

Governance Committee

Tuesday, 28th November, 2023, 6.00 pm

Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland PR25 1DH
and [You Tube](#)

Agenda

1 Apologies for absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to indicate at this stage in the proceedings any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that if the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined in the Members' Code of Conduct) they must leave the room for the whole of that item. If the interest is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but is such that a member of the public could reasonably regard it as being so significant that it is likely that it would prejudice their judgment of the public interest (as explained in the Code of Conduct) then they may make representations, but then must leave the meeting for the remainder of the item.

3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

(Pages 3 - 6)

Draft minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 attached.

4 Draft Audit Findings Report 2022-2023

(Pages 7 - 54)

Report of the External Auditor, Grant Thornton attached.

5 Statement of Accounts 2022/23

(Pages 55 - 210)

Report of the Director of Finance attached.

6 Treasury Management Mid Year Review 2023/24

(Pages 211 - 222)

Report of the Director of Finance attached.

7 Constitution Update

(Pages 223 - 230)

Report of the Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer attached.

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Governance Committee Councillors
Colin Sharples (Chair), Wesley Roberts (Vice-Chair), Damian Bretherton,
Peter Gabbott, Pete Pillinger, Margaret Smith and Angela Turner

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the internet at
www.southribble.gov.uk

Forthcoming Meetings

6.00 pm Tuesday, 23 January 2024 - Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock,
Leyland PR25 1DH

Minutes of	Governance Committee
Meeting date	Tuesday, 26 September 2023
Committee members present:	Councillors Colin Sharples (Chair), Wesley Roberts (Vice-Chair), Damian Bretherton, Peter Gabbott, Pete Pillinger, Margaret Smith and Angela Turner
Officers present:	Georgia Jones, External Auditor (Grant Thornton), Chris Moister (Director of Governance), Louise Mattinson (Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer), Dawn Highton (Head of Audit & Risk), Jacqui Murray (Senior Auditor), Alison Wilding (Head of Customer Services) and Clare Gornall (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Other attendees:	Councillors P Smith
In attendance virtually:	Councillors Keith Martin, Karen Walton and Ian Watkinson
Public:	0

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

20 Apologies for absence

There were none.

21 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

22 Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 8 August 2023 of Governance Committee

Resolved (unanimously):

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 August 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

23 External Audit Progress Report September 2023 and Discussion on the PSAA (Public Sector Audit Appointments) Proposed 2023/24 Scale Fees

Georgia Jones, External Auditor (Grant Thornton) presented the External Auditor progress report year ending March 2023. The report stated that Grant Thornton expect to give their Opinion on the Statement of Accounts and the Auditor's Annual Report by the end of November 2023. Ms Jones also confirmed that Grant Thornton will follow up on the 2022/23 recommendations and report back in November 2023.

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Resolved: (unanimously):

That the External Auditor progress report year ending March 2023 be noted.

Arising from this discussion, Louise Mattinson, Director of Finance informed members that the PSAA (Public Sector Audit Appointments) were holding a consultation on proposals to increase the fee for External Audit services for the 2023/24 accounts.

Details of the proposed fees for South Ribble Borough Council had been circulated. Any feedback from the Committee would be submitted by the close of consultation on 10 October 2023.

It was stressed that PSAA had set the fee, which was a reflection of the increase nationally. The context for the increase was increased work for the external auditor in areas such as pensions and the auditing of accounting standards, and also market forces.

Louise Mattinson confirmed that the figure was a fixed fee and any additional work identified would attract a further increase.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the proposed 150% increase in fees, particularly at this point in time given that the Council would not know the outcome of the Local Government Settlement until December.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. That the information be noted and
2. That the comments of the Committee be submitted by close of the consultation on 10 October 2023.

24 Internal Audit Plan October 23 to March 24

Jacqui Murray, Senior Internal Auditor presented a report setting out the programme of work to be undertaken by Internal Audit from October 2023 to March 2024.

An enquiry was made regarding staffing levels in the Internal Audit team. The Committee were informed that there was one vacancy to which they were currently recruiting.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Internal Audit Plan October 2023 to March 2024 be approved.

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25 Internal Audit Progress report

The Head of Audit and Risk, Dawn Highton presented a report informing members of the work undertaken in respect of the Internal Audit Plan from April 2023 to August 2023 and giving an appraisal of the Internal Audit Service's performance to date.

A query was made in relation to the number of actions in progress with revised dates as detailed on page 24. The Head of Audit and Risk indicated that the timescales for actions had been considered very carefully and gave assurances that if she had any concerns they would be brought to the attention of the Committee.

The report included the final audit report following a Review of the Building Control Service and a Review of Data Quality, which had been given an 'adequate' assurance rating.

The report also included the final audit report on a Review of Sundry Debtors – Aged Debts which had been given a 'limited' assurance rating. Alison Wilding, Head of Customer Services was in attendance at the Committee to discuss the report.

An enquiry was made with regard to Recommendation 5 (pages 36/37), which stated that "our review established that a significant proportion of the Aged Debtor reports (26% Chorley and 76% South Ribble) are not being automatically issued/ emailed as a recipient within the service area had not been assigned".

Alison Wilding explained that a changeover of staff had led to relevant Heads of Service not being emailed. She assured the Committee that this had been rectified over the last few weeks.

Dawn Highton clarified that the potential risk of a "customer" receiving service while debts are still outstanding refers generically to members of the public or external agencies.

Alison Wilding confirmed that there was a log kept ensuring business continuity if a member of staff was off sick.

A query was made regarding the Council's creditors. Dawn Highton indicated that a review of this was carried out in 2019/20, then repeated in 2021/22 and that all the actions had been implemented. The six-month Internal Audit Plan had now been approved, however it was likely that another review would be included in the Internal Audit Plan next year.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. That the Internal Audit Progress report be noted; and
2. That consideration of the Review of Building Control and Review of Data Quality report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

26 Governance Committee Effectiveness Review

Dawn Highton, Head of Audit and Risk presented a report following a review of the Governance Committee's effectiveness. The report included an evaluation of the Council's compliance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance "Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and

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Police 2022” and presented details of the self-assessment of good practice contained within the guidance.

The Head of Audit and Risk informed the Committee that, further to the review, an external training day had been arranged for Governance Committee members of both South Ribble and Chorley Councils on Monday, 30 October 2023.

The report highlighted that the appointment of two independent persons to support work of the Committee was recommended by CIPFA. Members of the Committee were supportive of the proposal. It was explained that the two independent persons could not be the same as those appointed to the Standards Committee, as they were different roles. However, it would be possible to approach other local authorities because it was possible to be an independent person at more than one Council.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. That the report be noted; and
2. That the Committee seeks to appoint two independent persons to support its work.

27 Constitution - Planning

The Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer presented a report outlining the work of the Governance Committee Constitution Task Group which had recommended possible changes to the Constitution relating to the Planning Committee.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. To agree the proposed changes to the Constitution concerning Planning Committee set out in the report in paragraph 14; and
2. To recommend to Council that these changes be adopted.

Chair

Date

The Audit Findings for South Ribble Borough Council

Year ended 31 March 2023



Contents



Your key Grant Thornton team members are:

Georgia Jones

Key Audit Partner

T 0161 214 6383

E Georgia.s.jones@uk.gt.com

Matt Derrick

Senior Manager

T 0141 223 0656

E Matt.F.Derrick@uk.gt.com

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This Audit Findings 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 the Governance Committee.

Georgia Jones

Name: Georgia Jones

For Grant Thornton UK LLP

Date: November 2023

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 South Ribble Borough Council ('the Council') and the preparation of the Council's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 for the attention of 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 the Council's 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 undertaken on site and remotely during August to November. Our findings are summarised on pages 6 to 21.

To date, we have not identified any adjustments to the financial statements that have resulted in adjustment to the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Audit adjustments are detailed in Appendix D. We have also raised recommendations for management as a result of our audit work in Appendix B. Our follow up of recommendations from the prior year's audit are detailed in Appendix C.

This our draft report and we will issue a final report including any further adjustments to the financial statements and unadjusted misstatements.

Our work is nearing completion and subject to the following outstanding matters;

- Outstanding queries and request for supporting evidence for land & building and investment property valuations
- Outstanding audit queries on substantive testing of operating expenditure, creditors, grant income, fees and charges income, debtors, employee payroll and cash to bank reconciliation
- Receipt and review of the pension surplus IFRIC 14 assessment
- receipt of management representation letter see appendix G; and
- review of the final set of financial statements

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 financial statements audit report opinion will be unmodified. Our work on the Council's value for money (VFM) arrangements is not yet complete. The outcome of our VFM work will be reported in our commentary on the Council's arrangements in our Auditor's Annual Report (AAR). We are satisfied this work does not have a material effect on our opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

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 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 the Appendix I to this report. We expect to issue our Auditor's Annual Report by January 2024. 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.

Since issuing our Audit Plan in May 2023, we have issued our Auditor's Annual Report 2021-22 which reported the findings and recommendations from our VFM work.

We identified a significant weakness in the 2021-22 work in relation to the Council's governance arrangements for procurement with, and, onboarding of external contractors. In 2022-23, we continue to consider this as a potential significant weakness in arrangements and we are reviewing progress with the recommendations.

Our work on this risk is underway and an update is set out in the value for money arrangements section of this report (Section 3).

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.

We have not exercised any of our additional statutory powers or duties.

We have completed the majority of work under the Code and we expect to certify the completion of the audit upon the completion of our work on the Council's VFM arrangements, which will be reported in our Annual Auditor's report in January 2024.

Significant matters

We did not encounter any significant difficulties or identify any significant matters arising during our audit.

1. Headlines

National context – audit backlog

Nationally there have been significant delays in the completion of audit work and the issuing of audit opinions across the local government sector. Only 12% of local government bodies had received audit opinions in time to publish their 2021/22 accounts by the extended deadline of 30 November. There has not been a significant improvement over this last year, and the situation remains challenging. We at Grant Thornton have a strong desire and a firm commitment to complete as many audits as soon as possible and to address the backlog of unsigned opinions.

Over the course of the last year, Grant Thornton has been working constructively with DLUHC, the FRC and the other audit firms to identify ways of rectifying the challenges which have been faced by our sector, and we recognise the difficulties these backlogs have caused authorities across the country. We have also published a report setting out our consideration of the issues behind the delays and our thoughts on how these could be mitigated. Please see [About time? \(grantthornton.co.uk\)](https://www.grantthornton.co.uk)

We would like to thank everyone at the Council for their support in working with us to progress the audit.

National context – level of borrowing

All Councils are operating in an increasingly challenging national context. With inflationary pressures placing increasing demands on Council budgets, there are concerns as Councils look to alternative ways to generate income. We have seen an increasing number of councils look to ways of utilising investment property portfolios as sources of recurrent income. Whilst there have been some successful ventures and some prudently funded by councils' existing resources, we have also seen some councils take excessive risks by borrowing sums well in excess of their revenue budgets to finance these investment schemes.

The impact of these huge debts on Councils, the risk of potential bad debt write offs and the implications of the poor governance behind some of these decisions are all issues which now have to be considered by auditors across local authority audits.

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 and the Governance Committee.

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;
- An evaluation of the component of the group based on a measure of materiality considering each as a percentage of the Council's gross revenue expenditure to assess the significance of the component and to determine the planned audit response. From this evaluation we determined that an audit of transactions of the leisure company was required
- Substantive testing on significant transactions and material account balances, including the procedures outlined in this report in relation to the key audit risks

Conclusion

We are nearing completion of our audit of your financial statements and subject to outstanding queries being resolved, we anticipate issuing an unqualified audit opinion following the Governance Committee meeting on 28 November 2023, as detailed in Appendix H. These outstanding items are detailed on page 3.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the assistance provided by the finance team and other staff.

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 disclosure requirements and adherence to acceptable accounting practice and applicable law.

Materiality benchmarks remain the same as reported in our audit plan in May 2023.

We set out in this table our determination of materiality for South Ribble Borough Council and group.

	Group Amount (£)	Council Amount (£)	Qualitative factors considered
Materiality for the financial statements	923,000	922,000	We have used planning materiality which equates to around 1.8% of your gross operating expenditure for 2022/23. This is considered to be the level above which users of the financial statements would wish to be aware in the context of overall expenditure.
Performance materiality	691,000	691,000	Assessed as 75% of financial statements materiality and based on our knowledge of the Authority and consideration of previous audit findings and adjustments.
Trivial matters	46,000	46,000	Assessed as 5% of financial statements materiality
Lower materiality for senior officer remuneration	n/a	n/a	The senior officer remuneration disclosures has been identified as an area operating specific materiality due to the sensitive nature of disclosures in this area. This has been assessed as £20k.



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	Relevant to Council and Group
<p>Risk of fraud related to revenue recognition</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Having considered the risk factors set out in ISA240 and the nature of the revenue streams at the Council, we have determined that the risk of fraud arising from revenue recognition can be rebutted, because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 South Ribble Borough Council mean that all forms of fraud are seen as unacceptable. <p>Therefore and as reported in our Audit Plan, we do not consider this to be a significant risk. Whilst not a significant risk, we have performed audit procedures and testing of material revenue items.</p> <p>Our testing in this area is completed and our procedures to sample test income have not identified any matters to report to date and have not identified any matters that would lead to a change in our risk assessment.</p>	
<p>Risk of fraud related to expenditure recognition</p> <p>In line with the Public Audit Forum Practice Note 10, in the public sector, auditors must also consider the risk that material misstatements due to fraudulent financial reporting may arise from the manipulation of expenditure recognition.</p>	<p>As reported in our Audit Plane, we have considered the risk of improper expenditure recognition and do not consider this to be a significant risk of material misstatement.</p> <p>Whilst not a significant risk, we have performed audit procedures and testing of material revenue items.</p> <p>Our testing in this area is completed and our procedures to sample test income have not identified any matters to report to date and have not identified any matters that would lead to a change in our risk assessment.</p>	
<p>Management override of controls</p> <p>Under ISA (UK) 240 there is a non-rebuttable presumed risk that the risk of management override of controls is present in all entities. .</p> <p>We therefore identified management override of control, in particular journals, management estimates and transactions outside the course of business as a significant risk, which is one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement.</p>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluated the design and implementation of management controls over journals • analysed the journals listing and determined the criteria for selecting high risk unusual journals • identified and tested unusual journals made during the year and the accounts production stage for appropriateness and corroboration • gained an understanding of the accounting estimates and critical judgements applied by management and considered their reasonableness <p>We have not identified any changes to accounting policies or the estimation process.</p> <p>Based on testing to date, we have not identified any issues to report.</p> <p>In our prior year audit, we identified that there were no automated controls on the Civica finance system to prevent members of staff approving their own journals and there are no limits on authorisation of journals. We reported a recommendation and journal authorisation controls have now been implemented from February 2023 – see appendix C</p>	

2. Financial Statements: Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan

Valuation of land & buildings and investment properties

The Council revalues its land and buildings on a five-yearly basis to ensure the carrying value in the financial statements is not materially different from current value at the financial statements date. This valuation of £32.789m (£27.953m, 2021-22) represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements.

The valuation of land and buildings is a key accounting estimate which is derived, depending on the valuation methodology, from assumptions that reflect market observations and the condition of the asset at the time. However, the valuation methodology for land and buildings is specified in detail in the CIPFA Code and the sector is highly regulated by RICS, therefore we will focus our audit attention on assets that have large and unusual changes and/or approaches to the valuation of land and buildings, as a significant risk requiring special audit consideration.

All investment properties should be valued and reported at fair value under relevant accounting principles. Again, this valuation of £10.742m (£11.159m, 2021-22) represents a significant estimate by management in the financial statements due to the size of the numbers involved compared to Council's materiality and the sensitivity of this estimate to changes in key assumptions.

We have identified valuation of land and buildings, including investment properties, as a significant risk, which was one of the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement. The risk will be pinpointed as part of our final accounts work. We will report an updated risk assessment for valuation of land and buildings in our Audit Findings Report.

Commentary

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
- discussed with the valuer 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
- tested revaluations made during the year to see if they had been input correctly into the Council's asset register
- evaluating 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.
- reviewed management's assessment of the risk of impairment of Assets Under Construction

We have made number of inquiries to the valuer and Council officers in relation to the key data inputs and assumptions applied in the valuations. We are also reviewing the desktop valuation that has been completed for asset not subject to a full revaluation.

We have identified an understatement of land & buildings net book value as a result of errors in the accounting for accumulated depreciation. We are working with management to determine the extent of the misstatement.

Our work is ongoing and, to date, we have not identified any issues in respect of valuation of land and buildings and investment properties.

Relevant to Council

2. Financial Statements: Significant risks

Risks identified in our Audit Plan	Commentary	Relevant to Council and Group
<p>Valuation of pension fund net surplus</p> <p>The Council's pension fund net surplus, as reflected in its balance sheet as the net defined benefit liability, represents a significant estimate in the financial statements.</p> <p>The pension fund net surplus is considered a significant estimate due to the size of the numbers involved and the sensitivity of the estimate to changes in key assumptions.</p> <p>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). However, for the first time since IFRS have been adopted the council has had to consider the potential impact of IFRIC 14 - IAS 19 -the limit on a defined benefit asset. Because of this we have assessed the recognition and valuation of the pension asset as a significant risk.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The actuarial assumptions used are the responsibility of the entity but should be set on the advice given by the actuary.</p> <p>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. In particular the discount and inflation rates, where our consulting actuary has indicated that a 0.1% change in these two assumptions would have approximately 2% effect on the liability/surplus. 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 Council's pension fund net liability as a significant risk.</p>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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; - undertaken 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 Lancashire Pension Fund 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. <p>The Council has recognised the full pension surplus and a net pension asset of £12.485m in the draft accounts presented for audit. We recommended that the Council undertakes or obtains an IFRIC 14 assessment to determine the extent to which the pension surplus should be recognised as a net pension asset.</p> <p>In October 2023, the Council commissioned the actuary to undertake an IFRIC 14 assessment of the pension surplus and we will review this when available.</p> <p>We also await the final assurance letter from the pension fund auditor.</p> <p>Our work is ongoing and, to date, we have not identified any other issues to report.</p>	

2. Financial Statements: new issues and risks

This section provides commentary on new issues and risks which were identified during the course of the audit that were not previously communicated in the Audit Plan and a summary of any significant deficiencies identified during the year.

Issue	Commentary	Auditor view
<p>Cyber Security</p> <p>We note that the Council does not have a formal policy covering cyber risk.</p>	<p>1 in 3 UK entities suffer from a cyber breach every month, so it's more a case of 'when' an attack happens, not 'if'.</p> <p>High profile cyber-attacks undermine trust in an organisation and shatter hard won reputations and consumer trust. Over 80% of the cyber-attacks we read about could have been prevented through good simple cyber hygiene. Understanding and managing cyber risk is fundamental to any business's growth journey.</p>	<p>Auditor view</p> <p>We recommend that the Council proactively looks at its cyber preparedness and puts in place appropriate policies/safeguards.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>[...]</p>
<p>IT Control deficiencies</p> <p>We have reviewed the IT General Controls for the in-scope financial systems. Our review identified some deficiencies in the processes in place during the period under review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of requests and approvals of changes to privileged user access is not retained for more than 30 days There are no periodic reviews of user access Our review identified cases where user access was not removed on a timely basis The Council did not have a formal change management policy in place until March 2023 and details of changes to IT applications implemented during the period under review was not readily available 	<p>We have encountered some delays in obtaining sufficient audit evidence to complete this review.</p> <p>We will provide a summary of IT controls findings as an appendices when the remaining audit work is finalised.</p>	<p>Auditor view</p> <p>We recommend that the Council reviews the security & access management procedures and change management processes and and puts in place appropriate policies and controls in line with best practice.</p> <p>Management response</p> <p>[...]</p>

2. Financial Statements – Key findings arising from the group audit

Component	Component auditor	Findings	Group audit impact
South Ribble Borough Council	Grant Thornton	<p>The Group accounts were provided for audit on 12 October 2023</p> <p>We reviewed the Council's procedures and consolidation calculations for the consolidation of South Ribble Leisure Ltd with the Council's accounts. No issues were identified.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have obtained sufficient assurances over any material balances and transactions outside the group boundary. We completed a review of the group consolidation process and there are no issues identified that need reporting to the Governance Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our group audit work is now completed and we have not identified any issues to report as a result of our findings. We are satisfied that the Group accounts after taking account intercompany transactions, are not materially misstated.
South Ribble Leisure Ltd	Not applicable	<p>Risks identified as per our audit plan were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management override of controls Valuation of Pension Fund Liability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have completed a review of the group consolidation process and there are no issues identified that need reporting to the Audit Committee. We have substantively tested a sample of the income and expenditure transactions in the leisure company <p>Our work in this area is ongoing, pending completion of the income and expenditure testing</p>	Our work is ongoing. We have no findings to report to date

2. Financial Statements: key judgements and estimates

This section provides commentary on key estimates and judgements in line with the enhanced requirements for auditors.

