikely to exist, and so a straightforward and standardised approach for the consideration of going concern will often be appropriate for public sector entities for many public sector entities, the financial sustainability of the reporting entity and the services it provides is more likely to be of significant public interest than the application of the going concern basis of accounting. Our consideration of the Council's financial sustainability is addressed by our value for money work, which is covered elsewhere in this report. <p>Practice Note 10 states that if the financial reporting framework provides for the adoption of the going concern basis of accounting on the basis of the anticipated continuation of the provision of a service in the future, the auditor applies the continued provision of service approach set out in Practice Note 10. The financial reporting framework adopted by the Council meets this criteria, and so we have applied the continued provision of service approach. In doing so, we have considered and evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the nature of the Council and the environment in which it operates the Council's financial reporting framework the Council's system of internal control for identifying events or conditions relevant to going concern management's going concern assessment. <p>On the basis of this work, we have obtained sufficient appropriate audit evidence to enable us to conclude that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a material uncertainty related to going concern has not been identified; and management's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

2. Financial Statements - other responsibilities under the Code

Issue	Commentary
Other information	<p>We are required to give an opinion on whether the other information published together with the audited financial statements (including the Annual Governance Statement and Narrative Report), is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.</p> <p>No inconsistencies have been identified. We plan to issue an unmodified opinion in this respect – refer to appendix E</p>
Matters on which we report by exception	<p>We are required to report on a number of matters by exception in a number of areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with disclosure requirements set out in CIPFA/SOLACE guidance or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit, • if we have applied any of our statutory powers or duties. • where we are not satisfied in respect of arrangements to secure value for money and have reported [a] significant weakness/es. <p>We have identified significant weaknesses in the Council’s arrangements for procurement and contract management and an update is set out in the value for money arrangements section of this report.</p>



2. Financial Statements - other responsibilities under the Code

Issue	Commentary
Specified procedures for Whole of Government Accounts	<p>We are required to carry out specified procedures (on behalf of the NAO) on the Whole of Government Accounts (WGA) consolidation pack under WGA group audit instructions.</p> <p>However, the Council is below the threshold (as set out in the Group Instructions) and therefore no further work is required.</p>
Certification of the closure of the audit	<p>We intend to delay the certification of the closure of the 2020/21 audit of Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council in the audit report, as included in Appendix F, due to VFM work being incomplete.</p>

3. Value for Money arrangements

Revised approach to Value for Money work for 2020/21

On 1 April 2020, the National Audit Office introduced a new Code of Audit Practice which comes into effect from audit year 2020/21. The Code introduced a revised approach to the audit of Value for Money. (VFM)

There are three main changes arising from the NAO's new approach:

- A new set of key criteria, covering financial sustainability, governance and improvements in economy, efficiency and effectiveness
- More extensive reporting, with a requirement on the auditor to produce a commentary on arrangements across all of the key criteria.
- Auditors undertaking sufficient analysis on the Council's VFM arrangements to arrive at far more sophisticated judgements on performance, as well as key recommendations on any significant weaknesses in arrangements identified during the audit.

The Code require auditors to consider whether the body has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. When reporting on these arrangements, the Code requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under the three specified reporting criteria.



Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness

Arrangements for improving the way the body delivers its services. This includes arrangements for understanding costs and delivering efficiencies and improving outcomes for service users.



Financial Sustainability

Arrangements for ensuring the body can continue to deliver services. This includes planning resources to ensure adequate finances and maintain sustainable levels of spending over the medium term (3-5 years)



Governance

Arrangements for ensuring that the body makes appropriate decisions in the right way. This includes arrangements for budget setting and management, risk management, and ensuring the body makes decisions based on appropriate information

Potential types of recommendations

A range of different recommendations could be made following the completion of work on the body's arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources, which are as follows:



Statutory recommendation

Written recommendations to the body under Section 24 (Schedule 7) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. A recommendation under schedule 7 requires the body to discuss and respond publicly to the report.



Key recommendation

The Code of Audit Practice requires that where auditors identify significant weaknesses in arrangements to secure value for money they should make recommendations setting out the actions that should be taken by the body. We have defined these recommendations as 'key recommendations'.



Improvement recommendation

These recommendations, if implemented should improve the arrangements in place at the body, but are not made as a result of identifying significant weaknesses in the body's arrangements

3. VFM - our procedures and conclusions

We have not yet completed all of our VFM work and so are not in a position to issue our Auditor's Annual Report. An audit letter explaining the reasons for the delay is attached in the Appendix G to this report. We expect to issue our Auditor's Annual Report by 31 July 2022. This is in line with the National Audit Office's revised deadline, which requires the Auditor's Annual Report to be issued no more than three months after the date of the opinion on the financial statements.

As part of our work, we considered whether there were any risks of significant weakness in the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We identified the risks set out in the table below.

We have performed further procedures in respect of these risks and have completed our review of the Council's procurement and contract management arrangements. Our conclusions are detailed below. Our auditor's report will make reference to this significant weakness in arrangements, as required by the Code, see Appendix E.

Risk of significant weakness	Procedures undertaken	Conclusion	Outcome
<p>Procurement and contract management arrangements</p> <p>Our previous Value for Money work and the work of Internal Audit, has identified weaknesses in the Council's procurement and contract management arrangements. We identified several instances where the Council's processes for new contracts was not followed and we also reported that our recommendation from 2018-19 had not been addressed.</p>	<p>As part of our risk assessment, we have completed a review of key documentation relevant to these risks, including Council and Committee papers and reports from Internal Audit.</p> <p>We have engaged colleagues from our specialist VFM team to undertake a focussed review and requested additional information from management.</p> <p>We have assessed the Council's progress in strengthening the arrangements and considered whether significant improvement has been achieved.</p>	<p>We have identified significant weaknesses in the Council's arrangements for procurement and contract management.</p>	<p>We have identified key recommendations for improvement. The Council should ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - procurement activities are conducted in accordance with the contracting standing orders and procurement regulations - procurement and contracting documentation is available to Internal Audit to support their assurance reviews - changes to contracting and procurement procedures are supported by appropriate training and guidance to officers - procedures are in place to monitor compliance with the updated contracting and procurement procedures. <p>In view of the weaknesses identified, we are currently considering whether we need to exercise any of our additional statutory powers or duties in respect of 2020/21. Whilst this should not delay us signing the opinion on the financial statements, we will delay certifying the closure of the 2020/21 audit until we have reached a decision on this.</p>

3. VFM - our procedures and conclusions

Our work on this risk is underway and an update is set out below.