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management's approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Land and Building valuations – £32.789m	Other land and buildings includes specialised assets such as leisure centres which 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.	We have <ul style="list-style-type: none"> undertaken an assessment of management's experts reviewed the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate reviewed the impact of any changes to valuation method checked the consistency of estimate against near neighbours agreed the reasonableness of the increase/decrease in estimate reviewed the adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statements. 	Light purple
Investment Properties – £10.742m	<p>The remainder of other land and buildings are not specialised in nature and are required to be valued at existing use in value (EUV) at year end. The Council has engaged Sanderson Weatherall to complete the valuation of properties as at 31 March 2023 on a five yearly cyclical basis. 74% of total assets were revalued during 2022/23.</p> <p>Management have considered the year end value of non-valued properties and the potential valuation change in the assets revalued at 31 March 2023. This has been supported by a desktop review of assets by Sanderson Weatherall. Management identified material changes to the valuation of properties. Where applicable, the identified assets were subject to a full revaluation.</p> <p>Management's assessment of assets not revalued (£8.349m) has identified no material change to the properties value as at 31 March 2023.</p>	<p>The valuation method remains consistent with the prior year.</p> <p>The Valuer has prepared their valuations in accordance with RICS Valuation – Global Standards.</p> <p>Our work in this area is ongoing. Based on our work completed, we have not identified any issues in respect of valuation of land and buildings and investment properties</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																								
<p>Net pension surplus – £12.485m</p> <p>IFRIC 14 addresses the extent to which an IAS 19 surplus can be recognised on the balance sheet and whether any additional liabilities are required in respect of onerous funding commitments.</p> <p>IFRIC 14 limits the measurement of the defined benefit asset to the 'present value of economic benefits available in the form of refunds from the plan or reductions in future contributions to the plan.</p>	<p>The Council's [total] net pension liability at 31 March 2023 is £12.485m comprising the Lancashire Pension Fund Local Government Scheme and £2.558m of unfunded defined benefit pension scheme 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.</p> <p>The latest full actuarial valuation was completed in 2022. Given the significant value of the net pension fund liability (surplus), small changes in assumptions can result in significant valuation movements.</p> <p>There has been a £48.283m net actuarial gain during 2022/23.</p>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of management's expert Assessment of actuary's approach taken, detail work undertaken to confirm reasonableness of approach Use of PwC as auditors expert to assess actuary and assumptions made by actuary – use table to compare with Actuary assumptions <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Assumption</th> <th>Actuary Value</th> <th>PwC range</th> <th>Assessment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Discount rate</td> <td>4.8%</td> <td>4.7 - 4.8%</td> <td>●</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pension increase rate</td> <td>2.8%</td> <td>2.8%</td> <td>●</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Salary growth</td> <td>4.2%</td> <td>3.2 - 5.2%</td> <td>●</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45/65</td> <td>22.8 / 21.5</td> <td>22.4-24.3 / 21.0-22.6</td> <td>●</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45/65</td> <td>25.6 / 23.8</td> <td>25.3-26.6 / 23.5-24.7</td> <td>●</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>We have also reviewed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the completeness and accuracy of the underlying information used to determine the estimate the impact of any changes to valuation method Reasonableness of the Council's share of LPS pension assets. Reasonableness of increase/decrease in estimate Adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statements <p>We have also requested assurances from the auditor of the Local Government Pension scheme in order to conclude our work in this area.</p>	Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment	Discount rate	4.8%	4.7 - 4.8%	●	Pension increase rate	2.8%	2.8%	●	Salary growth	4.2%	3.2 - 5.2%	●	Life expectancy – Males currently aged 45/65	22.8 / 21.5	22.4-24.3 / 21.0-22.6	●	Life expectancy – Females currently aged 45/65	25.6 / 23.8	25.3-26.6 / 23.5-24.7	●	Light purple
Assumption	Actuary Value	PwC range	Assessment																								
Discount rate	4.8%	4.7 - 4.8%	●																								
Pension increase rate	2.8%	2.8%	●																								
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Assessment

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2. Financial Statements: key judgements and estimates

Significant judgement or estimate	Summary of management’s approach	Audit Comments	Assessment
Provisions for NNDR appeals - £1.737m	<p>The Council are responsible for repaying a proportion of successful rateable value appeals. South Ribble’s calculation is based upon the latest information about outstanding rates appeals provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) for the 2010 listing and previous success rates.</p> <p>Whilst earlier outstanding appeals have fallen, the Council has included an estimate for appeals in from 2017-18 to 2022-23 of approximately 3.0 per cent. The provision has decreased £0.614m from 31 March 2022.</p>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reviewed the appropriateness of the underlying information used to determine the estimate reviewed the impact of any changes to valuation method checked the consistency of estimate against industry practice agreed the reasonableness of the increase in estimate reviewed the adequacy of disclosure of estimate in the financial statements. <p>Our work in this area is ongoing and, to date, we have not identified any findings to report.</p>	Light purple

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 - £0.358m	<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.</p> <p>The Council's policy for MRP for pre 2008 borrowing is a charge at the rate of 4% in accordance with the Regulatory Method.</p> <p>In the case of all capital spend finance by Prudential Borrowing; this is subject to MRP under the Asset Life Method – equal instalments charged over the estimated useful life of the asset. MRP is based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations.</p> <p>The year end MRP charge was £0.358m, a net increase of £0.298m from 2021/22.</p>	<p>We have examined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> whether the MRP has been calculated in line with the statutory guidance whether the Council's policy on MRP complies with statutory guidance. Assessed whether any changes to the Council's policy on MRP have been discussed and agreed with those charged with governance and have been approved by full council Reasonableness of the increase/decrease in MRP charge <p>At 31 March 2023, the Council's MRP was £0.358m. At 31 March 2022 the MRP was £0.298m. The MRP represents 5.81% of the Council's overall Capital Financing Requirement. This has decreased from 8.49% at 31 March 2022.</p> <p>Across the sector, government have consulted on changes to the regulations that underpin MRP, to clarify that capital receipts may not be used in place of a prudent MRP and that MRP should be applied to all unfinanced capital expenditure and that certain assets should not be omitted. The consultation highlighted that the intention is not to change policy, but to clearly set out in legislation, the practices that authorities should already be following. This is still being reviewed and government will issue a full response to the consultation in due course.</p>	Light purple

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: Information Technology

This section provides an overview of results from our assessment of Information Technology (IT) environment and controls which included identifying risks from the use of IT related to business process controls relevant to the financial audit. This includes an overall IT General Control (ITGC) rating per IT system and details of the ratings assigned to individual control areas.

IT application	Level of assessment performed	Overall ITGC rating	ITGC control area rating			Related significant risks/other risks	Additional procedures carried out to address risks arising from our findings
			Security management	Technology acquisition, development and maintenance	Technology infrastructure		
Civica	ITGC assessment (design and implementation only)	●	●	●	●	Management override of controls	
iTrent	ITGC assessment (design, implementation only)	●	●	●	●	No significant risk identified	

Assessment

- Significant deficiencies identified in IT controls relevant to the audit of financial statements
- Non-significant deficiencies identified in IT controls relevant to the audit of financial statements/significant deficiencies identified but with sufficient mitigation of relevant risk
- IT controls relevant to the audit of financial statements judged to be effective at the level of testing in scope
- Not in scope for testing

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 Governance Committee. We have not been made aware of any other incidents in the period and no issues have been identified during the course of our audit.
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, including specific representations in respect of the Group, which is set out at Appendix G
Confirmation requests from third parties	We requested from management permission to send confirmation requests to the Council's bankers. This permission was granted and the requests were sent and 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.
Audit evidence and explanations/significant difficulties	We have experienced some delays in obtaining sufficient audit evidence to complete the review of IT General Controls, although we acknowledge that this was partially due to limitations of the systems and policies in place during the period under review. We have not encountered any other significant difficulties during the audit.

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 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 H</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 nothing to report on these matters</p>



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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>Detailed procedures are not required as the Council does not exceed the threshold.</p>
Certification of the closure of the audit	<p>We intend to delay the certification of the closure of the 2022/23 audit of South Ribble Borough Council in the audit report, as detailed in Appendix I, due to VFM work being incomplete.</p>

3. Value for Money arrangements (VFM)

Approach to Value for Money work for 2022/23


The National Audit Office issued its guidance for auditors in April 2020. 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.


 <p>Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness</p> <p>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.</p>	 <p>Financial Sustainability</p> <p>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)</p>	 <p>Governance</p> <p>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</p>
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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 I to this report. We expect to issue our Auditor’s Annual Report by January 2024. 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 risk set out in the table below. Our work on is underway and an update is set out below.

Risk of significant weakness	Work performed to date
In 2021-22, we identified a significant weakness in the Council’s governance arrangements in relation to capacity of the procurement function, ensuring compliance with procurement procedure, onboarding of contractors onto the Council network and providing access to information.	We continue to review the progress with implementation of the management actions in response to the key recommendations reported in 2021-22.

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 and consider that an objective reasonable and informed third party would take the same view. 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

We confirm that we have implemented policies and procedures to meet the requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and we as a firm, and each covered person, confirm that we 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 F.

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 [Grant Thornton International Transparency report 2023](#).

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 November 2023, as well as the threats to our independence and safeguards that have been applied to mitigate these threats.

Service	Fees £	Threats identified	Safeguards
Audit related			
Certification of Housing Benefit Claim 2021-22	27,005	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	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 £27,005 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £74,660 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.
		Self review (because GT provides audit services)	To mitigate against the self review threat, we consider the safeguards are the timing of certification work is done after the audit has completed, materiality of the amounts involved to our opinion and unlikelihood of material errors arising 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 Benefit Claim 2022-23	32,400	Self-Interest (because this is a recurring fee)	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 £32,400 in comparison to the total fee for the audit of £74,660 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.
		Self review (because GT provides audit services)	To mitigate against the self review threat, we consider the safeguards are the timing of certification work is done after the audit has completed, materiality of the amounts involved to our opinion and unlikelihood of material errors arising 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.

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 Governance Committee. None of the services provided are subject to contingent fees.

4. Independence and ethics

As part of our assessment of our independence we note the following matters:

Matter	Conclusion
Relationships with Grant Thornton	We are not aware of any relationships between Grant Thornton and the Council that may reasonably be thought to bear on our integrity, independence and objectivity
Relationships and Investments held by individuals	We have not identified any potential issues in respect of personal relationships with the Council or investments held by individuals
Employment of Grant Thornton staff	We are not aware of any former Grant Thornton partners or staff being employed, or holding discussions in respect of employment, by the Council as a director or in a senior management role covering financial, accounting or control related areas.
Business relationships	We have not identified any business relationships between Grant Thornton and the Council
Contingent fees in relation to non-audit services	No contingent fee arrangements are in place for non-audit services provided
Gifts and hospitality	We have not identified any gifts or hospitality provided to, or received from, a member of the Council, senior management or staff

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 and consider that an objective reasonable and informed third party would take the same view. The firm and each covered person [and network firms] have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard and confirm that we are independent and are able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements

Appendices

- A. Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance
- B. Action plan – Audit of Financial Statements
- C. Follow up of prior year recommendations
- D. Audit Adjustments
- E. Fees and non-audit services
- F. Auditing developments
- G. Management Letter of Representation
- H. Audit opinion
- I. Audit letter in respect of delayed VFM work

A. Communication of audit matters to those charged with governance

Our communication plan	Audit Plan	Audit Findings
Respective responsibilities of auditor and management/those charged with governance	•	
Overview of the planned scope and timing of the audit, form, timing and expected general content of communications including significant risks	•	
Confirmation of independence and objectivity	•	•
A statement that we have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence. Relationships and other matters which might be thought to bear on independence. Details of non-audit work performed by Grant Thornton UK LLP and network firms, together with fees charged. Details of safeguards applied to threats to independence	•	•
Significant findings from the audit		•
Significant matters and issue arising during the audit and written representations that have been sought		•
Significant difficulties encountered during the audit		•
Significant deficiencies in internal control identified during the audit		•
Significant matters arising in connection with related parties		•
Identification or suspicion of fraud involving management and/or which results in material misstatement of the financial statements		•
Non-compliance with laws and regulations		•
Unadjusted misstatements and material disclosure omissions		•
Expected modifications to the auditor's report, or emphasis of matter		•

ISA (UK) 260, as well as other ISAs (UK), prescribe matters which we are required to communicate with those charged with governance, and which we set out in the table here.

This document, the Audit Findings, outlines those key issues, findings and other matters arising from the audit, which we consider should be communicated in writing rather than orally, together with an explanation as to how these have been resolved.

Respective responsibilities

As auditor we are responsible for performing the audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), 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.

Distribution of this Audit Findings report

Whilst we seek to ensure our audit findings are distributed to those individuals charged with governance, we are also required to distribute our findings to those members of senior management with significant operational and strategic responsibilities. We are grateful for your specific consideration and onward distribution of our report to all those charged with governance.

B. Action Plan – Audit of Financial Statements

We have not identified any recommendations to report to date.

C. Follow up of prior year recommendations

We identified the following issues in the audit of South Ribble Borough Council's 2021/22 financial statements, which resulted in two recommendations being reported in our 2021/22 Audit Findings report.

Assessment	Issue and risk previously communicated	Update on actions taken to address the issue
TBC	<p>Land & building assets held at historical cost</p> <p>We identified several land and building assets on the assets register which are held at historical cost which is not appropriate under the CIPFA Code. Upon review and through inquiries of management, we have established there are some items which are a component of other buildings on the asset register and therefore double-counted.</p> <p>There is a risk that land & building assets are misstated in the asset register through double-counting or the valuation of such items is inaccurate.</p> <p>We recommended the Council should review the accounting treatment for capital expenditure which forms a component of an existing property asset to consider whether componentisation is appropriate and ensure the assets are subject to revaluation in accordance with the CIPFA Code.</p>	To be updated subject to outstanding audit queries.
TBC	<p>Infrastructure assets</p> <p>From our review of useful lives applied to infrastructure assets, we identified that the basis for determining appropriate useful lives for different types of assets should be reviewed. The accounting policies include a range of 5-60 years for infrastructure assets however, there are additional sub-categories which should be assessed individually e.g. footpaths and bridleways, drainage, parks.</p> <p>There is risk that inappropriate useful lives are applied to assets which could result in a material error in the net book value and accumulated depreciation.</p> <p>We recommended the Council should review the basis for estimating useful lives for infrastructure assets, considering the guidance in the CIPFA Bulletin and ensure the accounting policies are compliant with the requirements of the CIPFA Code.</p>	To be updated subject to outstanding audit queries.

Assessment

- ✓ Action completed
- X Not yet addressed

C. Follow up of prior year recommendations

We identified the following issues in the audit of South Ribble Borough Council's 2021/22 financial statements, which resulted in two recommendations being reported in our 2021/22 Audit Findings report.

Assessment	Issue and risk previously communicated	Update on actions taken to address the issue
TBC	<p>Cash to bank reconciliation</p> <p>Our review and testing of the year-end reconciliation of cash balances in the accounting ledger to the bank account has identified that the reconciliation only includes the Council's main bank account however, there are other bank accounts which should also be reconciled and reviewed at year-end.</p> <p>As part of our procedures we have reconciled the cash balances to the bank account, obtained direct confirmation from the banks and verified items that cleared in the bank after the reporting date. Therefore, we are satisfied the cash balance is not materially misstated.</p> <p>We raised a similar recommendation in 2020-21 (see page 29) and management have started reviewing the cash to bank reconciliation process to ensure it covers all applicable cash balances in the account, and ensure it is fit for purpose as an effective check on the year-end balance.</p>	To be updated subject to outstanding audit queries.

Assessment

- ✓ Action completed
- X Not yet addressed

D. 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

Based on our audit work completed to date, we have not identified any adjusted misstatements to report.

D. 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.

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/issue/Omission	Details	Adjusted?
Accounts consistency	Updates made to references in the accounts and minor amendments to ensure consistency.	✓
Group accounts	The group financial statements and supporting notes have been added to the updated Statement of Accounts	✓
Cashflow Statement	The cashflow statement and relevant disclosure notes have been amended to incorporate the adjustments to debtors and creditors.	✓
Audit fees	Updates made to disclose the full external audit costs in the accounts.	✓

D. Audit Adjustments (continued)

Impact of unadjusted misstatements

Based on our audit work completed to date, we have not identified any unadjusted misstatements to report.

E. Fees and non-audit services

We confirm below our fees charged for the audit and provision of non-audit services.

	Proposed audit fee
Scale fee published by PSAA 2022/23	£40,660
<i>Issues not included in the above</i>	
Additional work on Value for Money (VfM) under new NAO Code	£9,000
Increased audit requirements of revised ISAs 540	£2,100
Enhanced audit procedures on journals testing (not included in the Scale Fee)	£3,000
Additional procedures to address other local risk factors (VFM significant weaknesses)	£6,000
Group audit procedures	£4,500
Enhanced audit procedures for Infrastructure	£2,650
Enhanced audit procedures for Payroll – Change of circumstances	£500
Enhanced audit procedures for Collection Fund- reliefs testing	£750
Increased audit requirements of revised ISAs 315/ 240	£3,000
Lower materiality	£2,500
Total proposed audit fees 2022/23 (excluding VAT)	£74,660

E. Fees and non-audit services

Non-audit fees for other services	Proposed fee	Final fee
Certification of Housing Benefit Claim 2022-23	32,400	tbc
Total non-audit fees (excluding VAT)	£32,400	tbc

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The fees reconcile to the financial statements.

• fees per financial statements	£41,000
• Audit fee variation to PSAA scale fee	£34,000
• Housing Benefit Claim 2022-23	£32,000
• total fees per above	£107,000

None of the above services were provided on a contingent fee basis.

This covers all services provided by us and our network to the group/company, its directors and senior management and its affiliates, and other services provided to other known connected parties that may reasonably be thought to bear on our integrity, objectivity or independence. (The FRC Ethical Standard (ES 1.69))

Agenda Item 4

F. Auditing developments

Revised ISAs

There are changes to the following ISA (UK):

ISA (UK) 315 (Revised July 2020) 'Identifying and Assessing the Risks of Material Misstatement'

This impacts audits of financial statement for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2021.

ISA (UK) 220 (Revised July 2021) 'Quality Management for an Audit of Financial Statements'

ISA (UK) 240 (Revised May 2021) 'The Auditor's Responsibilities Relating to Fraud in an Audit of Financial Statements'

A summary of the impact of the key changes on various aspects of the audit is included below:

These changes will impact audit for audits of financial statement for periods commencing on or after 15 December 2022.

Area of change	Impact of changes
Risk assessment	The nature, timing and extent of audit procedures performed in support of the audit opinion may change due to clarification of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the risk assessment process, which provides the basis for the assessment of the risks of material misstatement and the design of audit procedures the identification and extent of work effort needed for indirect and direct controls in the system of internal control the controls for which design and implementation needs to be assess and how that impacts sampling the considerations for using automated tools and techniques.
Direction, supervision and review of the engagement	Greater responsibilities, audit procedures and actions are assigned directly to the engagement partner, resulting in increased involvement in the performance and review of audit procedures.
Professional scepticism	The design, nature, timing and extent of audit procedures performed in support of the audit opinion may change due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> increased emphasis on the exercise of professional judgement and professional scepticism an equal focus on both corroborative and contradictory information obtained and used in generating audit evidence increased guidance on management and auditor bias additional focus on the authenticity of information used as audit evidence a focus on response to inquiries that appear implausible
Definition of engagement team	The definition of engagement team when applied in a group audit, will include both the group auditors and the component auditors. The implications of this will become clearer when the auditing standard governing special considerations for group audits is finalised. In the interim, the expectation is that this will extend a number of requirements in the standard directed at the 'engagement team' to component auditors in addition to the group auditor. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration is also being given to the potential impacts on confidentiality and independence.
Fraud	The design, nature timing and extent of audit procedures performed in support of the audit opinion may change due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clarification of the requirements relating to understanding fraud risk factors additional communications with management or those charged with governance
Documentation	The amendments to these auditing standards will also result in additional documentation requirements to demonstrate how these requirements have been addressed.

G. Management Letter of Representation

South Ribble Borough Council Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of South Ribble Borough Council and its subsidiary undertaking, South Ribble Leisure Ltd, for the year ended 31 March 2023 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the group and Council financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 and applicable law.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

Financial Statements

- i. We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 ("the Code"); in particular the financial statements are fairly presented in accordance therewith.
- ii. We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the group and Council and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the financial statements.
- iii. The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the group and Council financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of any regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance.
- iv. We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
- v. Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable. Such accounting estimates include valuation of land and buildings, valuation of investment property and the valuation of the net pension surplus. We are satisfied that the material judgements used in the

preparation of the financial statements are soundly based, in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements. We understand our responsibilities includes identifying and considering alternative, methods, assumptions or source data that would be equally valid under the financial reporting framework, and why these alternatives were rejected in favour of the estimate used. We are satisfied that the methods, the data and the significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates and their related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements.

- vi. We confirm that we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities for IAS19 Employee Benefits disclosures are consistent with our knowledge. We confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. We also confirm that all significant post-employment benefits have been identified and properly accounted for.
- vii. Except as disclosed in the group and Council financial statements:
 - a. there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
 - b. none of the assets of the [group and]Council has been assigned, pledged or mortgaged
 - c. there are no material prior year charges or credits, nor exceptional or non-recurring items requiring separate disclosure.
- viii. Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code.
- ix. All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.
- x. We have considered the adjusted misstatements, and misclassification and disclosures changes schedules included in your Audit Findings Report. The group and Council financial statements have been amended for these misstatements, misclassifications and disclosure changes and are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

G. Management Letter of Representation

- xi. We have considered the unadjusted misstatements schedule included in your Audit Findings Report and attached. We have not adjusted the financial statements for these misstatements brought to our attention as they are immaterial to the results of the Council and its financial position at the year-end. The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.
- xii. Actual or possible litigation and claims have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards.
- xiii. We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.
- xiv. We have updated our going concern assessment. We continue to believe that the group and Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that :
- the nature of the group and Council means that, notwithstanding any intention to cease the group and Council operations in their current form, it will continue to be appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of accounting because, in such an event, services it performs can be expected to continue to be delivered by related public authorities and preparing the financial statements on a going concern basis will still provide a faithful representation of the items in the financial statements
 - the financial reporting framework permits the entry to prepare its financial statements on the basis of the presumption set out under a) above; and
 - the group and Council's system of internal control has not identified any events or conditions relevant to going concern.
- We believe that no further disclosures relating to the group and Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements
- xv. The group and Council has complied with all aspects of ring-fenced grants that could have a material effect on the group and Council's financial statements in the event of non-compliance.
- xvi. We have considered the year end value of land and building assets which have not been subject to external valuation and we are satisfied that the basis of valuation remains appropriate and assets are not materially misstated. We have not identified any material changes to the properties.
- Information Provided**
- xix. We have provided you with:
- access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
 - access to persons within the Council via remote arrangements, from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- xx. We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware.
- xxi. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
- xxii. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.

G. Management Letter of Representation

- xxii. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the group and Council, and involves:
 - a. management;
 - b. employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - c. others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- xxiii. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.
- xxiv. We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.
- xxv. We have disclosed to you the identity of the group and Council's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- xxvi. We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Annual Governance Statement

We are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

Narrative Report

The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect our understanding of the group and Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was minuted by the Council's Governance Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2023

H. Audit opinion

Our audit opinion is included below.

We anticipate we will provide the Council with an unmodified audit report

Independent auditor's report to the members of South Ribble Borough Council

Report on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on financial statements

We have audited the financial statements of South Ribble Borough Council (the 'Authority') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement, the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement, the Collection Fund Statement, the Group Movement in Reserves Statement, the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, the Group Balance Sheet, the Group Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the group and of the Authority as at 31 March 2023 and of the group's expenditure and income and the Authority's expenditure and income for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law, as required by the Code of Audit Practice (2020) ("the Code of Audit Practice") approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report.

We are independent of the group and the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We are responsible for concluding on the appropriateness of the Director of Finance's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the group and the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Authority or the group to cease to continue as a going concern.

In our evaluation of the Director of Finance's conclusions, and in accordance with the expectation set out within the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 that the Authority's and group's financial statements shall be prepared on a going concern basis, we considered the inherent risks associated with the continuation of services provided by the group and the Authority. In doing so we had regard to the guidance provided in Practice Note 10 Audit of financial statements and regularity of public sector bodies in the United Kingdom (Revised 2022) on the application of ISA (UK) 570 Going Concern to public sector entities. We assessed the reasonableness of the basis of preparation used by the group and Authority and the group and Authority's disclosures over the going concern period.

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

H. Audit opinion

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Authority's and the group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Director of Finance with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Director of Finance is responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Other information we are required to report on by exception under the Code of Audit Practice

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in April 2020 on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the Code of Audit Practice) we are required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement does not comply with 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016 Edition' published by CIPFA and SOLACE, or is misleading or inconsistent with the information of which we are aware from our audit.

We are not required to consider whether the Annual Governance Statement addresses all risks and controls or that risks are satisfactorily addressed by internal controls.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters required by the Code of Audit Practice

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit of the financial statements, the other information published together with the financial statements in the Statement of Accounts for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make a written recommendation to the Authority under section 24 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or;
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, in the course of, or at the conclusion of the audit.

We have nothing to report in respect of the above matters.

Responsibilities of the Authority and the Director of Finance

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities, the Authority is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs.

H. Audit opinion

In this authority, that officer is the Director of Finance. The Director of Finance is responsible for the preparation of the Statement of Accounts, which includes the financial statements, in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Director of Finance determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Director of Finance is responsible for assessing the Authority's and the group's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless they have been informed by the relevant national body of the intention to dissolve the Authority and the group without the transfer of its services to another public sector entity.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the group and Authority and determined that the most significant which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements are those related to the reporting frameworks (the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and the Local Government Act 2003).

We enquired of management and the Governance Committee, concerning the group and Authority's policies and procedures relating to:

- the identification, evaluation and compliance with laws and regulations;
- the detection and response to the risks of fraud; and
- the establishment of internal controls to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.

We enquired of management, internal audit and the Governance Committee, whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations or whether they had any knowledge of actual, suspected or alleged fraud.

We assessed the susceptibility of the Authority and group's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur, by evaluating management's incentives and opportunities for manipulation of the financial statements. This included the evaluation of the risk of management override of controls. We determined that the principal risks were in relation to:

- journal entries that impacted income and expenditure or posted during the accounts production;
- potential management bias in accounting estimates; and
- transactions outside the normal course of business.

Our audit procedures involved:

- evaluation of the design effectiveness of controls that management has in place to prevent and detect fraud,
- journal entry testing, with a focus on journals which impacted income and expenditure or posted during the accounts production,
- challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in its significant accounting estimates in respect of valuation of land and buildings, the valuation of investment property and defined benefit pensions liability valuations, and
- assessing the extent of compliance with the relevant laws and regulations as part of our procedures on the related financial statement item.

H. Audit opinion

These audit procedures were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error and detecting irregularities that result from fraud is inherently more difficult than detecting those that result from error, as fraud may involve collusion, deliberate concealment, forgery or intentional misrepresentations. Also, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it.

We communicated relevant laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members, including the potential for fraud in revenue and expenditure recognition, and the significant accounting estimates related to the valuation of land and buildings, the valuation of investment property and defined benefit pensions. We remained alert to any indications of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, throughout the audit.

Our assessment of the appropriateness of the collective competence and capabilities of the group and Authority's engagement team included consideration of the engagement team's:

- understanding of, and practical experience with audit engagements of a similar nature and complexity through appropriate training and participation
- knowledge of the local government sector in which the group and Authority operates
- understanding of the legal and regulatory requirements specific to the Authority and group including:
 - the provisions of the applicable legislation
 - guidance issued by CIPFA/LASAAC and SOLACE
 - the applicable statutory provisions.

In assessing the potential risks of material misstatement, we obtained an understanding of:

- the Authority and group's operations, including the nature of its income and expenditure and its services and of its objectives and strategies to understand the classes of transactions, account balances, expected financial statement disclosures and business risks that may result in risks of material misstatement.

- the Authority and group's control environment, including the policies and procedures implemented by the Authority and group to ensure compliance with the requirements of the financial reporting framework.

For components at which audit procedures were performed, we considered whether there were instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations that gave rise to a risk of material misstatement of the group financial statements. No such matters were identified.

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

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Matter on which we are required to report by exception – the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Under the Code of Audit Practice, we are required to report to you if, in our opinion, we have not been able to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Our work on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources is not yet complete. The outcome of our work will be reported in our commentary on the Authority's arrangements in our Auditor's Annual Report. If we identify any significant weaknesses in these arrangements, these will be reported by exception in a further auditor's report. We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on our opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

H. Audit opinion

Responsibilities of the Authority

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Auditor's responsibilities for the review of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

We are required under Section 20(1)(c) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively.

We undertake our review in accordance with the Code of Audit Practice, having regard to the guidance issued by the Comptroller and Auditor General in January 2023. This guidance sets out the arrangements that fall within the scope of 'proper arrangements'. When reporting on these arrangements, the Code of Audit Practice requires auditors to structure their commentary on arrangements under three specified reporting criteria:

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

We document our understanding of the arrangements the Authority has in place for each of these three specified reporting criteria, gathering sufficient evidence to support our risk assessment and commentary in our Auditor's Annual Report. In undertaking our work, we consider whether there is evidence to suggest that there are significant weaknesses in arrangements.

Report on other legal and regulatory requirements – Delay in certification of completion of the audit

We cannot formally conclude the audit and issue an audit certificate for South Ribble Borough Council for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the Code of Audit Practice until we have completed our work on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

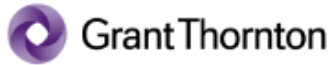
We are satisfied that this work does not have a material effect on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the members of the Authority, as a body, in accordance with Part 5 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and as set out in paragraph 44 of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies published by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Authority's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Authority and the Authority's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

I. Audit letter in respect of delayed VFM work

Commercial in confidence



Chair of Governance Committee
South Ribble Borough Council
West Paddock
Leyland
PR25 1DH

Grant Thornton UK LLP
Liver Building
Liverpool
L3 1PS

28 September 2023

Dear Councillor Colin Sharples, Chair of Governance Committee

The original expectation under the approach to VFM arrangements work set out in the 2020 Code of Audit Practice was that auditors would follow an annual cycle of work, with more timely reporting on VFM arrangements, including issuing their commentary on VFM arrangements for local government by 30 September each year at the latest. Unfortunately, due to the on-going challenges impacting on the local audit market, including the need to meet regulatory and other professional requirements, we have been unable to complete our 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 can 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 expect to publish our report no later than three months after the date of issuing the opinion on the financial statements.

For the purposes of compliance with the 2020 Code, this letter constitutes the required audit letter explaining the reasons for delay.

Yours faithfully

Georgia Jones
Engagement Lead



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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer	Governance Committee	28 th November 2023

Statement of Accounts 2022/23

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	No
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Purpose of the Report

- To present for approval the audited Statement of Accounts for 2022/23.

Recommendation to Governance Committee

- To approve the Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 (Appendix A), subject to any minor amendments identified during the final stages of the completion of the External Audit by Grant Thornton, which, in the opinion of the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), are minor in nature, i.e. defined as non-material to the finance position of the council;
- To delegate authority to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Chair of the Governance Committee, to make such amendments;
- If amendments are identified during the final stages of the completion of the External Audit by Grant Thornton, which the Director of Finance considers to be material to the financial position of the council, the Governance Committee will be reconvened to approve the new Statement of Accounts;
- To authorise the Director of Finance and Chair of Governance Committee to sign the Letter of Representation (Appendix B).

Reasons for recommendations

- Approval of the Annual Statement of Accounts is a statutory obligation.

Other options considered and rejected

Agenda Item 5

7. The Statement of Accounts are prepared in the form to meet professional accounting standards and to comply with statutory regulations. There are therefore no alternative options that can be adopted.

Corporate priorities

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Thriving Communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

9. The Accounts and Audit Regulations came into force on the 1st April 2015 and have subsequently been amended, most recently by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2022, which became effective from 22nd July 2022. These regulations set the statutory timetable for production, approval and audit of the Statement of Accounts.
10. The responsible financial officer must sign and date the Draft Statement of Accounts and certify that it presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Authority at the year end, and of the income and expenditure for the year.
11. The responsible financial officer must then commence the period for the 'exercise of public rights' and notify the local auditor of the date on which that period commenced; for the 2022/23 statements the timescale for doing so was 14th August 2023.
12. There is no requirement for Members to approve the Statement of Accounts at this stage in the process.
13. The responsible Financial Officer must, on behalf of the authority, publish (which must include publication on the authority's website) the draft Statement of Accounts, along with the Annual Governance Statement and a Narrative Report and a declaration, signed by that Officer, to the effect that the status of the statement of accounts is unaudited and that the approved Statement of Accounts, as published, may be subject to change.
14. The regulations also state that the period for the exercise of public rights is deemed to commence on the day following the day on which all of these obligations have been fulfilled. The responsible Finance Officer must also ensure that commencement of the period for the exercise of public rights takes place on such a day that it includes, for the 2022/23 statements, the ten working days between 14th August and 26th August 2023, and continues for a single period of 30 working days.
15. Once the full draft Statement of Accounts have been published, and the public inspection period has begun, then the audit of the accounts by the council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, can commence.
16. Once the audit has been completed, the Regulations specify that the responsible Financial Officer must reconfirm on behalf of the authority that they are satisfied that the statement of accounts present a true and fair view of the financial position of the authority at the year end, and the income and expenditure for the year. The council is then required to:

Agenda Item 5

- Consider, either by way of a committee, or by the members meeting as a whole, the statement of accounts;
 - Approve the statement of accounts by a resolution of that committee or meeting;
 - Ensure that the statement of accounts is signed and dated by the person presiding at the committee or meeting at which that approval is given.
17. South Ribble Council delegates the responsibility for the approval of the accounts to the Governance Committee.
18. For 2022/23, the date for completion of the audit and final approval and publication of the Statement has been determined in the Regulations as 30 November 2023.
19. Once approved the council must, by no later than 30 November, publish:
- The statement of accounts together with any certificate or opinion, entered by the local auditor;
 - The annual governance statement; and
 - The narrative statement.
20. Publication of the final documents must include publication on the council's website.

Approval of the Statement of Accounts 2022/23

21. The draft Statement of Accounts 2022/23 was signed by the Director of Finance on 10th August 2023 and published on the council's website on the 14th August, together with details of public inspection rights. Whilst every effort was made, this was slightly beyond the deadline set by government due to resources available within the Finance Team. Grant Thornton, the external auditors, were kept fully informed of the position, and on 14th August the accounts were presented to them for audit.
22. The Auditor's 'Draft Audit Findings Report' is presented as a separate report on this agenda. This sets out adjusted misstatements, unadjusted misstatements, and misclassification and disclosure changes in the current version of the Statement of Accounts. The audit of the accounts has not yet been completed in full. A few matters are still under consideration and so there is a possibility that further changes to the Statement of Accounts may be required. The details of the work yet to be undertaken is stated on page 3 of their report.
23. The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, as amended by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2022, require that the statement should be approved by a meeting of members by 30 November 2023, or should that not prove possible 'as soon as is reasonably practicable after the receipt of any report from the auditor which contains the auditor's final findings from the audit which is issued before the conclusion of the audit'.
24. The full statement for 2022/23 is attached as Appendix A for consideration and approval.

Agenda Item 5

25. Following consideration and approval by this Committee, the Chair is required to sign and date the Statement, which should also be re-certified by the Director of Finance, as soon as is practicable. The Statement of Accounts will then be published on the South Ribble Council website; www.southribble.gov.uk.
26. The Director of Finance and the Chair of the Governance Committee should also sign the Letter of Representation which is attached at Appendix B.
27. As the audit has not yet been fully completed, it is recommended that the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Chair of the Governance Committee, should approve any further non-material amendments to the Statement of Accounts, if necessary, before the accounts are signed and dated. If the Director of Finance is of the opinion that the amendments are material to the financial position of the council, Governance Committee should be reconvened to approve the new Statement of Accounts.

Changes to Draft Statement of Accounts Published on 14th August 2023

28. The Draft Audit Findings Report has not identified any adjusted misstatements to report.

Climate change and air quality

29. The work noted in this report has no impact on the Council's Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.

Equality and diversity

30. This report has no implications for equality and diversity.

Risk

31. Risk implications apply in relation to compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) 2022, and in preparing financial statements in accordance with the statutory timetable. The accounts must be compliant with the relevant standards and must be prepared on a true and fair view basis. Failure to comply could result in a failure to meet the statutory duty.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

32. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The report meets the statutory accounting requirements for the Statement of Accounts to be produced and is a factual statement of the income and expenditure flows over the course of the 2022/23 financial year, and a snapshot of the Balance Sheet position as at 31st March 2023.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

33. The legal implications are in respect of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) 2022, and the requirement that the accounts must be compliant with the relevant accounting standards and codes of practice and must be prepared on a true and fair view basis. Failure to comply could result in a failure to meet the statutory duty.

Agenda Item 5

Background documents

- Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 (as amended) 2022
- CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Financial Statements 2022/23

Appendix B: Draft Letter of Representation 2022/23

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Jean Waddington (Principal Financial Accountant)	jean.waddington@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515233	8 th November 2023

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Draft (Unaudited) Statement of Accounts

Year Ending 31 March 2023

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Narrative Report of the Chief Financial Officer

Introduction

I am pleased to introduce the Statement of Accounts for the 2022/23 financial year for South Ribble Borough Council. The accounts are produced annually to give electors, local taxpayers, members of the Council, employees and other interested parties clear information on the Council's finances and the financial outlook for the future.

The accounts must be completed by law and in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting. The accounts provide all of the financial information for the 2022/23 financial year and there is a narrative that provides a high level overview of the key issues that affect the accounts, including information on the Council's achievements during the year and a section that looks at the outlook for the future.

The Council faces continued challenges as we emerge from the global pandemic, working to address the impact of high inflation, particularly in energy costs, and a cost of living crisis, all exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and global supply chain issues. This is compounded by the Council's operating environment in which costs and demands on services are growing each year, with finite resources to respond. This climate brings uncertainty over future costs and funding for the authority, but I am confident given the way in which our staff have responded to date, that the Council will continue to meet and manage these challenges into the future on behalf of all of our local residents.

I hope you find this report and the Statement of Accounts useful in understanding the Council's financial position and performance for the year.