Risk of significant weakness

Work performed to date

Financial sustainability

The Council faces some significant challenges in the short and medium term. Achieving future planned savings will be even more challenging in context of Covid-19 impact and recovery and there is uncertainty around future arrangements for the delivery of leisure services.

As part of our risk assessment, we have completed a review of key documentation relevant to these risks, including Council and Committee papers and reports from Internal Audit.

4. Independence and ethics

We confirm that there are no significant facts or matters that impact on our independence as auditors that we are required or wish to draw to your attention, in addition to those we have already drawn to your attention in our Audit Plan.

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and confirm that we, as a firm, and each covered person, are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

Further, we have complied with the requirements of the National Audit Office's Auditor Guidance Note 01 issued in May 2020 which sets out supplementary guidance on ethical requirements for auditors of local public bodies.

Details of fees charged are detailed in Appendix D.

Transparency

Grant Thornton publishes an annual Transparency Report, which sets out details of the action we have taken over the past year to improve audit quality as well as the results of internal and external quality inspections. For more details see [Transparency report 2020 \(grantthornton.co.uk\)](https://www.grantthornton.co.uk/transparency-report-2020)

4. Independence and ethics

Audit and non-audit services

For the purposes of our audit we have made enquiries of all Grant Thornton UK LLP teams providing services to the Council. The following non-audit services were identified, which were charged from the beginning of the financial year to September 2021, as well as the threats to our independence and safeguards that have been applied to mitigate these threats.

These services are consistent with the Council's policy on the allotment of non-audit work to your auditors. All services have been approved by the Audit and Risk Committee. None of the services provided are subject to contingent fees.

Audit-related service	Fees £	Threats identified	Safeguards
Certification of Housing Benefit Claim	41,100 (expected)	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee) Self review (because GT provides audit services)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £41,100 in comparison to the total fee for the audit and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level. To mitigate against the self review threat, the certification work is completed after the audit has finished. Material errors in this area are unlikely and the Council has informed management who will decide whether to amend returns for our findings and agree the accuracy of our reports on grants.
Certification of Housing capital receipts grant	6,000	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee) Self review (because GT provides audit services)	The level of this recurring fee taken on its own is not considered a significant threat to independence as the fee for this work is £6,000 in comparison to the total fee for the audit and in particular relative to Grant Thornton UK LLP's turnover overall. Further, it is a fixed fee and there is no contingent element to it. These factors all mitigate the perceived self-interest threat to an acceptable level. To mitigate against the self review threat, the certification work is completed after the audit has finished. Material errors in this area are unlikely and the Council has informed management who will decide whether to amend returns for our findings and agree the accuracy of our reports on grants.

Appendices

A. Action plan – Audit of Financial Statements

We have identified 2 recommendations for the Council as a result of issues identified during the course of our audit. We have agreed our recommendations with management and we will report on progress on these recommendations during the course of the 2021/22 audit. The matters reported here are limited to those deficiencies that we have identified during the course of our audit and that we have concluded are of sufficient importance to merit being reported to you in accordance with auditing standards.

Assessment	Issue and risk	Recommendations
Medium	<p>Minimum Revenue Provision</p> <p>At 31 March 2021, the Council’s MRP was £0.503m. At 31 March 2020 the MRP was £0.506m. The MRP represents 1.38% of the Council’s overall Capital Financing Requirement. This has increased from 1.34% at 31 March 2020.</p> <p>This is measure of the pace at which charges to revenue (GF) are being made to finance capital expenditure that has not previously been financed.</p> <p>The overarching requirement is for authorities to determine a “prudent” provision, rather than to follow a particular basis of calculation. If the MRP is too low, the burden of financing capital assets will fall on future generations of taxpayers.</p>	<p>Review the Council’s MRP policy to ensure the provision continues to be prudent and is sufficient to finance capital expenditure that has not previously been finance through the application of capital receipts, capital grants or direct revenue charges.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>The MRP Policy was thoroughly reviewed in 2016 as a project within the Budget Strategy (the Council’s response to austerity). The Council’s MRP Policy aligns the annual charges to revenue against the period of time that service delivery benefits from the assets created and improved. The MRP Policy is considered annually when preparing the Treasury Management Strategy Statement. The Policy has remained the same since the 2016 review and management accept that it is timely to bring forward another detailed review to the Executive Committee for consideration.</p>

Controls

- High – Significant effect on financial statements
- Medium – Limited Effect on financial statements
- Low – Best practice

A. Action plan – Audit of Financial Statements

Assessment	Issue and risk	Recommendations
High	<p>Valuation of land & buildings</p> <p>We have encountered some delays in obtaining sufficient evidence and supporting explanations for the key assumptions used by the valuer.</p> <p>We identified issues with reconciling the detailed asset calculations to the valuers overall report.</p> <p>The valuers supporting evidence and explanation for some key assumptions for DRC assets was limited and we subsequently engaged our internal specialists valuations team to review the external valuers work.</p>	<p>Management should ensure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Complete, accurate and up to date source data is provided to the Valuer (in particular up to date lease agreements and lease terms) 2) review of valuation report in terms of completeness and challenge of valuers key assumptions 3) robust management assessment on the assumptions adopted for all valuations and for DRC assets including consideration of the modern equivalent asset approach 4) clear instructions are issued to valuer in terms of assets to be revalued, valuation basis, tenant update and changes to any key inputs and assumptions <p>Management Response</p> <p>Management recognise that the information required to support the Valuer carrying out the Council's instructions must be complete, accurate and up-to-date, and shall ensure that the relevant departments work together to achieve this. Management shall strive to secure the Valuers Report in good time to allow the completeness and key assumptions to be reviewed and challenged. The assessment of assets valued at depreciated replacement cost (DRC), including the consideration of the modern equivalent asset (MEA) approach, was new for 2020-2021; management recognise that the DRC MEA assumptions should be robust and disclosed to the Valuer. Management shall ensure that clear instructions are issued to the Valuer in all aspects that are relevant to the valuations required.</p>

Controls

- High – Significant effect on financial statements
- Medium – Limited Effect on financial statements
- Low – Best practice

B. Follow up of prior year recommendations

We identified the following issues in the audit of Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council's 2019/20 financial statements, which resulted in two recommendations being reported in our 2019/20 Audit Findings report. We have followed up on the implementation of the recommendations.