I'd also like to express my thanks for the hard work and dedication of staff across the whole of the Council who have worked to consolidate the financial stability of the Council and ensure the production of the Statement of Accounts in difficult circumstances



Louise Mattinson ACA
Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer
South Ribble Council

South Ribble Borough Council

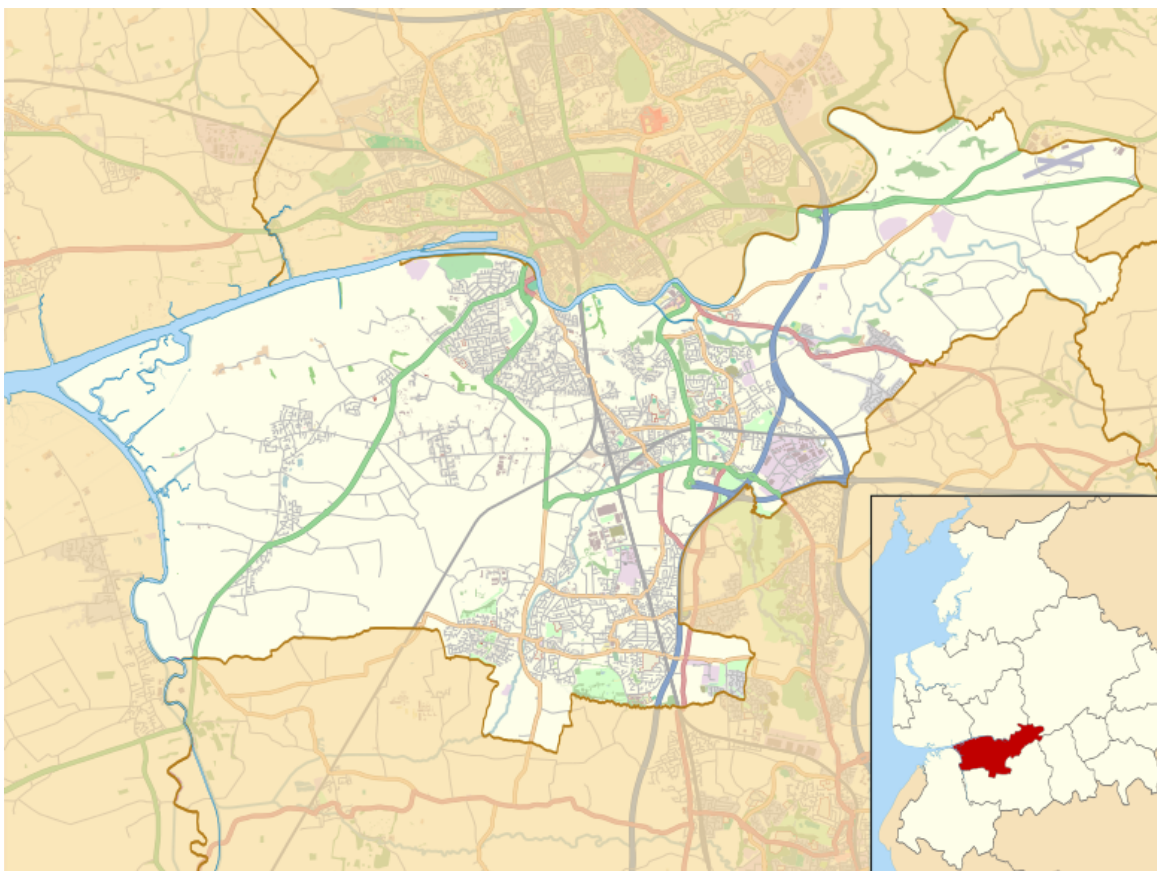
South Ribble Borough extends to about 113 km² (approximately 44 square miles) and is located in Lancashire at the centre of the North West region, situated right on the M61, M6 and M65 motorways with easy access to the West Coast mainline and airports at Manchester and Liverpool. The Borough is on the edge of the West Pennine Moors with beautiful scenery and countryside and is just a short drive from the Lancashire coastline. The latest figures available from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimate that the total population of the borough was approximately 111,000 in 2022.

The Council is based in the town of Leyland in the south of the borough with other notable population areas being Penwortham, Longton, Hutton, Walton-le-Dale, Bamber Bridge, Lostock Hall, Moss Side and a significant part of Buckshaw Village.

The district was formed on 1st April 1974 under the Local Government Act 1972, from Leyland and Walton-le-Dale urban districts, along with part of Preston Rural District. The borough shares its borders with Chorley, West Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen, Ribble Valley, Preston and Fylde Councils.

Regeneration, inward investment and working with partners on a range of initiatives and projects are recognised as very important for the future prosperity of the borough and are key priorities for the Administration. The Council must provide services such that it meets the needs of its citizens, serving both an urban and rural environment.

Location and map of South Ribble borough



The Structure of the Council

South Ribble Borough Council is part of a two-tier system in Lancashire that consists of a county council, two unitary councils and 12 district councils. The Council works collaboratively with a wide range of partners and is committed to working across organisational boundaries to improve outcomes for local people and communities, and to ensure that high-quality services are readily accessible to the people of the borough; during 2022/23, the Council continued to develop and expand its shared services arrangement with Chorley Council to Property and Development and Pest Control.

The Council has 50 district councillors elected to cover all the electoral wards across the borough. District councillors represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making process. Council meetings are publicised on the Council's website alongside agendas, reports and minutes. The meetings are open to members of the public to attend bringing decision-making closer to the public.

The political structure of the Council at the end of the 2022/23 year was as follows, with a Labour administration supported by the Liberal Democrat group on the basis of a supply and confidence agreement:

Party	No.
Conservative	21
Labour	23
Liberal Democrat	5
Vacancy	1
TOTAL	50

Management Structure

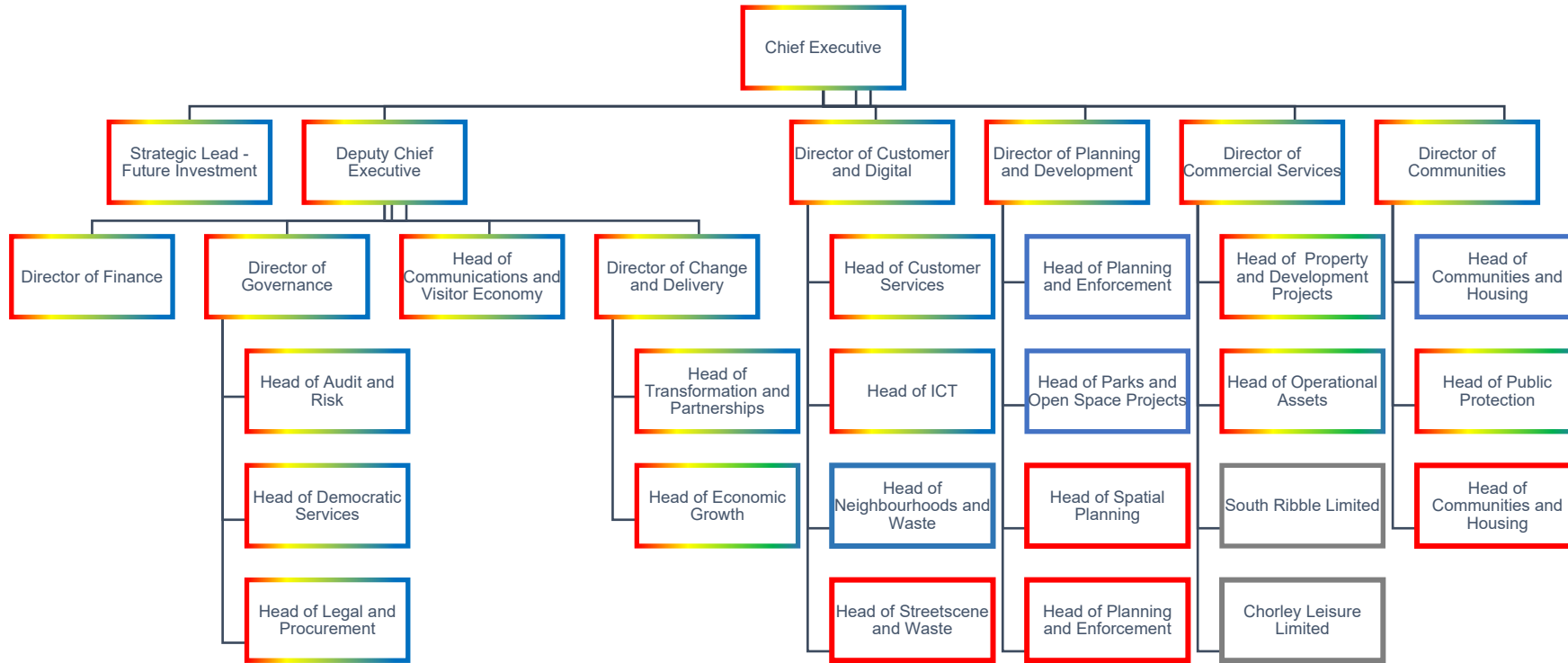
The Senior Management Team is shared across South Ribble and Chorley Borough Councils and consists of the Chief Executive, a Deputy Chief Executive and Directors as shown below.

The Senior Management Team meets weekly and is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities, and for ensuring resources are available for this.

Posts which solely work for South Ribble Council are shaded blue below, whilst those posts which are shared with Chorley Council are shown as a blend of red and blue.

Following the insourcing of South Ribble Council's leisure services in April 2021, the Council established a wholly owned leisure company to manage the running of its leisure services on the Council's behalf. The leisure staff moved to South Ribble Leisure Ltd on 1st September 2021 and are employed by the company; during the first seven months of the year they were managed by the Director of Commercial Services, until November 2022 when line management moved to the Director of Governance.

Leadership and Management Structure - South Ribble



Key



Our staff are the most important resource we have to help us to achieve our goals. The Council (SRBC), including its subsidiary South Ribble Leisure Ltd (SRLL), and staff employed by the Council who work in the shared service arrangement with Chorley Council, employs 594 staff in full time, part time and casual contracts. A breakdown of our workforce by age and gender is set out in the table below:

No. of Employees by Age and Gender.

	SRBC		Shared Services		SRLL		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 20	5	6	0	0	21	27	26	33
21-30	28	9	9	14	16	24	53	47
31-40	27	19	11	20	7	8	45	47
41-50	44	26	12	27	3	19	59	72
51-60	50	33	11	24	11	14	72	71
61+	31	17	2	7	5	7	38	31
Total	185	110	45	92	63	99	293	301

Corporate Strategy and Performance in 2022/23

The Corporate Strategy for delivery in 2022/23 was approved at Council in November 2021, refreshing the delivery programme and performance measures.

The four priorities identified in the strategy are:

- An exemplary council,
- Thriving communities,
- A fair local economy that works for everyone,
- Good homes, green spaces, healthy places.

Activity and resources are targeted towards 15 priority projects which are delivered over a period of 12-18 months and measured using a suite of performance indicators.

The Council has made good progress during the year, although it is important to understand that some of these Corporate Strategy projects run across multiple years, therefore for some objectives work completed to date has been at a strategic planning and consultation level.

The Corporate Strategy is delivered with the purpose of achieving the Council's vision and ambition.

The vision and priorities are outlined below.

Corporate Strategy

2021/22 – 2023/24



An exemplary council

A council that:

- Delivers high performing services that represent value for money
- Understands the community and works with partners to make things better
- Is open and transparent in its activities

Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

A borough with:

- A choice of decent, affordable housing
- Commitment to protecting the local environment
- A choice of quality recreational activities

Thriving communities

Places where:

- Residents have positive mental health
- People get involved and have a sense of belonging
- Communities can access services and support when they need them

A fair local economy that works for everyone

A council that:

- Increases access to training and jobs
 - Grows and supports sustainable businesses
- Invests in improving the borough

Our vision:

A healthy and happy community, flourishing together in a safer and fairer borough that is led by a council recognised for being innovative, financially sustainable and accountable.

Corporate Strategy

2021/22 – 2023/24



South Ribble will:

- Deliver the peer challenge action plan to ensure continued improvement
- Deliver the shared services development plan to build a more resilient organisation
- Implement more efficient and effective working practices at the council through the WorkPlace Strategy
- Deliver more joined up public services through working with our partners



South Ribble will:

- Develop the Youth Council to make sure the views of young people are represented
- Deliver Music in the Park 2022 and Queens Jubilee Celebrations
- Review and enhance the community hubs as a primary way to work closely with residents
- Develop the visitor offer in South Ribble



South Ribble will:

- Improve leisure facilities in South Ribble to improve wellbeing
- Deliver the new Worden Hall complex as a flagship venue
- Lead action to address climate change for South Ribble
- Deliver affordable homes



South Ribble will:

- Deliver transformational regeneration projects including the Town Deal
- Support communities to access community cooperatives in South Ribble as part of growing a fair local economy
- Support residents to recover from the pandemic with advice, support and key services



The following pages outline the Council's achievements in 2022/23 against the delivery of the Corporate Strategy and the key performance indicators up to the end of 2022/23. Detailed quarterly reports providing updates on performance against these were taken to the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Meetings and then to Cabinet meetings across the year.



AN EXEMPLARY COUNCIL

A COUNCIL THAT:

Delivers high performing services that represent value for money

Understand the community and work with partners to make things better

Is open and transparent in its activities

Achievements

The council has an ambitious transformation programme that includes delivering improvements to ensure high quality and responsive services. In Phase 3 of the Shared Services Programme, a single operating model for Property and Development, as well as Pest Control, was successfully implemented over the course of the year, with both teams now operating on a shared basis with Chorley Borough Council. This forms part of the wider programme of shared services, which provides greater capacity, more resilience and the creation of development opportunities for staff.

As part of the delivery of the Workplace Strategy, work has been undertaken over the course of the year to develop and scope the project to deliver improvements to the Civic Centre workspace to improve the working environment. The aim is to provide a modern, attractive working space to facilitate new models of working, to improve staff morale and to promote collaboration and maximise space in the building.

As part of the Workplace Strategy, ICT infrastructure improvements have been made, including the implementation of a single workspace desktop, and standardised equipment has been rolled out, including laptops, iPads and phones, to ensure that members and officers have access to the most appropriate equipment and systems, enabling teams to be agile and responsive to the needs of residents.

The Chorley and South Ribble Partnership continues to drive forward the way we work with partners, to share intelligence to target areas of need within communities and to design services to match. The shared Data and Intelligence Dashboard was reviewed with partners in March 2023, and feedback gathered, providing partners with the opportunity to influence its future look. Having a single view of our communities should help to coordinate activity and resources for the benefit of communities, rather than individual organisations each taking a different approach.

The Partnership is working with health organisations to implement changes proposed by the Integrated Care Board. This has involved making sure that local priorities for South Ribble are reflected in the plans and ways of working. The proposals should see more coordination of services at a local level through an 'integrated team' approach which will bring together key teams from community health services, adult and children's services and the council, to deliver services within the borough; this is known as 'place based working'. An initial trial will focus on early years and family support, particularly school readiness. A review will be undertaken of the membership and structure

of the Chorley and South Ribble Partnership Executive Board to ensure that a place-based partnership model can be incorporated into its existing structures.

Engagement with local businesses has continued with the delivery of round table events over the year; for example in the second quarter of the year, leading businesses from the construction sector came together and identified a range of issues and priorities such as access to suitable land for development, the impact of rising prices across the supply chain and recruitment challenges. Another round table event was also held in response to the increasing pressures on businesses caused by the cost of living crisis. Through these events businesses are able to benefit from direct engagement with, and obtain advice from, the council's Investment and Skills Team and the feedback provided by businesses has been used to inform the council's Economic Strategy.

In April 2022, the council welcomed back the Local Government Association's Peer Challenge Team for a progress review, further to their original visit in the summer of 2021. The Peer Team acknowledged the robust action plan developed in response to their recommendations and found that the council had responded positively and made several fundamental improvements across the themes of governance, performance improvement and people management. The Peer Team commended the council's relationship with communities and highlighted the Community Hubs as a positive approach that should continue and be developed further.



THRIVING COMMUNITIES

A PLACE WHERE:

Residents have positive mental health

People get involved and have a sense of belonging

Communities can access services and support when they need them

Achievements

To mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, the council hosted a programme of entertainment over the bank holiday weekend in June 2022. The celebrations held in Worden Park, included a 'Great British' themed Leyland Festival, follow by an 80's themed 'Music in the Park' concert. Following the success of the concert, it was agreed to hold a similar event in May 2023 for which planning work has been undertaken in the latter part of the financial year.

The project to implement a social prescribing service for South Ribble, and to work with partners to enhance provision, address health inequalities and improve outcomes, has progressed over the year and has included the recruitment of three Social Prescribing Link Workers. The social prescribing service is expected to be launched in July 2023. The service will take referrals from key partner-based agencies in South Ribble, including the Primary Care Networks (PCN), to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services that can support sustainable wellbeing. The scheme could include a range of referral activities include volunteering, arts activities, group learning, gardening, befriending, cookery, healthy eating advice, a range of sport and can assist people with access to financial advice, income maximisation and wellbeing support.

As part of the Council's commitment to investing in the local community, an ambitious programme has been established to develop local community infrastructure across the borough. The project will work with partners and community groups to develop new provisions and enhance existing provision

with a focus on supporting young families, older people, socially isolated and young people. This includes establishing a South Ribble Family Wellbeing Centre, developing a community grants programme to support improvement to community spaces, developing a policy outlining the approach for assessing community assets that require investment from the Council and developing a directory of youth activities and provision. In the final quarter of the year a 'directory of services and activities' brochure has been created and shared with the Social Isolation Network and wider partners. A mapping exercise of existing community assets and provision has also been undertaken to better understand where they may be potential gaps to try and ensure that all residents regardless of financial, social, or geographical barriers have accessible provisions that supports their needs.

The Cost of Living action plan, providing practical financial advice and support to households, including advice and access to services that promote resident wellbeing, has progressed with the delivery of the Household Support Fund. The fund has been used to provide a life line to eligible residents and families, supporting with essential items such as food and hygiene products and. A 'Cost of Living' webpage has been developed on the South Ribble council website, providing a central place of information to support vulnerable residents and communities through the cost of living crisis. Some examples of information available on the webpage include support with energy bills, the Warm Welcome Campaign, foodbanks and community shops, mental health and wellbeing and much more. Going forward, the project will deliver the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme, the Warm Welcome Campaign, and the community pop-up bike shop programme.

Following the establishment of the South Ribble Youth Council during the year, which is a member of the British Youth Council, members meet bi-weekly and are supported by the Youth Engagement Officer to deliver projects in line with the Youth Council's identified key themes; Poverty/Cost of Living, Mental Health, Equality, Knife Crime and Veterans. The Youth Council has been successful in offering a chance for young residents to use their voice and influence decisions within their local communities.

The Community Hubs have successfully delivered a number of projects within their actions plans for 2022/23. As part of the ongoing commitment to invest in communities, funding was distributed during the year from the council's 'Boost Fund Plus Fund' of £269k, and from the 'Leisure Local Community Fund' of £206k, to support recovery from the pandemic and to support local communities to thrive.



A FAIR LOCAL ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

A COUNCIL THAT:

Increases access to training and jobs

Grows and supports sustainable businesses

Invests in improving the borough

Achievements

The South Ribble Economic Strategy was finalised and approved at Cabinet in February 2023. The Economic Strategy aims to set out a clear ambition and vision for South Ribble with a focus on four key areas which are:

- Space and Place - to create the right conditions for business to grow;
- Workforce and Skills - providing the right skills, training, and people;

- Employability - working with communities to remove any barriers to employment;
- Business Support – offering tailored assistance to respond to business needs.

Each priority is accompanied by a number of objectives and supporting actions that are set out in the strategy. Success measures have been identified to monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and help to provide a strong local economy within South Ribble.

The council successfully launched the Business Energy Efficiency (BEE) scheme in December 2022. The scheme offers businesses fully funded energy use audits and provides council grant support to enable businesses to implement the recommended energy saving (carbon reduction) measures. Applicants are processed as the energy audits are completed and will progress to grant stage until the identified budget (£200k) is depleted. The aim of the scheme is to prevent businesses from closing by supporting a reduction in their energy usage, which will reduce their business energy costs and reduce their carbon footprint, thereby contributing to the longer-term carbon reduction targets of the council.

The South Ribble Skills Factory was launched on the 'Business in South Ribble' website in February 2023 as a dedicated skills hub providing impartial advice, skills, training and recruitment support to businesses, and providing free skills, apprenticeship and employment support to residents of all ages across South Ribble. A skills and job matching website has also been created that matches businesses with local residents and tradespeople (e.g. plasterers, bricklayers, joiners etc) who are registered with the Skills Factory, and who are actively seeking work opportunities. Marketing materials have been created and the Skills Factory was showcased at the Lancashire Business Expo 2023, along with the launch of the Economic Strategy. To support businesses and people seeking jobs and careers information, the Skills Factory also attended apprentice and career expos over the month of March 2023. Going forward, the Skills Factory will develop the website and commission skills and employment support, raise the Skills Factory profile with more events and activities with partners, and support careers delivery in schools and encourage local businesses to sign up to the Lancashire Skills Pledge.