Assessment	Issue and risk previously communicated	Update on actions taken to address the issue
X	<p>Segregation of duties conflicts between Oracle system administration and finance roles</p> <p>To support our opinion on the financial statements for the year-ended 31 March 2020, our specialist IT audit team completed an audit of the design and implementation effectiveness of the IT General Controls (ITGC) within the IT environment. During the IT Audit visit, we also completed an Oracle authorisation and security design review to help provide assurance over Oracle controls for the financial statements. We observed two users that had conflicting IT and Finance responsibilities assigned. This combination of access rights allows the users a wide range of access to change and configure the system, users and data therein. In addition we also observed 10 Finance users with access assigned to critical functions that allows them to change system configuration including cross validation rules, functions, profile options responsibilities and key flex fields values.</p> <p>We recommended that management address segregation of duties conflicts between the Oracle system administration and finance roles.</p>	<p>We note that the segregation of duties conflicts identified previously remain prevalent in 2020-21 and management asserts this is unavoidable due to the nature and capacity of the finance team.</p> <p>Our audit procedures have not identified any instances of an override of controls in relation to these issues. We are satisfied that they have not impacted the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.</p>
✓	<p>Valuation of Land, Buildings and Dwellings</p> <p>The Council has been slow to provide evidence to support key assumptions and source data underpinning the valuation of its land, buildings and dwellings. This has made it difficult for management to support the assumptions and source data used by its valuer, and in turn has added delays to the audit process.</p> <p>We recommended that management provide evidence to support all source data and key assumption used in the annual valuation of land, buildings and dwellings.</p>	<p>The Council has commissioned physical surveys of significant assets valued using Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) where one of the key inputs to the valuation is the internal floor area and/or site area. This has been undertaken for five buildings and the results identified significant differences in floor areas when compared to existing records. Upon review, we are satisfied that the net impact on the land & buildings asset value is immaterial, although some individual changes to asset values are material. Management has also considered the risk that other DRC assets are misstated and we are satisfied this assessment is appropriate.</p> <p>We are satisfied the original issues identified and our recommendation has been implemented however, we have identified further issues during our 2020-21 audit, as detailed in Appendix A</p>

Assessment

✓ Action completed

X Not yet addressed

C. Audit Adjustments

We are required to report all non trivial misstatements to those charged with governance, whether or not the accounts have been adjusted by management.

Impact of adjusted misstatements

All adjusted misstatements are set out in detail below along with the impact on the key statements and the reported net expenditure for the year ending 31 March 2021. Note that there are elements of our audit which are still underway as at the time of writing and therefore there could be further amendments required.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Statement of Financial Position £'000	Impact on total net expenditure £'000
The Council re-measured some of the significant assets valued using Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) and this identified significant differences in the valuations which have been amended in 2020-21.			
Forum	(£200)	£200	(£200)
Dock Museum	(£100)	£100	(£100)
Crematorium	(£400)	£400	(£400)
Cavendish Park	(£30)	£30	(£30)
Barrow Town Hall	£1,100	(£1,100)	£1,100
Overall impact	£370	(£370)	£370

C. Audit Adjustments



Impact of unadjusted misstatements

The table below provides details of adjustments identified during the 2020/21 audit which have not been made within the final set of financial statements. The Audit and Risk Committee is required to approve management's proposed treatment of all items recorded within the table below. Note that there are elements of our audit which are still underway as at the time of writing and therefore there could be further amendments required.

Detail	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £'000	Statement of Financial Position £' 000	Impact on total net expenditure £'000	Reason for not adjusting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our testing of additions identified £179,000 classified as capital expenditure in 2020/21. This has been incorrectly treated as an addition in 2020/21, as it relates to the prior year. The impact on in-year depreciation is trivial. 	nil	nil	nil	n/a
Overall impact	nil	nil	nil	

Impact of prior year unadjusted misstatements

Our prior year audit findings report included an unadjusted misstatement in relation to the impact of the McCloud Judgement and a change in the value of the Council's share of Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme assets. The net impact of these two issues would have been to increase the net defined benefit pension liability by £107,000. This difference is included in the prior year comparator in the 2019/20 financial statements and is immaterial. The Council's net defined pension liability at 31 March 2021, as disclosed in the 2019/20 financial statements, reflects the most up to date valuation of Cumbria Local Government Pension Scheme assets and includes an estimate of the impact of the McCloud Judgement.

C. Audit Adjustments

Misclassification and disclosure changes

The table below provides details of misclassification and disclosure changes identified during the audit which have been made in the final set of financial statements.

Disclosure	Details	Adjusted?
Prior year comparatives	The Council made some amendments to the prior year comparative figures which had been brought forward into the draft accounts inaccurately.	✓
Accounts consistency	Updates made to references in the accounts and minor amendments to ensure consistency.	✓
Narrative report	Updates made to figures drawn from the accounts to ensure consistency	✓
Accounting policies	Heritage Asset accounting policy is required this year due to this becoming a material balance in 2020/21.	✓
Remuneration disclosures	The Council made some amendments to the disclosures in the Officers Remuneration note. We identified some omissions in the disclosure of allowances and expenses paid during the year.	✓
Grants disclosures	The Council added further information to the explanation of the accounting and recognition of funds received from Covid-19 grants and amended the disclosure of grant funding received in advance	✓
Critical judgements & uncertainty	The Council has amended the disclosures in notes 4 and 5 where there are no critical judgements applied or significant uncertainty likely to result in material future adjustment to transactions or balances in the account.	✓
Financial instruments	Updates made to disclosures of financial instruments and reconciliation to the balance sheet	✓
Going concern	Further details are required to provide the users of the financial statements with an overview of Local Government reform and the reasoning behind the accounts still being prepared on a going concern basis.	✓
Audit fees	Updates made to disclosure the full external audit costs in the accounts.	✓

D. Fees

We confirm below our final fees charged for the audit and provision of non-audit services.

Audit fees	Proposed fee	Final fee
Council Audit	£62,772	TBC
Total audit fees (excluding VAT)	£62,772	TBC

* See overleaf for a breakdown of the fee. This information was provided in our Audit Plan but is reproduced overleaf for completeness.

The disclosure in Note 37 of the accounts is as follows and with the exception of rounding we are satisfied that statutory fees as well as non-audit fees for other services as set out in this report, reconciles to the financial statements.

Non-audit fees for other services	Fees
Audit Related Services:	
• Certification of Housing benefits	£41,100**
• Certification of Housing capital receipts grant	£6,000
Total non-audit fees (excluding VAT)	£47,100

** These are proposed fees as the work in respect of these grant claims is not yet complete. Therefore we are not in a position to confirm final fees as at the time of writing.

G. Audit letter in respect of delayed VFM work

Note that this letter does not form part of our formal communications under ISA 260 (Communication with Those Charged with Governance) but is included here for ease of reference.

Councillor Burns
Audit and Governance Committee Chair
Barrow-in-Furness Borough Council
Town Hall
Duke Street
Barrow-In-Furness
LA14 2LD

Dear Councillor Burns, Chair of Audit and Governance Committee as TCWG,

Under the 2020 Code of Audit Practice, for relevant authorities other than local NHS bodies we are required to issue our Auditor's Annual Report no later than 30 September or, where this is not possible, issue an audit letter setting out the reasons for delay.

As a result of the ongoing pandemic, and the impact it has had on both preparers and auditors of accounts to complete their work as quickly as would normally be expected, the National Audit Office has updated its guidance to auditors to allow us to postpone completion of our work on arrangements to secure value for money and focus our resources firstly on the delivery of our opinions on the financial statements. This is intended to help ensure as many as possible could be issued in line with national timetables and legislation.

As a result, we have therefore not yet issued our Auditor's Annual Report, including our commentary on arrangements to secure value for money. We now expect to publish our report no later than 31 July 2022.

For the purposes of compliance with the 2020 Code, this letter constitutes the required audit letter explaining the reasons for delay.

Yours faithfully

Director and Key Audit Partner
for and on behalf of Grant Thornton UK LLP, Local Auditor



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PART ONE

Barrow Borough Council
Audit and Governance Committee
27 April 2022
Approvals and Letter of Representation

Report from: Director of Resources

Report Author: Director of Resources

Wards: None

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 1.1 This report contains the Council's drafted Letter of Representation; the finalised version will be presented at the meeting.
- 1.2 The report requests approval for the finalised letter to be signed in addition to signing and publishing the Statement of Accounts 2020-2021 with the Annual Governance Statement 2020-2021.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are recommended to:

- 1. Approve the audited accounts and authorise the Chair of this committee to sign the Statement of Accounts for 2020-2021 on behalf of the Council.**
- 2. Approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020-2021 and authorise the Chair of this committee to sign on behalf of the Council.**
- 3. Approve the finalised Letter of Representation and authorise the Director of Resources and the Chairman of this committee to sign on behalf of the Council.**
- 4. To publish the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement on the Council's website.**

3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 Statement of Accounts

- 3.1.1 After considering the Statement of Accounts, Annual Governance Statement and the Audit Findings Report for 2020-2021, Members are recommended to approve the audited Statement of Accounts for 2020-2021 and to authorise the Chair of this committee to sign on behalf of the Council.

3.2 Annual Governance Statement

3.2.1 Members are recommended to approve the Annual Governance Statement for 2020-2021 and to authorise the Chair of this committee to sign on behalf of the Council.

3.3 Publication

3.3.1 The Annual Governance Statement will be combined with the Statement of Accounts and this will be published on the Council's website once the audit certificate is provided.

3.4 Letter of Representation

3.4.1 The purpose of this letter is to provide assurance to the Appointed Auditors on relevant and significant matters relating to the financial year. The Letter of Representation is issued to disclose the material facts affecting the 2020-2021 transactions of the Council; the drafted letter is at **Appendix 1**.

3.4.2 Members are asked to consider and approve the final Letter of Representation and authorise the Director of Resources and the Chair of this committee to sign on behalf of the Council.

4.0 **Consultation**

4.1 Consultation is not relevant to this report which is part of a statutory process.

5.0 **Alternative Options**

5.1 There are no alternative options to recommend but Members are encouraged to raise any questions.

6.0 **Contribution to Council Plan Priorities**

6.1 In order to be able to deliver Council Plan Priorities the Council must be financially resilient and have good financial management. The opinion of the appointed auditor informs financial management and the value for money conclusion focusses on the Council's use of resources.

7.0 **Implications**

7.1 **Financial, Resources and Procurement**

7.1.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report.

7.2 **Legal**

7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Local Government Reorganisation

- 7.3.1 There are no impacts on the process of Local Government Reorganisation; the Council's finances will be aggregated into the Westmorland and Furness Council upon vesting day.

7.4 Equality and Diversity

- 7.4.1 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No, the report has no direct Equality and Diversity implications.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
The Statement of Accounts with the Annual Governance Statement are not published.	Reputational risk. Impact on closing 2021-2022.	Plan and timetable. Liaison with appointed auditors.

Contact Officers

Director of Resources directorsadmin@barrowbc.gov.uk

Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Letter of Representation (to follow)

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PART ONE

Barrow Borough Council
Audit and Governance Committee
27th April 2022
Internal Audit Annual Plan

Report from: Head of Internal Audit

Report Author: Head of Internal Audit

Wards: None

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

1.1 The Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022-23 has been produced and is based on the risks associated with the Council's operations.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are recommended to consider and agree the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022-23.

3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 The purpose of Internal Audit is to provide independent assurance of the effectiveness of the Council's internal controls, governance and risk management arrangements. The individual audit reports provide recommendations for management to act upon and consider in order to achieve improvements where potential weakness or risk is identified. Internal Audit adds value to the Council and helps to achieve the Council's objectives by designing an annual audit plan through a systematic and risk-based approach.

3.2 A significant number of days are committed currently to fulfil the statutory obligations around the DWP housing benefit subsidy claim. There are specific skills and knowledge within the Department to undertake this work.