The council continues to progress the Leyland Town Deal following the decision received in October 2022 from central government (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – BEIS) to provide £25 million of grant funding, which has enabled the programme to be taken forward. Combined with the council's commitment of £13 million to the project, a total of £38 million will be invested in the project

Progress has also been made on the Penwortham Masterplan which was approved by Cabinet in November 2022. The approved plan includes works to Liverpool Road, Kingsfold and Middleforth commercial areas.



A BOROUGH WITH:
A choice of decent, affordable housing

**GOOD HOMES
 GREEN SPACES
 HEALTHY PLACES**

Commitment to protecting the local environment

A choice of quality recreational activities

Achievements

As part of the council's commitment to deliver affordable, quality homes to meet the needs of local communities, 15 affordable and energy efficient homes on the former McKenzie Arms site were

completed in April 2023. The homes meet all current space and energy standards which aim to give a high level of comfort, using very little energy for heating and cooling thereby providing a reduction in energy bills, excellent indoor air quality which will help alleviate allergies and respiratory problems and will work towards the Council's net zero carbon targets. The new homes will be let on an affordable rent basis through the Select Move system, with Progress Homes managing the properties on behalf of the council.

The development of the Jubilee Garden Extra Care Scheme has also progressed which aims to deliver 75 high quality affordable homes.

As part of the Council's continued investment in local green spaces and play areas, the council has continued to deliver a number of improvement schemes to enhance the quality and accessibility of play areas in South Ribble. The project has delivered improvements during the year including those at The Holme, Bamber Bridge, Moss Side Village Green and Birch Avenue, Penwortham, with further works planned for 2023/24 at other sites such as the playgrounds at Ryden Avenue (Leyland), Hutton, Longton, New Longton and King George V Playing Field Playground (Penwortham).

As part of the ongoing commitment to becoming carbon net-zero, protecting the local environment and addressing the issues of the climate emergency, work has progressed with a number of activities including the launch of the Biodiversity Action Plan consultation through Citizen Space to gather the views of residents and help shape the action plan to support biodiversity locally. The phase one installation of 19 on street electric vehicle resident charge points (OSRC) has been completed and is awaiting connection from the Distribution Network Operators (DNO). Additionally, a grant funding application for phase two OSRC has been submitted and if successful, will see an additional 21 electric vehicle charging points and 42 charging bays across the borough. The council has been successful in receiving £53K government funding which it has matched with a further £20K of council funding to support the development of an Air Quality school project. The project will allow a year group from each primary school to have a free 4-hour educational session at the Eco Centre focussing on air quality related activities. As part of the project, all primary schools in the borough, irrespective of wealth, geographic and demographic barriers, will have equal access to the Clean Air Crew website/messages and will help schools better promote air quality in their communities. In addition, the council has also met its ambitious target for tree planting with 28,586 trees planted in 2022/23.

As part of the Council's commitment to improve leisure facilities across the borough, progress has been made on both the decarbonisation and the leisure improvement programmes, including the commencement of enabling works, the installation of solar panels and LED lights and the delivery of heat source pumps and associated equipment to complete the decarbonisation works.

Worden Hall was reopened on 30 September 2022 following an investment of £2.8 million and marked the completion of extensive renovations to the grade II listed building at the heart of the award winning Worden Park. The refurbished Hall provides a new home for event and wedding spaces, community use spaces and a retail unit, along with a coffee house and delicatessen.

Performance of the Corporate Strategy Measures Outturn 2022/23

▲ Worse than target, outside threshold (5%)	● Worse than target but within threshold (5%)	★ Performance is better than target
---	---	-------------------------------------

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter (Reported)	Quarter 4 2022/23	Symbol	Trend
An Exemplary Council						
At least 40% of service requests will be received via self-service channels	Bigger is better	40%	32.30% (Q3:2022/23)	54.70%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
The percentage of households living in fuel poverty will be better than the North West average	Smaller is better	14.4%	10.8% (Q1:2021/22)	10.5% (Q1:2022/23)	★	Better than Q1 2021/22
More than 80% of customers will be satisfied with the service (Quarterly)	Bigger is better	80%	-	To be reported Q2 2023/24	-	-
Thriving Communities						
Number of new savers with Unify Credit Union in South Ribble (Cumulative)	Bigger is better	200	83* (Q3:2022/23)	104	▲	Better than Q4 2021/22
Number of claimants as a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64 in South Ribble will be lower than the North West average	Smaller is better	4.4%	2.4% (Q3: 2022/23)	2.4%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
Number of residents participating in activities delivered by the Council (Cumulative)	Bigger is better	400	6,259 (Q3:2022/23)	7,742	★	New for 2022/23
Number of people who have successfully completed basic digital skills training	Bigger is better	300	-	To be reported Q2 2023/24	-	-
The percentage of the population with NVQ level 3 or above will increase	Bigger is better	60.6%	53.1% (Q4:2021/22)	Data Unavailable	TBC	TBC
A fair local economy that works for everyone						
Overall employment rate greater than north west average	Bigger is better	73%	85.4% (Q3:2022/23)	84.7%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
% 16 -17year olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	Smaller is better	3.5%	2.6% (Q3:2022/23)	2.6%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22

The total social value delivered locally through the Social Value portal	Bigger is better	Target to be set 2022/23	£ 63,430.94 (Q3:2022/23)	£63,430.94	N/A	New for 2023/24
Median Workplace Earnings better than the National Average	Bigger is better	£642.00	-	£620.20	●	New for 2022/23
Median Earnings by Residence (residents of South Ribble) will be better than the National Average	Bigger is better	£642.20	-	£580.30	▲	New for 2022/23
Good homes green spaces healthy places						
The number of wellbeing sessions delivered by the Active Health Team (Cumulative)	Bigger is better	Target to be set 2022/23	1,854 (Q3:2022/23)	2,547	N/A	New for 2022/23
The number of people who are prevented from becoming homeless or have had their homelessness relieved (Cumulative)	Bigger is better	Monitor Trend	136 (Q3:2022/23)	181	N/A	Worse than Q4 2021/22
Number of affordable homes delivered	Bigger is better	80	55 (Q2:2022/23)	98	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
27,500 trees will be planted in the borough this year (Cumulative)	Bigger is better	27,500	3,778 (Q3:2022/23)	28,586	★	Worse than Q4 2021/22
The number of individuals who complete a health check (screening) by a member of the Active Health Team	Bigger is better	110	87 (Q3:2022/23)	149	★	New for 2022/23

Key Organisational Performance Measures

Indicator Name	Polarity	Target	Previous Quarter	Quarter 4 2022/23	Symbol	Trend
Number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter will be reduced	Smaller is Better	44	40 (Q3:2022/23)	44	★	Worse than Q4 2021/22
Number of accidents reported to Health and Safety from work related activity	Smaller is better	8	6 (Q3:2022/23)	4	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
Number of accidents reported to Health Safety Executive for work related activity (RIDDOR)	Smaller is better	4	2 (Q3:2022/23)	0	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
Number of near misses reported and acted upon	Bigger is better	1	1 (Q3:2022/23)	8	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
The average number of working days from Disabled Facilities grant referral received from LCC to application approved	Smaller is better	167 days	70 days (Q3:2022/23)	80 days	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
% planning applications decided within 13 weeks (major applications)	Bigger is better	80%	75% (Q3:2022/23)	66.6%	▲	Worse than Q4 2021/22
% planning applications decided within 8 weeks (minor / other applications)	Bigger is better	85%	96.10% (Q3:2022/23)	89.40%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
Percentage of calls to Gateway/Call Centre answered within 90 seconds	Bigger is better	40%	35.85% (Q3: 2022/23)	54.40%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
Percentage of calls to the Contact Centre (Gateway) abandoned	Smaller is better	15%	20.67% (Q3:2022/23)	23.80%	▲	Better than Q4 2021/22
Percentage of Council Tax collected (Cumulative YTD)	Bigger is better	96.46%	85.09% (Q3:2022/23)	96.78%	★	Better than Q4 2021/22
Percentage of Business Rates (Cumulative YTD)	Bigger is better	96.14%	81.20% (Q3:2022/23)	94.46%	●	Worse than Q4 2021/22

Financial Performance

Despite the financial challenges faced, the financial standing of the Council is robust, with sound budget setting and monitoring practices. The Council's 2022/23 Revenue Budget, Capital Programme, Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and Treasury Management Strategy were approved at the Council meeting on 23 February 2022. Thereafter, budget monitoring reports were submitted at quarterly intervals to the Cabinet. The reports are available on the Council's website.

In 2022/23, the Council set a balanced annual budget of £15.546 million.

The draft outturn report for 2022/23, approved by Cabinet on 21 June 2023, showed a net surplus of £0.290m. The report and appendices can be found here – [link](#)

The outturn position is summarised in the table below:

Directorate	Budget	Outturn	Variance (Under)/ Overspend
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Commercial Services	877	1,288	411
Communities	1,737	1,906	169
Customer & Digital	6,029	6,197	168
Governance	1,922	1,987	65
Planning & Development	1,313	1,305	(8)
Policy	2,538	2,514	(24)
Provision for repayment of debt	320	358	38
Interest payable / (receivable)	(56)	(869)	(813)
Parish Precepts	469	469	0
Pensions cost	226	228	2
Savings target	171	0	(171)
Funding Requirement	15,546	15,383	(163)
Funding	Budget	Outturn	Variance (Under)/ Overspend
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Tax	(8,633)	(8,633)	-
Lower Tier Support Grant	(269)	(269)	-
New Homes Bonus	(802)	(802)	-
Reserves	127	-	(127)
Retained Business Rates	(3,201)	(3,201)	-
Section 31 Government Grants	(2,768)	(2,768)	-
Total Funding	(15,546)	(15,673)	(127)
Net Outturn	-	(290)	(290)

It was approved to transfer the underspend to General Reserves.

The outturn position will be considered as part of future updates of the Council's MTFS to ensure that ongoing additional income, or reduced expenditure, is fully reflected in the strategy.

Over the last 13 years, as a consequence of central government's austerity measures to reduce overall public sector spending, the Council has seen significant changes in the way it is funded with the withdrawal of central government grants, including the revenue support grant, the provision of various non-recurring grants from year to year, and an annual, year on year extension to the Lancashire Business Rate Pooling arrangement (a temporary pilot scheme introduced in 2016/17 providing an increase in locally retained business rates, from which South Ribble Council currently benefits by approximately £1.576m per annum).

The financial outturn position for 2022/23 is reflective of a turbulent year; whilst pressures were expected in the recovery from the pandemic, these were exacerbated through the political and economic turmoil of the year; three Prime Ministers, the impact of the war in Ukraine, a deepening in the cost of living crisis, soaring energy prices and escalating rates of inflation and increases in interest rates.

Little movement has been made by the government in progressing their intention to significantly change the way in which councils are funded. Once again, local government has only been provided with a one-year settlement for 2023/24, with significant uncertainty regarding the income streams in future years.

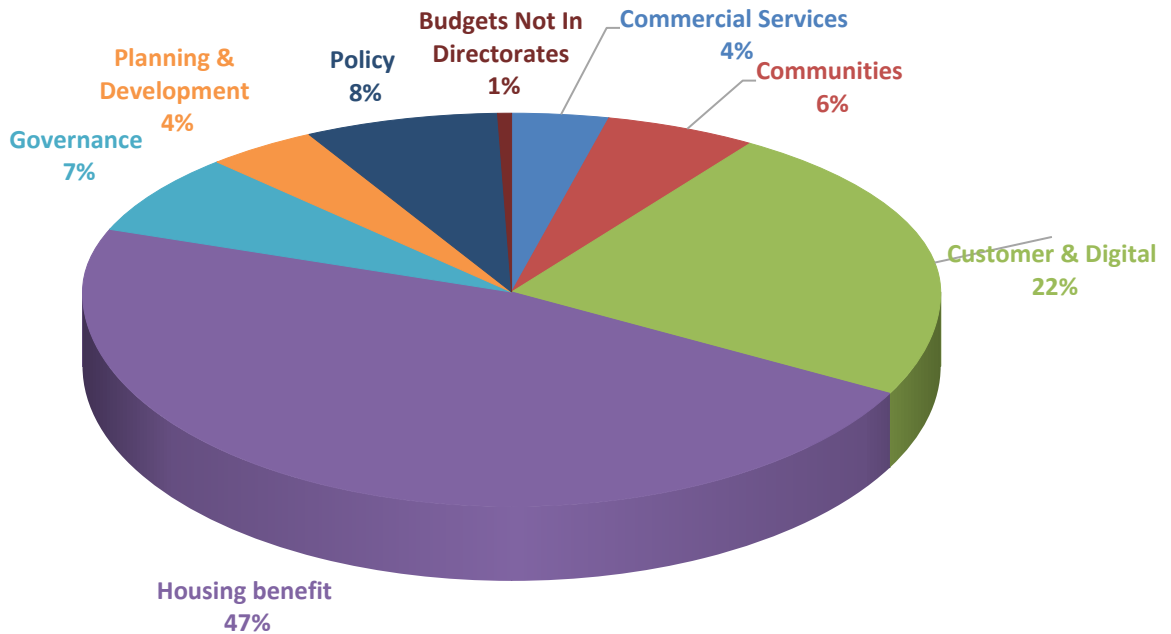
There is risk and uncertainty in relation to future years funding, not only because it is directly linked to growth in the borough, but also because it will be impacted by the outcome of the Fair Funding review which central government has said it will undertake, and any potential reset to the business rates retention system. The implementation of these has been delayed for several years now since 2017/18, firstly due to government's focus on Brexit and then due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst uncertainty remains, the MTFs and the assumptions on which this is based will be kept under regular review.

In light of this, and the fact that Council Tax and Business Rates are the major source of funding for local services, it is essential that all councils monitor their collection rates and raise as much income as possible. Any under recovery of income can have a significant impact on the ability of a Council to fund its service delivery. South Ribble Council continues to perform well in this area, despite the inflationary cost pressures experienced over the last year, escalating utility costs and the cost of living crisis impacting on businesses and residents, with collection rates of 96.78% for council tax and 94.46% for business rates in 2022/23. There is no room for complacency however, and these will be monitored closely as part of the Council's performance management framework during 2023/24.

The following charts show where the Council's money came from and how it was spent on services.

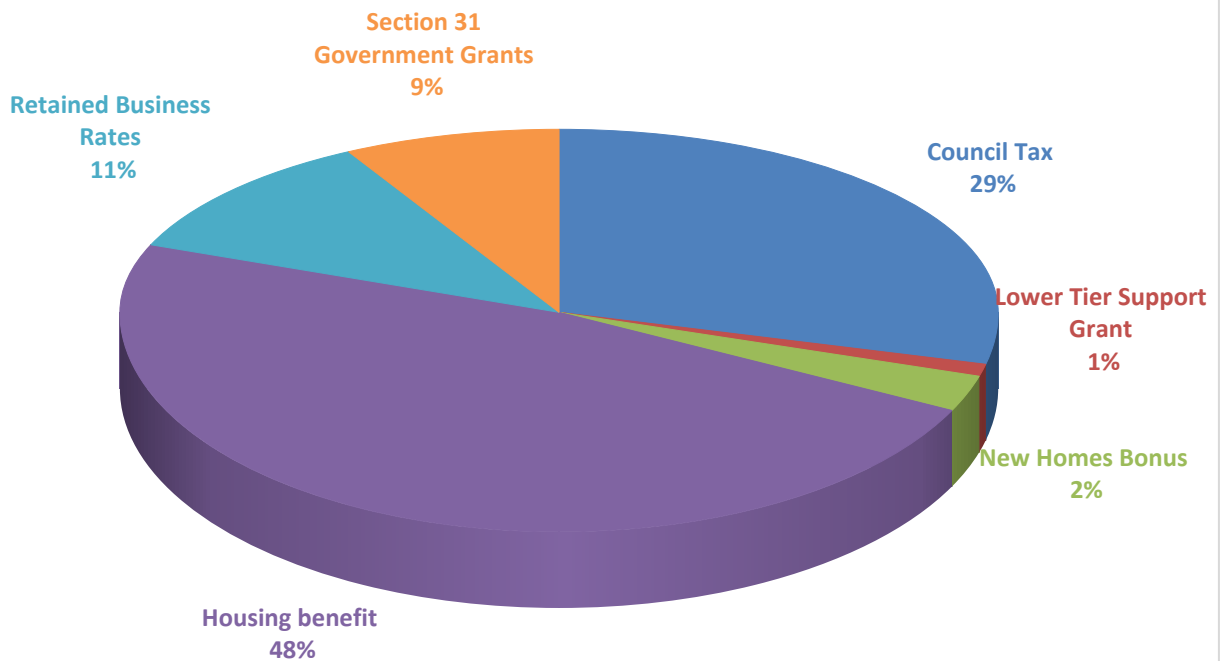
The gross expenditure for the Council is detailed in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. In 2022/23 it consisted of:

WHERE THE MONEY WAS SPENT



The gross income for the Council is disclosed in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. It consisted of:

WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM



Reserves and Balances

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy specifies that general balances should be maintained at or above £4.0m. This was achieved during 2022/23 and stands at £4.537m at the year end.

Total earmarked reserves for specific purposes were £16.634m as at 31 March 2023. A full list of these earmarked reserves, together with a description of the purpose of each, can be found at Note 11 to the statement of accounts.

It is considered this level of reserves is sufficient for the Council at present, but the Council will closely monitor its financial position and future budget planning to ensure it remains financially sustainable.

The following table shows the reconciliation between the reserves reported to Cabinet in the Outturn report in June 2023 and the movement for the year shown in the Expenditure and Funding Analysis (EFA), which forms Note 1 to the Statement of Accounts:

General Fund Reserves at 31 March 2023	£'000
Amounts as per Outturn Report: Earmarked Reserves	16,069
Final Transfers to/(from) Collection Fund Deficit Distribution Reserve	494
Final Transfers to/(from) Business Rates Retention Reserve	71
Subtotal	16,634
General Reserve	4,537
Amounts as per EFA (Note 1)	21,171

Capital Programme

In February 2022 the Council approved a 3-year capital strategy of £57.842m. This programme delivers a number of key projects to the benefit of the residents of South Ribble:

- Health, Leisure and Wellbeing Programme (£30.504m) - including decarbonisation and improvements to the council owned leisure centres, upgrades to key green infrastructure sites, completion of the Worden Hall refurbishment and investment in Worden Park, an extensive programme of works across other parks and open spaces in the borough and delivery of a new sports pitch hub with artificial grass pitches.
- Master planning and regeneration of key strategic sites (£5.587m)
- Housing (£16.878m) - the council has several large-scale projects to bring forward affordable housing in the borough including that at the former McKenzie Arms site and at Jubilee Gardens, which will provide 75 self-contained extra care units.
- Community Asset and Neighbourhood Improvements (£0.844m)
- Improved and updated ICT systems and technology (£1.488m) including mobile technology, replacement of Council service vehicles (£1.841m) and updates to the Civic Centre and corporate buildings (£0.700m).

The capital programme budget for 2022/23 approved by Council in February 2022 was £29.194m. With approved slippage from 2021/22, along with other changes to the programme during the year, the final budget was £13.555m.