3.3 The Department is currently carrying one full-time vacancy.

3.5 The above factors are likely to have a bearing on the delivery of the proposed plan, which will therefore require a degree of flexibility.

3.6 Members are recommended to consider and approve the Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2022-23.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 The Internal Audit annual plan has been subject to consultation with the Council’s Management Team; and is agreed by the Audit and Governance Committee.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options other than limitations highlighted above.

6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities

6.1 In order to be able to deliver Council Plan Priorities the organisation must be sound in terms of internal control and governance and the Audit and Governance Committee is charged with that role.

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report, other than the budgeted vacancies outlined.

Legal

7.1.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity

7.2 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No, this report is for information.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Internal controls are inadequate.	Compliance cannot be demonstrated and assurance cannot be given.	Delivery of the Internal Audit annual plan.

Contact Officers

K Jackson audit@barrowbc.gov.uk

Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Internal Audit Annual Plan 2022-23

BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL
INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL PLAN 2022/23

Audit	Significance Band	Division/Service	Days
Contract Audit	1	All Divisions	50
Risk Management	1	Corporate Support	5
Budgetary Control	1	Finance	5
Income Collection	1	Finance	5
Main Accounting System & Periodic Controls	1	Finance	30
Business Rates (NNDR)	1	Revenues & Benefits	10
Council Tax & Council Tax Support	1	Revenues & Benefits	10
Housing Benefits	1	Revenues & Benefits	40
Procurement (inc. Ordering)	2	All Divisions	20
Car Park Meter Income	2	Parking Services	5
Corporate Control/Governance	2	Corporate Support	5
Performance Management	2	Corporate Support	5
Standing Orders/Financial Regulations/Anti-Fraud/Other Policies & Procedures	2	Resources Directorate	5
Accounts Payable	2	Finance	5
Accounts Receivable	2	Finance	10
Treasury Management	2	Finance	5
Payroll (inc Expenses)	2	Finance & HR	10
IT AUDIT			
Specific IT Audit inc. implementation review	1		3
Pulse Soccer Review	1	Operational Services	35
Audits identified by their significance rating or agreed with Senior Management to ensure adequate coverage of the Council's internal controls.	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	All Divisions	0
DESIGNATED ANNUAL AUDIT ACTIVITY			
Community Organisations	-		10
Financial/Account Reviews	-		5
Fraud Hotline	-		5
Funding Checks/Grant Claims	-		30
Implementation Review	-		5
NFI Responsibilities	-		20
Probity	-		10
AUDIT MANAGEMENT			
Audit Administration	-		10
Audit Committee	-		10
Audit Management/Planning/Reporting	-		10
External Audit Liaison	-		2
Plan days			380
Benefit Certification Testing	-		250
TOTAL AUDIT DAYS			630

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PART ONE

**Barrow Borough Council
Audit and Governance Committee
27th April 2022
Internal Audit Final Reports**

Report from: Head of Internal Audit

Report Author: Head of Internal Audit

Wards: None

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

1.1 Internal Audit performs audits in accordance with the approved Annual Plan which is based on a risk assessment of the internal control environment.

1.2 The final reports completed since the last meeting of the Committee are presented in this report.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Audit and Governance Committee note the Internal Audit final reports.

3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 This report presents the Internal Audit final reports completed since the last meeting of the Committee.

3.2 There are two final reports for presentation. All recommendations have been accepted by management unless otherwise stated.

3.3 Covid Risk Assessment, 20-25, **Appendix 1**; restricted assurance. This report contains two major issues, eight important issues and one minor issue.

3.4 Declaration of Interests and Hospitality, 21-32, **Appendix 2**; substantial assurance. This report contains four important issues and three minor issues.

3.5 The assurance levels are:

- None – control is weak, causing the system to be vulnerable to error and abuse.
- Restricted – significant weaknesses have been identified in the system of control, which put the system objectives at risk.
- Substantial – while there is a reasonable system of control, there are weaknesses, which may put the system objectives at risk.
- Unqualified – there is an adequate system of control designed to achieve the system objectives.

3.6 The recommendation levels assigned to issues identified are:

- Priority 1 – major issues that Internal Audit considers need to be brought to the attention of senior management.
- Priority 2 – important issues which should be addressed by management in their areas of responsibility.
- Priority 3 – minor issues which provide scope for operational improvement.
- Previous issues – are issues identified in a previous audit report that have not been entirely implemented at the time of this latest audit.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 The Internal Audit annual plan is agreed by the Audit and Governance Committee.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options as the report is presented for noting.

6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities

6.1 In order to be able to deliver Council Plan Priorities the organisation must be sound in terms of internal control and governance and the Audit and Governance Committee is charged with that role.

7.0 Implications

Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report.

Legal

7.1.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity

7.2 This report is for information.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Internal controls are inadequate.	Compliance cannot be demonstrated and assurance cannot be given.	Internal Audit annual plan.

Contact Officers

K Jackson audit@barrowbc.gov.uk

Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Covid Risk Assessment 20-25
2	Declaration of Interests and Hospitality 21-32

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BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL
INTERNAL AUDIT FINAL REPORT 20-25
COVID RISK ASSESSMENT - POST ASSURANCE REVIEW

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Council has an overriding duty to protect people from harm. This includes taking reasonable steps to protect Council staff and members of the Borough from coronavirus when utilising Council services. In relation to Covid and in order to manage risk and protect people a risk assessment should be performed which must identify work activity or situations which may cause transmission of the virus, establish who could be at risk from the virus, evaluate how likely it is that an individual could be exposed and document actions to remove the activity or situation, or if this isn't possible, control the risk. The Council has introduced a number of measures over the past twelve months, to protect and support staff, further to this, the Council has produced "Covid Risk Assessments" which have been fundamental to this audit review.

Although the impact and cases of Covid are reducing, there is still significant risk and concern moving forward. The audit review has taken a number of months to conclude due to the developing situation, level of information requested and availability of the auditee.

Audit Objectives

An audit of this system was included within the 2020/21 programme as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The audit objectives were to review and test the internal health and safety controls put in place as a result of the pandemic as detailed upon the Covid Risk Assessments. The scope and objectives of the audit were discussed and agreed in advance with the Health and Safety Advisor.