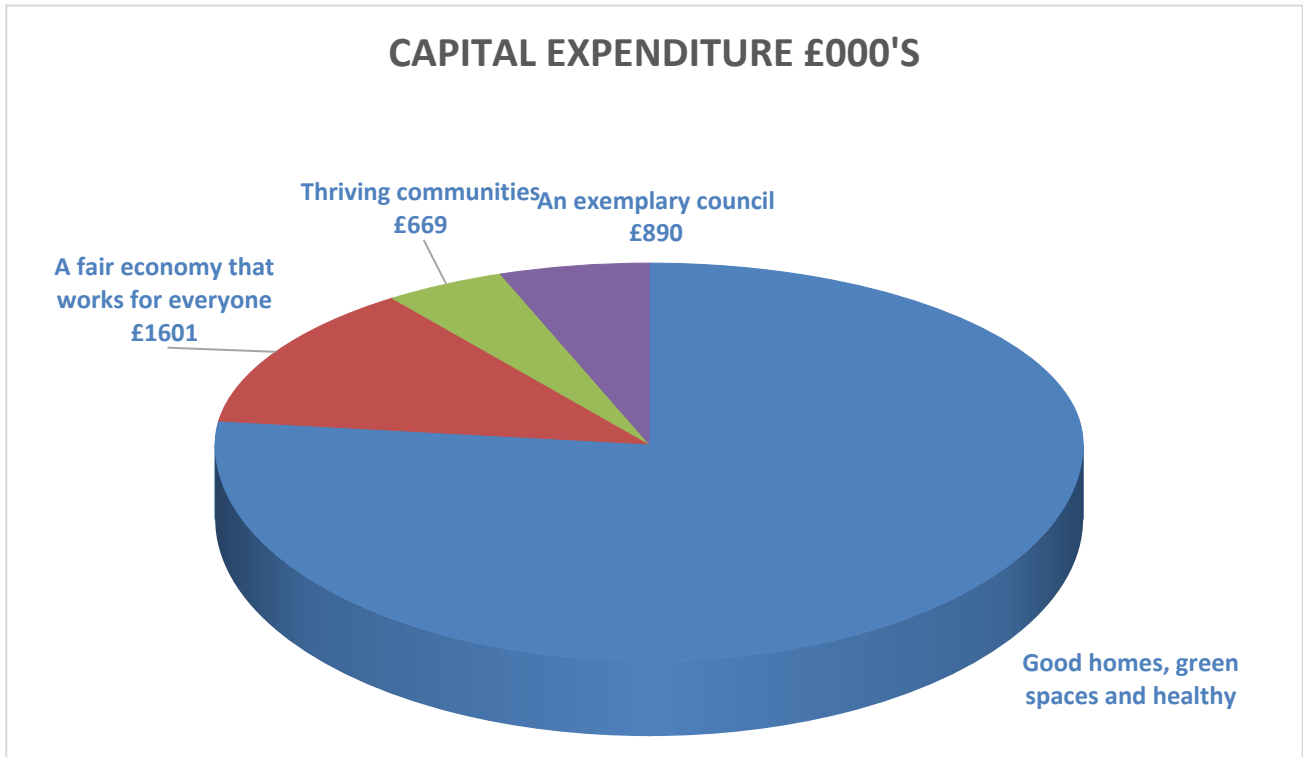
The draft outturn position of the 2022/23 capital programme is set out in the following table and outlined further in Appendix B of the outturn report approved by Cabinet on 21 June 2023. The report and appendices can be found here - [link](#)

Capital Programme Outturn 2022/23

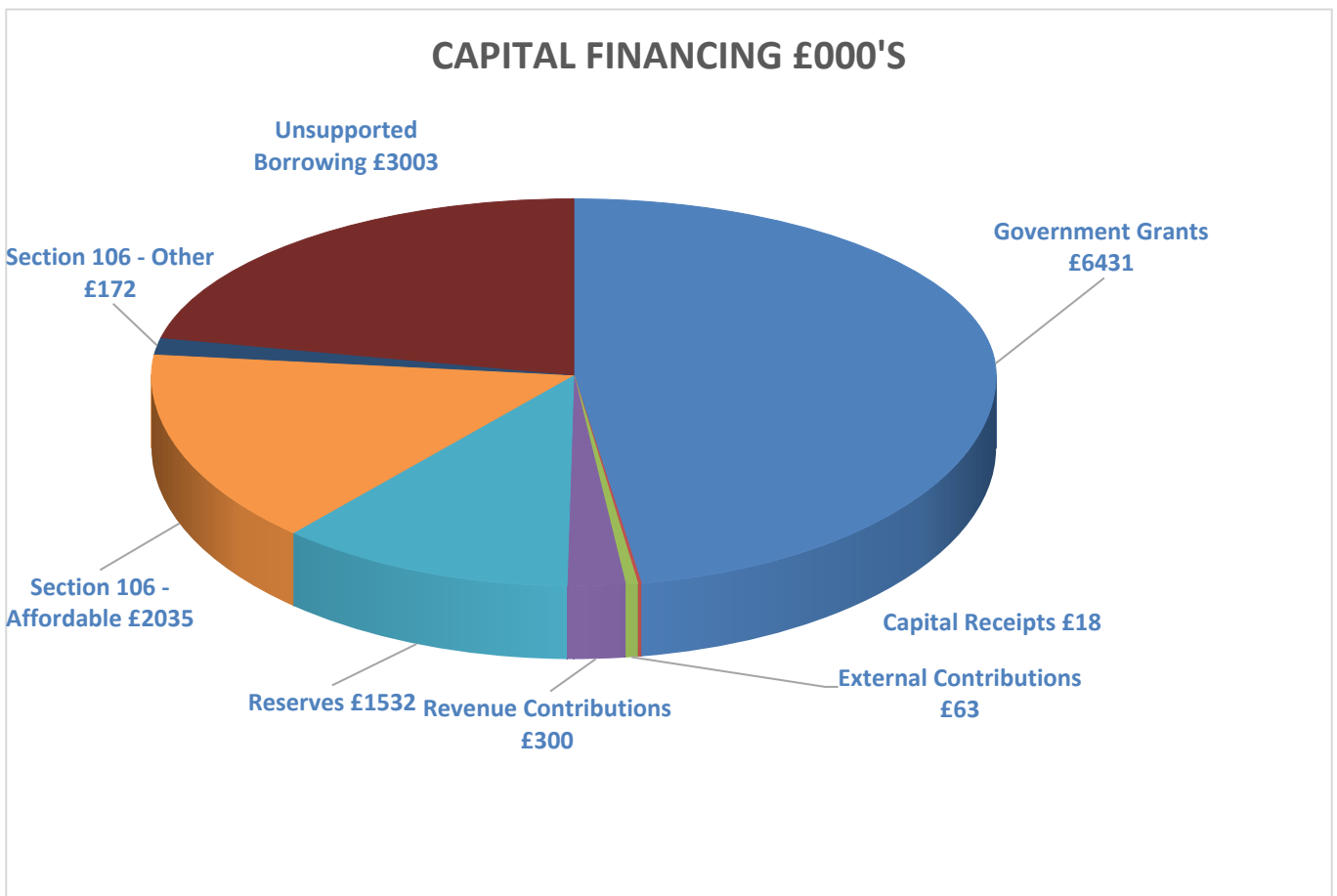
2022/23 Capital Programme

Scheme Name	Original Budget 2022/23	Revised Budget 2022/23	Slippage/ reprofiling of budget (to 23/24)/from 23/24	Outturn 2022/23
Good homes, green spaces and healthy places				
Green Links	731	651	(611)	40
Worden Park Total	1,172	1,217	355	1,572
Other Parks and Open Spaces Total	1,090	1,117	(418)	699
Sports and Leisure Total	7,369	13,972	(9,196)	4,776
Housing Total	10,408	10,459	(7,151)	3,308
Good homes, green spaces and healthy places	20,770	27,416	(17,021)	10,395
A fair economy that works for everyone				
A fair economy that works for everyone – incl Master Planning and regeneration, Town Deal RIBA Stage 3 and site acquisitions	4,587	5,989	(4,388)	1,601
Thriving communities				
Thriving communities – incl Leisure Local, St. Mary's, Penwortham, Churchyard and Vernon Carus Sports Club	846	2,237	(1,568)	669
An exemplary council				
IT Programme Total	1,288	1,288	(668)	620
Corporate Buildings	450	450	(250)	200
Vehicles and Plant replacement programme	1,253	1,253	(1,183)	70
An exemplary council	2,991	2,991	(2,101)	890
Total	29,194	38,633	(25,078)	13,555

A summary position of capital expenditure and capital financing is set out below.



The Council has financed this expenditure through a number of different sources outlined in the charts below.



The significant areas of spend on projects (over £20k) in 2022/23 are outlined below:

Project	2022/23 Outturn £'000
Good homes, green spaces and healthy places	
Green Infrastructure	25
Worden Hall Refurbishment	1,473
Worden Park – craft units and farmyard cottages	99
Hurst Grange Park - Coach House Phase 2 and paths	63
Playground – The Holme, Bamber Bridge	225
Playground – Moss Side Village Green	171
Playground – Birch Avenue, Penwortham	144
Playground - Withy Grove and Gregson Lane	28
A Tree for every Resident	29
Sports Pitch Hub	1,643
Leisure Centres – refurbishment and decarbonisation works	3,131
Affordable Housing – McKenzie Arms	1,912
Disabled Facilities Grants	679
Extra Care Scheme	629
Private Sector Improvement Grants	75
A fair economy that works for everyone	
Car park resurfacing, Ryefield Avenue, Penwortham	43
Works to Church Road, Bamber Bridge	36
Site Acquisitions	1,129
Town Deal RIBA Stage 3	344
Thriving Communities	
Leisure Local	164
Fox Lane Sports and Social Club	118
Gregson Lane Community Centre Grant	150
Neighbourhood Improvements	220
An Exemplary Council	
Mobile devices, Citrix, CCTV, software and Cloud-based upgrades	540
Network switching and wireless infrastructure	78
Corporate buildings	199
Vehicle Replacement Programme	70

Treasury Management

The treasury operations of the Council are conducted in accordance with its annual Treasury Strategy. This document identifies the investment and borrowing policies of the Council over a three-year period specifying, amongst other things, the criteria for investment counterparties, the maximum duration and amount of investments, and the need for borrowing.

The key facts for 2022/23 were:

- Investments were held for the short-term in call accounts and money market funds. The maximum period permitted by the Council's Treasury Strategy for term deposits in banks and building societies is one year.
- Investment returns dropped to historically low levels during 2020/21 and 2021/22, however from a rate of 0.75% in April 2022, there were a number of increases over the course of the year and as at March 2023 the Bank of England base rate stood at 4.25%. The average cash balance invested during the year was £37.060m at an average rate of 1.64% and generated £0.595m of interest over the 12 month period.
- There was an increase of £1.694m in the underlying Prudential Borrowing requirement from funding the capital programme. In accordance with the approved Borrowing Strategy, this was funded by the use of internal balances and no external borrowing was entered into.

Note 18 – Financial Instruments presents details of treasury operations and the management of risk.

Pension Fund Liability

The pension fund has seen a movement of £43.645m during the year, from a deficit of £31.160m at the end of 2021/22 to a surplus of £12.485m at the end of 2022/23. This reflects the value of assets invested in the pension fund, offset by the value of pension liabilities which the Council is required to pay in the future when they fall due.

The Council's pension fund must be revalued every three years to set future contributions into the fund. The latest valuation was undertaken in 2022 which reported a funding level in the council's pension fund of 112%. Given the surplus position of the fund, the Council no longer requires the deficit recovery plan that was previously in place with the Administering Authority to maintain a 100% funding level and which had required additional Deficit Recovery Contributions over a number of years.

This surplus figure is an estimate, being the actuary's assessment of the present value of the current assets and anticipated future receipts of the fund, less the liabilities to be met over a long period. Note 36 presents detailed information about the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.

Strategic Risk Register

Risk management is a cornerstone of good corporate governance and the Council has established a system of risk management which involves the creation of risk registers at a strategic level, service level and individual project levels. Compiling the Strategic Risk Register requires a collective effort involving Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to identify the key strategic risk issues facing the Council.

The Strategic Risk Register is stored and managed within the Council's risk management system GRACE. SLT are responsible for identifying, owning, monitoring and mitigating strategic risks ensuring that any actions against each risk are completed.

The GRACE system also contains separate risk registers for individual projects and service level risk registers owned and controlled by individual services managers and project managers. All strategic risks are now contained and embedded within the GRACE system and are reviewed to inform the latest position. All risks are stored within the GRACE system and are scored on a 4x4 risk matrix as outlined below:

Major	4	4 Low	8 Medium	12 High	16 High
Serious	3	3 Low	6 Medium	9 Medium	12 High
Minor	2	2 Low	4 Low	6 Medium	8 Medium
Insignificant	1	1 Low	2 Low	3 Low	4 Low
		1	2	3	4
		Rarely – there is a slight possibility that the event will occur	Unlikely- there is a possibility that the event will occur or there is a history of occasional occurrence within the authority	Likely – There is a strong possibility that the event will occur or there is history or regular occurrence within the Authority	Highly likely -there is little doubt that the event will occur

The risk register is reported to the Governance Committee on an annual basis, setting out changes over the last 12 months, existing control measures and planned actions to mitigate risk. The latest Corporate Risk Register was reported to Governance Committee on 8 August 2023, the full report can be found here [link](#), and provides members with an update on the 16 strategic risks to the council that have been monitored over the last 12 months, including actions that are in progress, as well as new actions planned to further mitigate the risks identified.

Many of the highest scoring risks focus on delivering Council priorities, including service delivery, large scale capital projects, new ways of working, and working with strategic partners to deliver outcomes. There are challenges facing the organisation in relation to budgetary pressures and financial uncertainty in relation to the current national economic context that we will have to continue to address to meet the demand for services and needs of residents. ICT and cyber security also remain a high risk to the council due to the potential impact on service delivery and reputational damage. There are strong control measures in place to mitigate these risks, including as part of the council’s governance framework and budget setting and monitoring processes.

The highest scoring risk, with an inherent risk score of 16 and residual risk score of 12 is; financial risk, which has been referred to in the report, i.e. *R03 - Reduction in current funding streams (including government grant and key public sector and third party partners) or increase in costs as a result of inflation.*

Existing control measures and planned actions to help further mitigate risk are detailed in the report presented to the Governance Committee.

The latest review of the risk register identified the following changes from the last review:

- An increase to the residual risk of R03 - Poor Financial Sustainability from 9 (medium) to 12 (high). This is to reflect ongoing financial pressures including ongoing uncertainty of funding from central government, high inflation and unfunded pay awards;
- Reduction of the risk score for R05 - Failure to Respond to External Legislation and Policy Change. This has changed from 12 (inherent risk) to 9 and 8 (residual risk) to 6 and reflects the reduced risk from large external changes that would impact directorates across the council (such as BREXIT/ GDPR etc.)
- Reduction to the residual risk of R06 - Staff Capacity and Skills, from 12 (high) to 9 (medium) to reflect that whilst recruitment is still a large challenge, there has been some success in recent recruitment and through alternative strategies such as 'grow our own.' The scoring still reflects that the view that this is still a high risk and would have a serious impact if mitigations put in place are unsuccessful.
- Change to the title of R04 from 'poor management of capital programme and capital funding' to 'failure to realise the value of large investments.' This is to better reflect the current risks around the capital programme, including the impact of the current high rates of inflation.
- Removal of references to Covid-19 from all risk descriptions to reflect that this is no longer a key risk to the council.

A summary of the latest risks for 2023 are below;

Risk	Risk Description	Inherent Risk Score	Residual Risk Score	Target Risk Level
R01 Incidents Impacting Service Delivery	The ability of the council to continue its service delivery is either halted or scaled back as a result of major incidents	12	9	4
R02 Failure to Deliver Outcomes through Strategic Partnerships	Failure to achieve desired outcomes through strategic relationships including City Deal	12	9	4
R03 Poor Financial Sustainability	Reduction in current funding streams (including government grant and key public sector and third party partners) or increase in costs as a result of inflation.	16	12	6
R04 Failure to realise the value of major investments	Failure to realise the value of large scale investments linked to the capital programme delivery and oversight	12	9	4
R05 Not Responding to External Legislation and Policy Change	Failure to account for and/or respond to external legislation and policy change for example those brought about by BREXIT, Universal Credit, GDPR, local government transformation, green agenda	9	6	4

R06 Staff Capacity and Skills	Lack of staff capacity and/or skills (including as a result of issues in relation to recruitment) to enable service delivery or for the Council to deliver large scale capital projects to support the Corporate Strategy.	16	9	4
R07 ICT Security and Data Protection	Failure to comply with GDPR regulations and data legislation leading to action taken against the council, including reputation and legal action resulting in fines.	12	8	4
R08 Failure to Act to Address Climate Change	Failure to act successfully to meet commitments made by the Council to address climate change, alongside the risk of negative impacts on our communities as a result of the Climate Emergency.	12	9	6
R09 Not Adapting to New Ways of Working	Failure to adapt business models and services to reflect changes in the way people interact and do business with the council.	12	6	4
R10 Low Staff Satisfaction and Morale	Reduction in staff satisfaction and morale with the Council including increase in sickness absence	12	6	4
R11 Detrimental Impact of Brexit	Potential detrimental impact of Brexit upon service delivery or costs	9	6	4
R12 Corporate Governance Failure	Failure to implement and maintain the corporate governance framework action plan leading to continued fundamental weaknesses in internal controls	9	6	4
R13 Breakdown in Political Relationships	Failure to maintain political stability and Officer-Member relationships with each party, alongside good open relationships between parties	9	6	4
R14 Damage to the Council's Reputation	Damage to the Council's reputation and potential reduction in resident satisfaction	9	4	4
R15 Failure Shared Service Arrangements	Failure of existing shared service arrangements/failure to expand shared service arrangements	9	4	1
R16 Council Underperformance	Failure to sustain performance of Corporate Strategy projects and general organisational performance	12	6	2

Outlook for the Future

The fact that for 2023/24, yet again, we have only received a one year settlement has exacerbated the uncertainty and the risk in our medium term financial planning; in the absence of any figures or framework from Government, it has been almost impossible to prepare a credible financial strategy beyond 31 March 2024 with any degree of confidence in the underlying assumptions. Uncertainty prevails in respect of:

- the development and implementation of a new Fair Funding Review;
- changes to the Business Rates Retention Scheme;
- the funding changes linked to the government's 'levelling up' agenda and shared prosperity funds;
- devolution and potential local government reorganisation;
- the impact of the cost of living crisis driven by rising inflation and interest rates and increases in the cost of utilities driven by the war in Ukraine and;
- the social, economic and financial impacts as we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Local Government Financial Settlement for 2023/24 represents a holding position' until the next Parliament, aiming for stability in local government finances over the next two years. The ruling out of a business rates reset or a fair funding review in this period means that the funding distribution will stay fairly stable, however the questions about the future of the funding system remain unaddressed.

Within this financial context the Council updated its MTFS in March 2023 to reflect its new corporate priorities, as approved at the Council meeting in November 2022, and for changes in funding and expenditure. Gaps between the budget required and the likely funding available were approved by Full Council, based on assumptions on prudent economic growth and Council Tax increases in 2024/25 and 2025/26 to progress towards a balanced three year Medium Term Financial Strategy. There are however savings that will be required over the next couple of years due to the anticipated impact of changes in government funding and unfunded inflationary and other cost pressures. The Council continues to develop and refine its savings plan to close the budget gap through the delivery of savings and the generation of additional income. The MTFS is kept under constant review in order to take account of changes in demand and/or funding that may impact on the financial position going forward.

Further efficiencies, savings and income generation opportunities will continue to be progressed, options for delivery developed and updates provided to the Cabinet at regular intervals.

The Council is in a potentially high growth area for housing and business. As such it needs to manage this growth to ensure that the Council services and the wider infrastructure are reshaped accordingly.

To deliver this the Council has embarked on an ambitious capital programme utilising a combination of its own reserves, external funds and also borrowing, where an appropriate business case supports repayment of the debt, to facilitate this transformational programme for its residents.

Going Concern

South Ribble Borough Council's MTFS outlines the strategies it will pursue to meet current and future funding shortfalls. A balanced budget for 2023/24 has been approved and there is no reason to believe that the budget gap identified in the Council's budget in future years will not be entirely mitigated through sound financial planning and the delivery of the savings plan. As such, it is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of these financial statements.

Further Information

If you would like to receive any further information about these accounts, please do not hesitate to contact South Ribble Borough Council on 01772 625625, by email at info@southribble.gov.uk or by post at the Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1DH.

Introduction to the Statement of Accounts

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (as amended) require the council to produce a Statement of Accounts for each financial year.

This Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (The Code), which is based on International Financial Reporting Standards.

The Statement of Accounts contain a number of sections and statements and these are explained below:

STATEMENTS TO THE ACCOUNTS

- Page 34 **The Independent Auditor’s Report** – This gives the auditor’s opinion of the financial statements and of the council’s arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources.
- Page 40 **Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts** – This summarises the responsibilities of the council and the Chief Finance Officer in relation to the Statement of Accounts.
- Page 111 **The Annual Governance Statement** – The council is required to conduct an annual review of the effectiveness of its system of corporate governance and to publish a statement on the adequacy of the system with its annual accounts. This statement is referred to as the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). The AGS explains our governance arrangements, the review of the governance framework against the Local Code of Governance and future plans to improve and strengthen the governance environment.

CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The core financial statements consist of the following:

- Page 41 **Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement** – This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.
- Page 42 **Movement in Reserves Statement** – Levels of reserves, and movements therein, are indicators of the financial strength of the organisation. This statement distinguishes usable from unusable reserves. The distinction is explained in the Balance Sheet comment below.
- The Movement in Reserves Statement shows the surplus or deficit arising in the year on the Provision of Service. This is the true economic cost of providing the authority’s services (as detailed in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement). For the purposes of council tax setting, however, a series of statutory adjustments are then made, resulting in a line entitled “Increase/Decrease in year”.
- Page 43 **The Balance Sheet** – this shows the value of the assets and liabilities recognised by the authority. The total of these, the Net Assets, is matched by the authority’s reserves, as shown in the lower part of the Balance Sheet.

Reserves are categorised into “Usable”, i.e. available to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation, and “Unusable”. The latter includes the Revaluation Reserve (holding

unrealised gains in property values), and other reserves holding amounts arising from differences between the accounting basis used in compiling the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the statutory basis prescribed for taxation purposes.

Page 44 **Cash Flow Statement** – this shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents during the reporting period. It shows how cash and cash equivalents are generated and used by classifying cash flows into operating, investment and financing activities.

Page 45 **Notes to the Main Financial Statements** – these add to and interpret the individual statements.

SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Page 107 **Collection Fund** – this is an agents statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to record transactions relating to the collection of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates, and their distribution to precepting authorities, the Government, and the council itself.

Page 108 **Notes to the Collection Fund** – these add to and interpret the Collection Fund statement.

The Independent Auditor's Report

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Statement of Responsibilities

This statement defines the responsibilities of the council and the Responsible Financial Officer in respect of the council's financial affairs.

The council's Responsibilities

The council shall:

- Make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this council, that officer is the Director of Finance/S151.
- Manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.
- Approve the Statement of Accounts.

The Chief Financial Officer's Responsibilities

The Chief Finance Officer (Director of Finance/S151 Officer). is responsible for the preparation of the Authority's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (the Code).

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

- Selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently;
- Made judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Complied with the local authority Code;
- Kept proper accounting records which are up to date; and
- Taken reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Further Information

Further information about the accounts is available from the Shared Financial Services Team, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 1DH

Certification

I certify that the Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the financial position of South Ribble Borough Council as at 31 March 2023 and its Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Louise Mattinson
Director Finance Officer

Date: 10th August 2023

CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

This statement shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. This is not the amount to be funded from taxation, since authorities raise taxation to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations. The taxation position is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

2021/22				Note	2022/23		
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000			Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
9,284	(1,536)	7,748	Commercial Services		6,325	(871)	5,454
3,740	(1,299)	2,441	Communities		5,515	(1,864)	3,651
26,195	(18,041)	8,154	Customer & Digital		25,965	(17,815)	8,150
3,599	(1,627)	1,972	Governance		3,831	(1,445)	2,386
5,368	(5,251)	117	Planning & Development		7,363	(4,973)	2,390
2,919	(740)	2,179	Policy		3,496	(875)	2,621
2,684	(2,670)	14	Budgets Not in Directorates		1,190	(1,510)	(320)
53,789	(31,164)	22,625	Cost of Services		53,685	(29,353)	24,332
478	(185)	293	Other operating expenditure	12	469	(188)	281
2,547	(3,404)	(857)	Financing and investment income and expenditure	13	4,163	(5,272)	(1,109)
10,977	(31,821)	(20,844)	Taxation and non-specific grant income	14	10,604	(37,935)	(27,331)
67,791	(66,574)	1,217	(Surplus) / deficit on provision of services		68,921	(72,748)	(3,827)
		273	(Surplus)/deficit on revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment				(2,189)
		(13,019)	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability	36d			(48,283)
		(12,746)	Other Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure				(50,472)
		(11,529)	Total Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure				(54,299)

Movement in Reserves Statement

This statement shows the movements in the year on the different reserves held by the council, analysed between those that are “usable” (available to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation), and other reserves.

The line “(Surplus)/deficit on provision of services” shows the true economic cost of providing the authority’s services, as detailed in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. For the purposes of council tax setting however, a series of statutory adjustments are then made. These adjustments are shown in total below, and are also detailed in Note 10.

	General Fund £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2021	(26,913)	0	(8,283)	(35,196)	2,899	(32,297)
<u>Movements in 2021/22</u>						
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure	1,217	0	0	1,217	(12,746)	(11,529)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis (note 10)	1,275	0	(2,350)	(1,075)	1,075	0
(Increase) / Decrease in year	2,492	0	(2,350)	142	(11,671)	(11,529)
Balance at 31 March 2022	(24,421)	0	(10,633)	(35,054)	(8,772)	(43,826)
<u>Movements in 2022/23</u>						
Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure	(3,827)	0	0	(3,827)	(50,473)	(54,300)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis (note 10)	7,077	(170)	(1,781)	5,126	(5,126)	0
(Increase) / Decrease in year	3,250	(170)	(1,781)	1,299	(55,599)	(54,300)
Balance at 31 March 2023	(21,171)	(170)	(12,414)	(33,755)	(64,371)	(98,126)

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the authority. It shows the net assets of the authority which are matched by the reserves held. Reserves are reported in two categories. 'Usable Reserves' includes reserves available to provide services and other reserves which may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt. 'Unusable Reserves' fall into two categories. The first consists of the Revaluation Reserve which holds unrealised gains and losses in asset values. The second category holds amounts resulting from the "adjustments between the accounting basis and the funding basis", as shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement (MiRS).

31 March 2022 £'000		Notes	31 March 2023 £'000
36,374	Property, Plant & Equipment	15	47,031
11,159	Investment Property	16	10,741
112	Intangible Assets	17	55
186	Long Term Debtors	18	182
0	Other Long-Term Assets – pensions	36	12,982
47,831	Long Term Assets		70,991
34,026	Short Term Investments	18	27,660
114	Inventories	19	0
6,631	Short Term Debtors	20	8,369
21,272	Cash and Cash Equivalents	21	8,586
62,043	Current Assets		44,615
(31,306)	Short Term Creditors	22	(15,396)
(2,351)	Provisions	23	(1,737)
(33,657)	Current Liabilities		(17,133)
(152)	Long Term Creditors	18	(133)
(31,160)	Net Pension Liability	36	0
(1,078)	Grant Receipts in Advance - Capital	32	(215)
(32,390)	Long Term Liabilities		(348)
43,827	Net Assets		98,125
(35,054)	Usable Reserves	24 & MiRS	(33,754)
(8,773)	Unusable Reserves	25	(64,371)
(43,827)	Total Reserves		(98,125)

The unaudited accounts were authorised for issue on 10th August 2023.



Louise Mattinson
Director of Finance
10 August 2023

Cash Flow Statement

This shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents during the reporting period. It shows how cash and cash equivalents are generated and used by classifying cash flows into operating, investment and financing activities.

2021/22 £'000		Note	2022/23 £'000
(1,217)	Net surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services (Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement)	CIES	3,827
15,051	Adjustments to net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	26a	(10,131)
(5,969)	Adjustment for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities	26b	(11,533)
7,865	Net cash flows from Operating Activities	26	(17,837)
(5,262)	Investing Activities	27	4,190
3,521	Financing Activities	28	961
6,124	Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents		(12,686)
15,148	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		21,272
21,272	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	21	8,586

Notes to the Main Financial Statements

NOTE: values throughout these accounts are presented rounded to whole numbers (usually thousands or millions of pounds). Totals in supporting tables and notes may appear not to exactly match to the Core Financial Statements or other tables, due to rounding differences.

1. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis Note, which is a note to the core financial statements, shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) by local authorities in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's directorates.

Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). More information on the adjustments between expenditure charged to the General Fund and the CIES is provided in Notes 8 and 10.

2021/22				2022/23		
Net Expenditure chargeable to the General Fund Balance £'000	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (note 8 and 10) £'000	Net Expenditure in the CIES £'000		Net Expenditure chargeable to the General Fund Balance £'000	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (note 8 and 10) £'000	Net Expenditure in the CIES £'000
1,576	6,172	7,748	Commercial Services	5,120	334	5,454
1,402	1,039	2,441	Communities	(403)	4,054	3,651
5,793	2,361	8,154	Customer & Digital	6,675	1,475	8,150
1,696	276	1,972	Governance	678	1,708	2,386
(36)	153	117	Planning & Development	2,106	284	2,390
2,211	(32)	2,179	Policy	1,944	677	2,621
(570)	584	14	Budgets Not in Directorates	(459)	139	(320)
12,072	10,553	22,625	Net cost of Service	15,661	8,671	24,332
(9,579)	(11,829)	(21,408)	Other Income and Expenditure	(12,412)	(15,747)	(28,159)
2,493	(1,276)	1,217	(Surplus) / Deficit in year	3,249	(7,076)	(3,827)
(26,913)			Opening General Fund Balance at 1 April	(24,420)		
2,493			Add (Surplus) / Less Deficit on General Fund Balance in Year	3,249		
(24,420)			Closing General Fund Balance at 31 March	(21,171)		

2. Accounting Policies

General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the council's transactions for the 2022/23 financial year and its position at the year end of 31 March 2023. The council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 which require the accounts to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy 2022/23 Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code), supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

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

Accruals of Income and Expenditure (Revenue Recognition)

The Income and Costs of the council are accounted for in the period to which they relate, regardless of when the cash is paid or received. In particular:

- Revenue from contracts with service recipients, whether for services or the provision of goods, is recognised when (or as) the goods or services are transferred to the service recipient in accordance with the performance obligations in the contract.
- Revenue from Council Tax and Business Rates is measured at the full amount receivable (net of impairment losses) as they are non-contractual, non-exchange transactions. Revenue from non-exchange transactions shall be recognised when it is probable that the economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the authority, and the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably.
- 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.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and Cash Equivalents are shown net of bank overdrafts, where applicable, that are repayable on demand.

- Cash consists of cash in hand and deposits repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours.
- Cash Equivalents consist of highly liquid investments which mature in less than three months from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services, support services and trading accounts are debited with depreciation charges, revaluation and impairment losses in excess of accumulated revaluation gains, and amortisation charges in respect of intangible assets.

The Authority is not required to raise council tax to meet these charges. Instead it has 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 and amortisation are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund Balance (the Minimum Revenue Provision), by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates

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

Accounting for Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates

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

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

Contingent Assets and Liabilities

These are assets and liabilities arising from past events the existence of which will only be confirmed by future events not wholly within the council's control. They are disclosed in the notes to the main financial statements. See Note 37 to the accounts.

Exceptional Items

When items of income or 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 main financial statements, depending on their significance.

Employee Benefits

Benefits payable during employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled wholly 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 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, e.g. 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 entitlements are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination benefits

These are amounts payable as a result of a decision to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date, or a decision to accept voluntary redundancy. The costs are recognised when the council commits itself to terminate the employment of an officer or group of officers, or makes an offer to encourage voluntary redundancy. The charge is made to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme which provides defined benefits to those members. Full details of transactions are given in Note 36 to the accounts. The following notes explain the methodology.

The liabilities of the fund attributable to the Authority are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates etc. and projections of earnings for current employees.

Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate for the year (based on the indicative rate of return on high quality corporate bonds).

The assets of the 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 net pension liability is analysed into the following components:

Service cost comprising:

- current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – 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 will be 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 i.e. net interest expense for the council - the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability 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 at the beginning of the period, taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments;

Re-measurement comprising:

- the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability – 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 pension fund:

- cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense

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

Discretionary Benefits

The Authority also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities thus arising 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.

Events after the Reporting Period

Where an event occurs after the Balance Sheet date and it provides evidence of conditions that existed at the Balance Sheet date, the amounts recognised in the Statement of Accounts relating to this are adjusted.

Where an event that occurs after the Balance Sheet date is indicative of conditions that arose after the Balance Sheet date, the amounts recognised in the Statement of Accounts are not adjusted. The "non-adjusting event", and an estimate of the financial effect, is however disclosed in the notes to the main financial statements.

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

Financial Instruments

Financial Liabilities

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value and carried at their amortised cost. The annual charge to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) is based on the carrying amount multiplied by the effective rate of interest. The amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal payable plus interest accrued at 31 March.

Gains or losses on premature redemption are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement unless they are the result of a restructure that involves the modification or exchange of existing instruments, in which case they are added to the amortised cost and charged over the life of the modified or exchanged loan. Where charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, regulations require discounts to be amortised over the shorter of the life of the original loan or ten years. Greater discretion applies to premia, they can be amortised over the life of the original or replacement loan, or a shorter period. A transfer is done from the General Fund Balance to the Financial Instruments Adjustment Account to give effect to these regulations.

Financial Assets

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. The annual credit to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is based on the carrying amount multiplied by the effective rate of interest. The amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable plus interest accrued at 31 March.

The authority recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets measured at amortised cost, either on a 12-month or lifetime basis. The expected credit loss model also applies to lease receivables and contract assets. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the authority. Where a financial asset measured at amortised cost is identified as being subject to an expected credit loss, this shall be recognised as an impairment and the loss charged to Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Going Concern

The accounts have been prepared on the assumption that the council will continue in existence for the foreseeable future. Transfers of services under combinations of public sector bodies (such as local government reorganisation) do not negate the presumption of going concern.

Government Grants and Other Contributions

Government grants and other contributions for both revenue and capital purposes are accounted for on an accruals basis and recognised in the accounts when the conditions for their receipt have been complied with. If compliance has not been achieved, cash received is held on the Balance Sheet as a long term creditor.

The postings in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement relating to capital grants and contributions are reversed out of the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. If the monies have not been used they are credited to the Grants Unapplied Reserve. If they have been applied to fund capital expenditure they are credited to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The Authority has elected to charge a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The levy will be charged on new builds with appropriate planning consent. The Authority charges for and collects the levy, which is a planning charge. The levy income will be used to fund a number of infrastructure projects to support the development of the area. CIL received is limited by regulations. It is therefore recognised at the commencement date of the development in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in accordance with the above core accounting policy for grants and contributions. CIL charges will be largely to fund capital expenditure with a small proportion used to fund revenue.

Intangible assets

Expenditure on assets that do not have physical substance but are identifiable and controlled by the council (e.g. software licences), is capitalised at cost if it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow to the council for more than one financial year. Internally generated assets are capitalised where it is demonstrated that these will generate future economic benefits or service potential for the council.

The cost is amortised over the economic life to reflect the pattern of consumption. The charge is made to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The postings in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are reversed from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and charged to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Inventories and Long term Contracts

Inventories are included in the Balance Sheet at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The cost of inventories is assigned using the First In First Out (FIFO) costing formula. 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.

Investment Properties

Investment properties are those held solely to earn rentals or for capital appreciation. They are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value. Valuations are provided by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)-qualified valuers, are on the basis recommended by CIPFA, and accord with the Statement of Asset Valuation Principles and Guidance Notes issued by the RICS. They are not depreciated but are re-valued annually. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal. Gains and losses on revaluation and disposal are not permitted by statute to impact on the council tax. A reversal is therefore done between the General Fund Balance and the Capital Adjustment Account (or, in the case of sale proceeds exceeding £10,000, to the Capital Receipts Reserve).

Operating income and expenditure from investment properties are charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Leasing

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the asset from the lessor to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases. If the lease covers both land and buildings, then the land and building elements are considered separately for classification.

Assets 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

Finance leases

An asset held under a finance lease is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the inception of the lease (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset is matched by a liability, being the obligation to the lessor. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred. Lease payments are split between a finance charge, charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, and the principal element, applied to write down the lease liability. Assets held under a finance lease will be subject to depreciation and revaluation in the same way as any other asset.

Operating leases

Rentals are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as an expense of the service benefitting from the asset.

The Authority as lessor

Finance leases

Where the Authority grants a finance lease over an asset, it is written out of the Balance Sheet and charged to the "gain or loss on disposals" line in Other Operating Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The Authority's net investment in the lease is credited to the same line, matched by a Long Term Debtor in the Balance Sheet. Lease rental receipts are split between finance income (credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement), and the principal element applied to write down the Long Term Debtor.

Operating leases

Where the Authority grant an operating lease over an asset it remains on the Balance Sheet, and the income is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. See Note 35 to the accounts.

Non-Current Assets Held for Sale

Accounting treatment is detailed in the Property Plant and Equipment, Disposal and Non-Current Assets Held for Sale policy.

Overheads

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

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 estimates are accounted for prospectively, i.e. in the current and future years affected by the change, and do not give rise to a prior period adjustment. Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practice or if the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions on the council's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made it is applied retrospectively by adjusting opening balances and comparative amounts from prior periods. Material errors will also require a prior period adjustment. Material errors discovered in prior period figures are corrected retrospectively by amending opening balances and comparative amounts for the period.

Property Plant and Equipment (PPE)

All expenditure on the acquisition, creation, or enhancement of fixed assets is capitalised on an accruals basis in the accounts provided it exceeds the 'de minimis' threshold of £10,000 and provides benefits to the council for a period of more than one year.

Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising the purchase price, and 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 the council. Should they be incurred, the Authority would capitalise borrowing costs incurred whilst major assets are under construction.

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

- Assets under Construction, equipment, and certain Community Assets [where a current value measurement is not suitable] are held at depreciated historical cost.
- Infrastructure Assets are held at depreciated historical cost, however, in accordance with the Temporary Relief offered by the Update to the CIPFA Code of Practice on infrastructure assets the gross cost and accumulated depreciation are not separately disclosed.
- All other assets are measured at current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use.

In respect of specialised assets, if there is an absence of market based evidence of value, depreciated replacement cost is used as an estimate of current value.

Valuations are provided by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)-qualified valuers, are on the basis recommended by CIPFA, and accord with the Statement of Asset Valuation Principles and Guidance Notes issued by the RICS. Assets held in the Balance Sheet at current value are revalued sufficiently regularly to ensure that their carrying amount is not materially different from their current value at the year-end, but as a minimum every five years.

Increases in valuations are credited to the Revaluation Reserve unless they reverse previous losses charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, in which case the gain shall be credited to that account. A fall in value will be charged firstly against any balance held in the Revaluation Reserve. If this is insufficient or non-existent, the charge is made to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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

Depreciation

Non-current assets held for sale are not depreciated. Other property is depreciated over its useful life on a straight line basis. Depreciation is based on the closing value of assets. Components are separately depreciated if

- The total value of the host asset (excluding land) exceeds £0.500m and
- The value of the component exceeds 20% of the asset value (excluding land)

Depreciation periods are as follows:

	<u>years</u>
Property (excluding components separately identified)	5-60
Property components - mechanical	25
Portable office facilities	10-15
Vehicles	3-10
IT equipment	3-5
Other equipment	5-15

Revaluation gains are also depreciated by transfer of the difference between the current valuation depreciation charge and the historic cost depreciation charge, from the Revaluation Reserve to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Impairment

All assets are reviewed annually for impairment. Impairment losses are charged against revaluations held in the Revaluation Reserve. If these are inadequate the loss is charged to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. If an impairment loss is subsequently reversed, the reversal, up to the amount of the original loss adjusted for depreciation, is credited to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Disposal 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 continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale and shown within current assets. The asset is re-valued immediately and carried at the lower of this amount and current value less costs to sell. If assets subsequently fail to 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) and their recoverable amount at the date of the decision not to sell.