Audit work included a review of the risk assessments and controls put in place, and testing the operation of key controls.

Key Points
Restricted Assurance
Two major issues
Eight Important issues
One minor issue

Audit Conclusion – *Restricted Assurance*

As a result of the audit we have concluded that a number of weaknesses have been identified in the system of control, which put the system objectives at risk. We have made two Priority 1 recommendations which relate to the Council ensuring:

- all control measures identified in the risk assessments it has produced, are evidenced, including retrospectively, and spot checked by management where necessary; and

- cleaning requirements are explicitly detailed within the cleaning contract. Further, any additional Covid cleaning requirements identified as part of the risk assessment should be formally communicated to the cleaning contractor, agreed as an amendment to the contract; and necessary assurance regarding this obtained.

We have also made eight Priority 2 recommendations which concern the Council:

- confirming that required 'deep cleans' of Council vehicles are still required and if so, formally documented in line with procedure;
- ensuring that procurement procedures are adhered to when acquiring services, including validation of accreditation or technical ability;
- ensuring that Covid Risk Assessments have been performed of all areas, dated and subject to regular review, and promptly updated on the intranet;
- considering producing a procedure detailing the instances where visitors may be admitted to Council buildings and a protocol to follow where visitors are essential. For example pre booking visits, all visitors being accompanied whilst in the building, and contractors undertaking work providing risk assessments of the task to be undertaken;
- introducing a cleaning log to be completed by the designated contractor detailing dates and times of additional cleaning performed is considered in order to have greater assurance over a key control;
- considering the need for lift signage advising users of Covid safe guidance and practices;
- considering the need for a nominated an officer responsible for the monitoring of hand sanitiser, cleaning materials, wipes, mask stock/usage. Including confirmation that sufficient locations have been covered for sanitising arrangements; and
- ensuring sign-in sheets are correctly utilised in the event of an emergency evacuation; and the procedure tested more frequently.

We have made one further Priority 3 recommendation, which concerns ensuring:

- sufficient trained first aiders are on site during working hours, and that contact information is updated to reflect any changes due to Covid.

Management Response

We have received a constructive management response from the Head of Asset Management, accepting each of the recommendations.

Acknowledgement

Internal Audit would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the review.

Recommendation 1	Responsibility: Health and Safety Advisor	Priority: 1
<p>The Council should ensure that all control measures identified in the risk assessments produced are evidenced, including retrospectively, and spot checked by management where necessary.</p>		
<p>Rationale</p>		
<p>Although the Council has produced various risk assessments relating to Covid-19, including safe procedures and practices (i.e. regarding vehicle sharing and home visits), the audit identified that no formal checks are being performed or evidence documented to confirm these controls are consistently and correctly applied.</p> <p>Without formal documentation evidencing the controls are in place and adhered to, the Council may be open to criticism and reputational damage etc.</p> <p>This lack of formal evidence does not provide an adequate level of assurance for those charged with governance responsibilities.</p>		
<p>Management Response</p>		
<p>The Health and Safety Advisor was line managed by the Property Services Group Manager and responsible for ensuring health and safety checks with regard to Covid-19 were being undertaken. I am unable to comment on the findings as the Health and Safety Advisor no longer works for the Council and the role of Health and Safety Advisor no longer exists within the Council structure.</p> <p>As set out in the Government's plan for living with COVID-19, the Government expects the virus to be managed regionally and locally as part of a wider all hazards approach, using existing health protection frameworks.</p> <p>As part of this approach, focus should be placed on protecting those settings known to be at highest risk through local COVID-19 outbreak investigation and management activities, led by UKHSA Regional Health Protection Teams (HPTs).</p> <p>The Government is asking LAs to continue to routinely provide public health messaging and communications to set out advice about sensible behaviours and actions to their local residents. (This function sits with Cumbria County Council)</p> <p>The Government has further removed the need for venues to have systems in place that allow individuals to 'check in' and be notified if they have visited a venue linked to a COVID-19 outbreak. This means the process for a COVID-19 venue alert to be raised by LAs via the Service Hub will cease from 24th February 2022.</p> <p>The Covid-19 Co-ordination Group will review the Government's Covid-19 Decommissioning Guidance and advise the Council's Senior Management Team on Covid-19 requirements for the period leading up to the LGR transfer deadline*.</p>		

Management Response (cont.)

The Government is expected to provide a further update on “Living with Covid” on 1st April 2022.

*This statement applies to all findings of this report

The Head of Asset Management will ensure “Control Measures” identified in the Covid risk assessments are reviewed, updated and periodically checked in accordance with HSE guidance.

Accepted

Implementation Deadline:

30 April 2022

Recommendation 2	Responsibility: Health and Safety Advisor	Priority: 1
<p>The Council should ensure that cleaning requirements are explicitly detailed within the cleaning contract. Further, any additional Covid cleaning requirements identified as part of the risk assessment should be formally communicated to the cleaning contractor, agreed as an amendment to the contract; and necessary assurance regarding this obtained.</p>		
<p>Rationale</p>		
<p>Internal Audit were informed by the Health and Safety Advisor that Council premises are cleaned in accordance with the cleaning contract. However, no evidence of the cleaning of specific area is maintained. It could be confirmed that areas of the Town Hall are planned to be cleaned daily however, a schedule of exact areas has not been provided.</p> <p>Internal Audit were informed that since March 2020 the contractor has increased daily cleaning hours from 2 to 3 within the Town Hall building to include extra handrail, door handle cleaning etc.; however, this is only documented in an email rather than a formal contract amendment. There is no assurance that specific high risk/additional cleaning is performed.</p> <p>Further, the Covid 19 risk assessment required that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) a 2% bleach solution should be used for cleaning. Specifications of cleaning products are provided by the contractor, however, no reference to a 2% bleach solution was identified; b) Cleaning staff wear disposable gloves, however, staff have been observed on several occasions cleaning without gloves; c) Cloths and mop heads are removed in a safe manner – no evidence of this requirement is in the contract documents provided. <p>Without formal documentation and acceptance of these requirements between the Council and the contractor, management does not have adequate assurance that these additional control measures have been put in place.</p>		
<p>Management Response</p>		
<p>The Health and Safety Advisor was line managed by the Property Services Group Manager and responsible for ensuring procurement compliance and detailed contract specifications with regard to Covid-19. I am unable to comment on the findings as the Health and Safety Advisor no longer works for the Council and the role of Health and Safety Advisor no longer exists within the Council structure.</p> <p>At a meeting held on 9.3.2022, the following actions were agreed in line with current HSE guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point cleaning should continue until 1.4.2022. 		

Management Response (cont.)

It is proposed, subject to SMT approval, for point cleaning to cease after 1.4.2022 but this may be dependent on Government guidance expected on 1.4.2022.

If point cleaning is a requirement after 1.4.2022 the Head of Asset Management will ensure recommendation 2 highlighted in this report is fully actioned.

Accepted

Implementation Deadline:

**Review @ 1
April 2022**

BARROW BOROUGH COUNCIL
INTERNAL AUDIT FINAL REPORT 21-32
DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND HOSPITALITY

Executive Summary

Introduction

The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees and elected Members who work for local government. There is a requirement within both the Member's and Officers' Codes of Conduct for all Council Members and staff to declare any private interests that may result in a potential or actual conflict with their duties.

Further, gifts or Hospitality offered, whether accepted or declined should be recorded within the Council registers held and authorised by an appropriate Officer prior to acceptance.

Audit Objectives

An audit of this system forms part of the agreed 2021/22 programme. The audit objectives were to evaluate and test the internal controls over the Declaration of Interests, Gifts and Hospitality arrangements. The scope and objectives of the audit were discussed and agreed in advance with the HR Manager.

Key Points
Substantial Assurance
Four important issues
Three minor issues

Audit work included a control evaluation of the system design, and testing the operation of key controls.

Audit Conclusion – *Substantial Assurance*

As a result of the audit we have concluded that while there is a reasonable system of control, there are weaknesses, which may put the system objectives at risk. We have raised four Priority 2 recommendations, which relate to the Council ensuring that:

- Code of Conduct policies are in accordance with Local Government Association guidance, in particular in relation to the value above which gifts should be declared;
- Member Declaration of Interest forms are reviewed on a regular and timely basis;
- all officer Declaration of Interest forms are up to date and accurate; and
- all accepted gifts and hospitality are appropriate, authorised by a relevant manager and this is recorded on the register. Further, hospitality locations/venues should be recorded in detail on the register.

We have also raised three Priority 3 recommendations, which concern the Council ensuring that:

- reviews of Declarations of Interests/Gifts and Hospitality reported to Members include the outcome of the review rather than simply a notification it has occurred;
- all Policies relating to Declaration of Interests and Hospitality are sufficiently detailed and up to date; and
- all employees have completed a Declaration of Interests form or a reason for exemption/not applicable recorded.

Management Response

We have received a constructive management response from the Head of Legal and Governance and the HR Manager, accepting six recommendations and partially accepting one recommendation.

Acknowledgement

Internal Audit would like to thank staff for their co-operation and assistance during the review.

PART ONE

Barrow Borough Council
Audit and Governance Committee
27 April 2022
Annual Report

Report from: Director of Resources

Report Author: Director of Resources

Wards: None

1.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 1.1 The Annual Report records how the Audit and Governance Committee provides the independence, questioning, and thoroughness required across a wide range of internal control, corporate governance, and financial reporting matters.
- 1.2 Committee business is managed through the Work Plan which ensures that the business of the Committee fulfils the Terms of Reference contained in the Constitution and recognises how the Committee adds value.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are recommended to consider and endorse the Annual Report.**

3.0 Background and Proposals

- 3.1 The Annual Report is attached as **Appendix 1** for consideration and endorsement.
- 3.2 The Annual Report intends to provide Members of the Council with details of the work carried out by the Audit and Governance Committee during the Council year ended April 2022.
- 3.3 The report also details how the Audit and Governance Committee has fulfilled its Terms of Reference during this period by delivering the Work Plan.
- 3.4 The Audit and Governance Committee provides assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment; provides scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weaknesses in the control environment and oversees the financial reporting process.

3.5 The Annual Report concludes that the Committee fulfils a technical and challenging role, seeking assurance from officers and external experts that the risks and threats to the Council are identified and suitably addressed, and that the financial statements produced are accurate and reliable.

3.6 It is in seeking this assurance that the Committee “adds value” to the rest of Barrow Borough Council.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Consultation is not relevant to this report which is a summary of Committee business.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 There are no alternative options to recommend but Members are encouraged to raise any questions.

6.0 Contribution to Council Plan Priorities

6.1 In order to be able to deliver Council Plan Priorities the Council must be financially resilient and have good financial management. The opinion of the appointed auditor informs financial management and the value for money conclusion focusses on the Council’s use of resources.

7.0 Implications

7.1 Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1.1 There are no financial, resource or procurement implications arising from this report.

7.2 Legal

7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3 Local Government Reorganisation

7.3.1 There are no impacts on the process of Local Government Reorganisation.

7.4 Equality and Diversity

7.4.1 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No, the report has no direct Equality and Diversity implications.

Contact Officers

Director of Resources directorsadmin@barrowbc.gov.uk

Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Annual Report

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Annual Report of the Audit and Governance Committee

Foreword

The Annual Report records how the Audit and Governance Committee provides the independence, questioning, and thoroughness required across a wide range of internal control, corporate governance, and financial reporting matters.

The work undertaken and summarised in this report indicates the breadth of the Audit and Governance Committee's coverage across the Council's work in terms of compliance with standards and best practice.

During 2021-2022 the Council was faced with tackling recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and for the Audit and Governance Committee in particular, Committee business deferred from 2020-2021 due to COVID-19 new duties was incorporated into the 2021-2022 Work Plan.

The Audit and Governance Committee were made aware of, and supported, the work that Internal Audit carried out to maintain the required level of assurance relating to the Council's activities.

The Audit and Governance Committee were also made aware of the COVID-19 duties undertaken by the Revenues and Benefits Department, and Finance Department, in delivering the various grant and relief schemes; the Committee understood the pressures that these schemes created and supported officers in dealing with and recovering from the operational impacts as a consequence.

Looking forward, the Council continues to face a period of change to continue the recovery from COVID-19, to implement Local Government Reorganisation, to deliver significant major funding programmes, and to comply with statutory requirements.

Having a strong Audit and Governance Committee is essential to ensure that the Council achieves its objectives effectively.

The Work Programme ensures that the Terms of Reference are fulfilled, and that the Committee is effective.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the excellent work of the members of the Audit and Governance Committee and the supporting officers during the past year.

Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee

Introduction

The Annual Report intends to provide Members of the Council with details of the work carried out by the Audit and Governance Committee during the Council year ended April 2022. The report also details how the Audit and Governance Committee has fulfilled its Terms of Reference during this period.

Background

The Audit and Governance Committee provides assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment; provides scrutiny of the authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the authority's exposure to risk and weaknesses in the control environment and oversees the financial reporting process.

The Committee's specific powers and duties are set out in the Constitution and agreed each year at the Annual General Meeting.

The Audit and Governance Committee is a key component of corporate governance and provides an important source of assurance about the Council's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment, and reporting on financial and other performance.

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) issues guidance to local authorities to help ensure that audit committees are operating effectively. The guidance recommends that audit committees should report annually on how they have discharged their responsibilities.

Work Undertaken and Findings

The Audit and Governance Committee has met on five occasions in the year since May 2021, in accordance with its Work Programme.

During this period, the Committee has assessed the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements, control environment and associated counter fraud arrangements through regular reports from officers, the internal auditors, and the external auditors, Grant Thornton. The Committee has sought assurance that action has been taken, or is otherwise planned, by management to address any risk related issues that have been identified by the auditors during this period. The Committee has also sought to ensure that effective relationships continue to be maintained between the internal and external auditors, and between the auditors and management.

The Audit and Governance Committee is satisfied that the Council has maintained an adequate and effective control framework through the period covered by this report.

The specific work undertaken by the Committee is set out below.

Financial Statements

- Considered and approved the Statement of Accounts for 2020-2021 of the Council.
- Signed the 'letter of representation' to confirm that the Statement of Accounts give a true and fair view of the Council financial position of Barrow Borough Council as of 31 March 2021 and its income and expenditure for the year then ended in accordance with the CIPFA LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom.
- Received and considered the relevance of the going concern concept for the preparation of the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 accounting statements. Committee discussed the impact of Local Government Reorganisation and concluded that the going concern concept remained relevant.
- Received and considered the accounting policies to be applied in the preparation of the 2021-2022 accounting statements.

Audit Activity: External Audit

- Received and considered the external auditor's Annual Audit Letter in respect of the 2019-2020 audit year. The Committee was pleased to note that the external auditors had not raised any significant issues and had given an unqualified audit opinion for the accounts. The value for money conclusion was unqualified except for the arrangements for ensuring policies and procedures in relation to procurement and contract management are followed.
- Received and considered the external auditor's Audit Findings Report in respect of the 2020-2021 audit year. The Committee was pleased to note that the external auditors had not raised any significant issues and had given an unqualified audit opinion for the accounts. The 2020-2021 value for money conclusion will be presented at the meeting to be held in July 2022.
- Received and considered the external auditor's Housing Benefit Assurance Process letter in respect of the 2019-2020 claim year.
- Recommended that Council continue to participate in the sector-led appointment of external auditors by Public Sector Audit Appointments. The Committee noted the benefits of this approach and it was noted that a Cumbria-wide opt-in was recommended by officers given local government reorganisation.

Audit Activity: Internal Audit

- Continued to oversee the internal audit arrangements for the Council. This has included approving the Internal Audit plan for 2022-2023. Received and considered the results of internal audit work performed in respect of the 2021-2022 agreed plan. Monitored the progress made by management during the period to address identified control weaknesses.
- The 2022-2023 plan ensures that the limited internal audit resources are prioritised towards those systems and areas which are considered to be the highest risk or which contribute most to the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives.
- Monitored the delivery of the annual Internal Audit plans through regular update reports presented by the Head of Internal Audit including whistleblowing.
- Considered the Council's overall counter fraud arrangements in the light of emerging risks.
- Received and considered the Annual Report of the Head of Internal Audit for 2020-2021 which provided an overall opinion on the Council's control environment. The Head of Internal Audit confirmed that the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control provided substantial assurance.
- Received the results of a self-assessment on the effectiveness of the Internal Audit function.

Regulatory Framework: Risk Management

- Continued to oversee the Council's risk management arrangements.
- Reviewed the progress made by the Council to identify and address corporate risks. This included consideration of the updated Corporate Risk Register at each meeting. The Committee recognised that many of the risks identified were complex in nature and/or had potentially significant financial implications.

Regulatory Framework: Corporate Governance

- Considered and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2020-2021 of the Council. The Committee also reviewed and agreed an updated Code of Governance which evidences how the Council meets the governance principles.
- Considered and recommended that Council adopt the 2021 LGA Code of Conduct; the Committee acknowledged that the local Code provisions were covered in the 2021 Code.
- There were no Code of Conduct complaints which required a hearing sub-committee during 2020-2021.
- Received the procurement review which covers purchases, tendering and contracts; the review included revisions to the Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations which were also received.

Regulatory Framework: Other

- Received the Local Government Ombudsman Annual Report along with the complaints and compliments performance in relation to 2020-2021.
- Received the results of a review of the Council's Anti-Fraud Policies which are based on the CIPFA code of practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and corruption. Members noted that there are effective and appropriate processes in place to prevent, detect and investigate instances of fraud and corruption.
- Received the results of a self-assessment on the effectiveness of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Other work

- Reviewed the Committee's Terms of Reference and concluded that no changes were required.
- Established the Audit and Governance Committee Work Plan to ensure that the committee business is planned and Terms of Reference fulfilled.
- Received the results of a review of the Council's Standards Arrangements.
- Received the results of a review of the employee register of gifts and hospitality, and the councillor registers of pecuniary and other interests.
- Instructed the Head of Legal and Governance to review the Relocation Policy following which a revised Policy was subsequently presented to the Executive Committee for approval and adoption.

Conclusion

The Audit and Governance Committee fulfils a technical and challenging role, seeking assurance from officers and external experts that the risks and threats to the Council are identified and suitably addressed, and that the financial statements produced are accurate and reliable. It is in seeking this assurance that the Committee "adds value" to the rest of Barrow Borough Council.

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