On disposal the carrying amount of an asset 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 exceeding £10,000 from disposal are credited to the same line; lesser receipts are included as service income in cost of services. Any revaluation gains accumulated in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Capital Charges and Council Tax

The postings in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in respect of depreciation, impairment, disposal and revaluation are reversed in the Movement in Reserves Statement to avoid impacting on council tax. Capital Receipts exceeding £10,000 are reversed to the Capital Receipts Reserve. Other reversals are to the Capital Adjustment Account.

Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the council an obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits, but where the timing is uncertain. Provisions are charged to the appropriate revenue account, Expenditure, when incurred, is charged direct to the provision.

Reserves

Reserves are created by appropriating amounts from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from the reserve is incurred, it is charged to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, and the reserve is appropriated back into the General Fund Balance through the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Revenue Expenditure Funded From Capital Under Statute

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

If the Authority has determined to use capital resources to meet the cost (as opposed to funding from revenue) a transfer is done in the Movement in Reserves Statement, from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account, so that there is no impact on the council tax.

Value Added Tax

VAT is included in the accounts only to the extent that it is irrecoverable.

Fair Value Measurement

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

The fair value measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either:

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

Valuations of non-financial assets are provided by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)-qualified valuers, are on the basis recommended by CIPFA, and accord with the Statement of Asset Valuation Principles and Guidance Notes issued by the RICS.

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

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

The council uses valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data is available, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

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

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

3. Accounting standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

The 2022/23 Code requires changes in accounting policy to be applied retrospectively unless alternative transitional arrangements are specified in the Code. The Code requires an 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 by the Code for the relevant financial year.

The standards that may be relevant for additional disclosures that will be required in the 2022/23 financial statements in respect of accounting changes that are introduced in the 2023/24 Code are:

- IFRS 16 Leases (but only for those local authorities that have decided to voluntarily implement IFRS 16 in the 2023/24 year).
- Where an authority adopted IFRS 16 in 2022/23 but chose to defer implementation of IFRS 16 to PFI/PPP arrangements until 2023/24 information on that more specific accounting change will be required in its 2022/23 statements of accounts.
- Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendments to IAS 8) issued in February 2021.
- Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS 1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2) issued in February 2021.
- Deferred Tax related to Assets and Liabilities arising from a Single Transaction (Amendments to IAS 12) issued in May 2021.
- Updating a Reference to the Conceptual Framework (Amendments to IFRS 3) issued in May 2020.

The council does not anticipate that the above amendments will have a material impact on the information provided in the financial statements.

4. Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

In applying the accounting policies set out in Note 2, the Authority has made certain judgements about complex transactions or those involving uncertainty about future events. The critical judgements made in the Statement of Accounts are:

Fair Values

When measuring the fair value of a non-financial asset, the council uses judgement to ascertain 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. It also uses judgements regarding inputs to valuation techniques, particularly whether they are applicable and relevant to the assets or liabilities, either directly or indirectly, being valued.

Business Rates Appeals

With business rates, ratepayers who consider the rateable values of their properties to be too high can lodge an appeal with the Valuation Office to have it reviewed. Any resulting reduction in bills can be backdated, perhaps over several years. This creates an uncertainty, because it means that the amount of income for the year from business rates, which has been included by the council in this Statement of Accounts, may later be reduced. Given that the gross income (before reliefs) in each financial year is over £40m and that the provision is required to cover several years, even a relatively low percentage allowance produces a material amount, so the council must acknowledge this in its Statement.

Given that the uncertainties involved, ie the numbers of future appeals, their value and how far they will be backdated are all unknown, the question arises as to whether this should be treated as a provision or as a contingent liability. It is considered that it should be recognised as a provision, rather than as a contingent liability, because it meets the definition of a provision under IAS 37, in that there is:

- (1) a present obligation arising from a past event;
- (2) payment is probable;
- (3) the amount can be estimated reliably.

In respect of (1), the 'present obligation' can (under IAS 37) be either legal or constructive. For appeals already lodged the present obligation would be legal. However, for appeals not yet lodged, the present obligation is constructive, on the basis that the past practice of the council, in processing liability adjustments and associated refunds, creates a valid expectation on the part of the business rates payer that refunds will be granted in the future, as a result of equivalent liability adjustments. The past event is the raising of the business rates charge.

In respect of (2), there is a probability of payment, although there is a chance that refunds may not be payable, if individual businesses no longer exist. However, the number of such credits written off is very low. Any credits that are written off require liability adjustment (effectively re-raising the debt for refunds that are not payable). As such they are included in the data that feeds into the provision calculation.

In respect of (3), because of the nature of the revised appeals process introduced from April 2017 onwards, there are particular issues in estimating the potential value of appeals against valuations effective from that time onwards. The pattern of liability movements resulting from successful appeals across the years from 2010/11 to 2016/17 have been reviewed, together with information on the numbers and potential values of cases at the 'Check' and 'Challenge' stages of the process for 2017 list appeals. These, together with comments by the Valuation Office that the approach adopted for the 2017 revaluation was the same as for earlier valuations and a review of the approaches adopted by other authorities, supports the view that the level of provision made by the council at the end of 2022/23 is of an appropriate level.

The need for local authorities to consider making a business rates appeals provision developed as a result of the change to 'Business Rates Retention' within the local government finance system from 2013/14 onwards. Prior to this, the impact of appeals was absorbed within the amounts paid by the council into the then national business rates pool. The relevant CIPFA guidance clarified the view on whether authorities should include an element for refunds on appeals not yet lodged. It quoted IAS 37, paragraph 39 which deals with situations involving large populations where the obligation is estimated by weighting all possible outcomes by their associated probabilities. It is considered that the appeals provision methodology adopted by the council is entirely consistent with this 'expected value' methodology.

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

The Statement of Accounts contains figures estimated on the basis of historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. The following table notes items for which there is a significant risk of material future adjustment:

Item	Uncertainty	Effect if actual results differ
Pensions liability and assets	<p>The estimated liabilities depend on a number of complex judgements. These include future retirement ages, mortality rates, salary increases, returns on investments and discount rates. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide advice on these assumptions.</p> <p>The scheme holds a varied portfolio of assets, details of which are shown at Note 36h. The valuations shown in this Statement are those assessed as at 31 March 2023 and again these are provided by a firm of consulting actuaries.</p>	<p>Sensitivity to the factors contributing to this estimate is shown in Note 36i. Small changes have major impacts on the pension fund.</p> <p>The council anticipates that it will spend £1.781m on current pension contributions in 2022/23 (see Note 36j). A 1% upward variation on this would produce an increased cost of £18k.</p>
Asset valuations	<p>Note 15e shows that fixed assets valued at £62.490m are carried at either current value (£32.926m) or depreciated replacement cost value (£29.564m).</p> <p>Note 16 shows that investment properties valued at £10.742m are carried at current value.</p> <p>The valuations have been carried out by qualified valuers in accordance with Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors Guidance.</p>	<p>The values are only estimates and thus could over or understate the actual values realisable if sale actually occurred.</p> <p>The valuations in respect of Investment Properties are those most subject to market variations. A fall in the value of these would result in a charge to the CI&ES. Every 10% fall in the total value of the council's investment properties would result in a £1.074m charge to the CI&ES.</p> <p>Likewise, a 10% in the value of other assets valued at current cost would produce a variation of £3.293m. How much, if any, of this would be chargeable to the CIES would depend on the individual assets affected and on whether or not there were associated balances in the Revaluation Reserve.</p>
Provisions	<p>A provision of £1.737m has been recognised for the best estimate of the amount that businesses have been overcharged business rates up to 31 March 2023. The estimate in respect of appeals against the rating lists prior to that for 2017 has</p>	<p>If the value of successful appeals exceeded the provision there would be a reduction in the local share of business rates income</p>

Item	Uncertainty	Effect if actual results differ
	<p>been calculated using the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) ratings list of appeals and the analysis of successful appeals to date. In respect of the 2017 list, there have, as yet, been only a very limited number of appeals at a national level and so the appropriate level of provision is more difficult to gauge. The council's provision has been set at 3% of the net rates payable for each year, after making allowance for reductions in rateable values at the 'Check' and 'Challenge' stages of the 2017 List appeals process. See Note 23.</p>	<p>available to fund the Authority's services. Similarly, an increase in the provision to cover such appeals would be a charge to the Collection Fund which would also reduce the local share of business rates income available to fund the Authority's services.</p>
<p>Fair value measurements</p>	<p>When the fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities cannot be measured based on quoted prices in active markets (i.e. Level 1 inputs), their fair value is measured using valuation techniques (e.g. quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities in active markets). Where 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. These judgements typically include considerations such as uncertainty and risk. However, changes in the assumptions used could affect the fair value of the council's assets and liabilities. Where Level 1 inputs are not available, the council employs relevant experts to identify the most appropriate valuation techniques to determine fair value. Information about the valuation techniques and inputs used in determining the fair value of the council's assets and liabilities is disclosed in Notes 2, 16 and 18.</p>	<p>The council uses the market approach to value of some of its investment properties and financial assets. The unobservable inputs used in the fair value measurement include management assumptions regarding rent yield and growth, vacancy levels (for investment properties). Significant changes in any of the unobservable inputs would result in a lower or higher fair value measurement for the investment properties and financial assets.</p>

6. Material items of income and expense

All material items have been disclosed in the statement or in the notes to the main financial statements. For the purposes of this note the council considers material items to be those greater than £0.922m (2022/23 £0.780m). This equates to 1.9% (2021/22 1.9%) of the council's gross service expenditure for the financial year and matches the level of the threshold stated by the council's auditor in the External Audit Plan, as received by Governance Committee at its meeting of 23 May 2023.

7. Events after the reporting period

The unaudited Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Director of Finance on 10th August 2023. Subsequent events are not reflected in the financial statements or in the notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March 2023, the figures in the financial statements and notes will be adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

There are no adjusting or non-adjusting events after the Balance Sheet date.

8. Note to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis, which forms Note 1 to the Accounts, can be found on page 45.

2022/23	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (Note A)	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments (Note B)	Other Statutory Adjustments (Note C)	Total Statutory Adjustments	Non-Statutory Adjustments (Note D)	Total Adjustments
Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Commercial Services	2	346	(14)	334	0	334
Communities	3,276	55	1	3,332	722	4,054
Customer & Digital	1,217	286	(28)	1,475	0	1,475
Governance	979	668	(32)	1,615	93	1,708
Planning & Development	7	278	(1)	284	0	284
Policy	482	225	(30)	677	0	677
Budgets Not In Directorates	14	127	(5)	136	3	139
Net Cost of Service	5,977	1,985	(109)	7,853	818	8,671
Other income and expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(13,275)	892	(2,546)	(14,929)	(818)	(15,747)
Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(7,298)	2,877	(2,655)	(7,076)	0	(7,076)

2021/22 Comparative Figures	Adjustments for Capital Purposes (Note A)	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments (Note B)	Other Statutory Adjustments (Note C)	Total Statutory Adjustments	Non-Statutory Adjustments (Note D)	Total Adjustments
Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Commercial & Property	2,577	2,903	7	5,487	685	6,172
Communities	812	220	7	1,039	0	1,039
Customer & Digital	1,694	565	(17)	2,242	119	2,361
Governance	19	275	(18)	276	0	276
Planning & Development	0	151	2	153	0	153
Policy	16	100	3	119	(151)	(32)
Budgets Not In Directorates	2	581	1	584	0	584
Net Cost of Service	5,120	4,795	(15)	9,900	653	10,553
Other income and expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(10,203)	879	(1,852)	(11,176)	(653)	(11,829)
Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(5,083)	5,674	(1,867)	(1,276)	0	(1,276)

Note A Adjustments for Capital Purposes

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

- Other operating expenditure – adjusts for capital disposals with a transfer of income on disposal of assets and the amounts written off for those assets
- Finance and investment income and expenditure – the statutory charges for capital financing, i.e. Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and other revenue contributions, are deducted from other income and expenditure as these are not chargeable under generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP).
- Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure – capital grants are adjusted for income not chargeable under GAAP. Revenue grants are adjusted from those receivable during the year to those receivable without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied throughout the year. The Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income and Expenditure line is credited with capital grants receivable in the year without conditions or for which conditions were satisfied within the year.

Note B Net Change for Pension Adjustments

The net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of the IAS 19 Employee Benefits pension related expenditure and income are reflected as follows:

- For services this represents the removal of the employer pension contributions made by the authority as determined by statute and their replacement with current service costs and past service costs.
- For financing and investment income and expenditure – the net interest on the defined benefit liability is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES).

Note C Other Statutory Adjustments

Other differences between amounts debited/credited to the CIES and amounts payable/receivable to be recognised under statute are:

- For financing and investment income and expenditure - the other differences column recognises adjustments to the General Fund for the timing differences for premiums and discounts.
- For taxation and non-specific grant income - the charge represents the difference between what is chargeable under statute for Council Tax and Business Rates that was forecast to be received at the start of the year, and the income recognised under GAAP. This is a timing difference as any difference is brought forward in the surpluses or deficits on the Collection Fund.

Note D Other Non-statutory Adjustments

Other non-statutory adjustments represent amounts debited/credited to service segments which need to be adjusted against the 'Other income and expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis' line to comply with the presentational requirements in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. These are:

- For financing and investment income and expenditure, adjustments in respect of the income and expenditure on investment properties and in respect of charges for the provision for non-collection of outstanding debts.

9. Expenditure and Income Analysed By Nature

The authority's expenditure and income are analysed as follows:

Expenditure/Income	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Expenditure		
Employee benefits expenses	18,523	16,424
Other service expenses	31,155	32,062
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	3,992	5,113
Interest payments	3,078	4,112
Precepts and levies	10,968	10,761
Loss on the disposal of assets	74	448
Total Expenditure	67,790	68,920
Income		
Fees, charges and other service income	(19,267)	(24,032)
Interest and investment income	(2,303)	(4,112)
Income from Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates	(20,577)	(22,971)
Government grants and contributions	(24,241)	(21,444)
Gain on disposal of assets	(185)	(188)
Total Income	(66,573)	(72,747)
Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	1,217	(3,827)

10. 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 council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to arrive at the resources that are specified by the statutory provisions as being available to the council to meet future capital and revenue expenditure. The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

General Fund Balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of the council are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the council are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. These rules can also specify the financial year in which liabilities and payments should impact on the General Fund Balance, which is not necessarily in accordance with proper accounting practice. The General Fund Balance therefore summarises the resources that the council is statutorily empowered to spend on its services or on capital investment (or the deficit of resources that the council is required to recover) at the end of the financial year and includes Earmarked Reserves (see Note 11).

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

2022/23	General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000
<u>Adjustments to the Revenue Resources</u>			
Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:			
Pensions costs (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve) (note 25d)	2,877	0	0
Financial instruments (transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustments Account)	0	0	0
Council tax and NDR (transfers to or from Collection Fund Adjustment Account) (note 25e)	(2,545)	0	0
Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve) (note 25f)	(110)	0	0
Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account) (note 25b)	902	0	0
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	1,124	0	0
<u>Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources</u>			
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve (MiRS)	(188)	170	0
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account) (note 25b)	(358)	0	0
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account) (note 25b)	(1,833)	0	0
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(2,379)	170	0
<u>Adjustments to Capital Resources</u>			
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure (MiRS)	0	0	0
Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure (MiRS)	(5,822)	0	1,781
Total Capital Resources	(5,822)	0	1,781
Total Adjustments	(7,077)	170	1,781

2021/22	General Fund Balance £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000
<u>Adjustments to the Revenue Resources</u>			
Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:			
Pensions costs (transferred to (or from) the Pensions Reserve) (note 25e)	5,674	0	0
Financial instruments (transferred to the Financial Instruments Adjustments Account) (note 25c)	0	0	0
Council tax and NDR (transfers to or from Collection Fund Adjustment Account) (note 25f)	(1,855)	0	0
Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve) (note 25g)	(12)	0	0
Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account) (note 25b)	2,268	0	0
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	6,075	0	0
<u>Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources</u>			
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve (MiRS)	(185)	185	0
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account) (note 25b)	(298)	0	0
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account) (note 25b)	(2,734)	0	0
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(3,217)	185	0
<u>Adjustments to Capital Resources</u>			
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure (MiRS)	0	(185)	0
Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure (MiRS)	(4,133)	0	2,351
Total Capital Resources	(4,133)	(185)	2,351
Total Adjustments	(1,275)	0	2,351

11. Transfers to / from earmarked reserves

The movements in earmarked reserves during the year were as follows. The movements in the general reserve are also included, producing the overall total for general fund reserves that appears in the Movement in Reserves Statement on page 42.

	Balance 31 March 2021 £'000	Transfers In 2021/22 £'000	Transfers Out 2021/22 £'000	Balance 31 March 2022 £'000	Transfers In 2022/23 £'000	Transfers Out 2022/23 £'000	Balance 31 March 2023 £'000
Community Hubs	(109)	(131)	109	(131)	0	114	(17)
Borough Council Elections	(160)	0	0	(160)	0	28	(132)
Housing Needs Survey	(80)	0	0	(80)	0	80	0
Local Development Framework	(267)	0	59	(208)	(138)	117	(229)
Performance Reward Grant	(11)	0	0	(11)	0	11	0
Organisation Restructure Costs	(200)	0	0	(200)	(485)	70	(615)
Borough Investment Account	(4,405)	0	938	(3,467)	(825)	953	(3,339)
Business Rates Retention	(3,144)	0	236	(2,908)	(70)	509	(2,469)
City Deal Reserve	(1,851)	0	0	(1,851)	0	1,101	(750)
Capital Funding Reserve	(1,851)	(20)	1,387	(484)	0	221	(263)
Repairs and Maintenance Fund	(500)	0	114	(386)	(500)	386	(500)
Transformation Fund	(230)	(661)	177	(714)	0	342	(372)
Apprenticeship Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Climate Change	(250)	0	0	(250)	0	39	(211)
Credit Union	(149)	0	66	(83)	0	50	(33)
CIL Administration Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Section 106 Reserve	(242)	0	0	(242)	0	242	0
Asset Management	(400)	0	0	(400)	(600)	0	(1,000)
Business Grants Reserve	(150)	(71)	221	0	0	0	0
Community Wealth Building	(150)	0	0	(150)	(5)	5	(150)
Mental Health for Young People	(50)	0	6	(44)	0	15	(29)
Covid Recovery Fund	(675)	(392)	0	(1,067)	0	771	(296)
Covid Commitments	(654)	0	604	(50)	0	50	0
Income Equalisation	(150)	0	0	(150)	0	150	0
Leisure Reserve	(546)	0	17	(529)	0	327	(202)
Income Investment Reserve	(250)	0	0	(250)	0	250	0
Collection Fund Deficit Distribution Fund	(5,244)	(3,200)	4,295	(4,149)	(476)	2,006	(2,619)
Inflationary and cost of living pressures				0	(1,987)	661	(1,326)
Other Earmarked Reserves	(1,290)	(1,201)	175	(2,316)	(914)	1,149	(2,081)
Total Earmarked Reserves	(23,008)	(5,676)	8,404	(20,280)	(6,000)	9,647	(16,633)
General Reserve	(4,141)	0	0	(4,141)	(397)	0	(4,538)
Total General Fund Reserves	(27,149)	(5,676)	8,404	(24,421)	(6,397)	9,647	(21,171)

Below is a description of the purpose of each of the earmarked reserves identified above:

Earmarked Reserve	Reason / Use
Community Hubs	An accumulation of unspent core funding allocated to be spent in accordance with the local priorities determined by each of the Community Hub forums.
Elections Provision	An annual transfer from revenue is made to cover the four yearly Borough Elections. The next election is due to take place in May 2023.
Housing Needs Survey	Annual contribution made to fund the costs of carrying out detailed Housing Needs Surveys.
Local Development Framework	To fund one-off costs in relation to the production of planning policy documents in relation to the Local Development Framework.
Performance Reward Grant	External revenue funding held by the council on behalf of South Ribble Partnership set aside for spending on South Ribble Partnership projects in future years.
Organisation Restructure Costs	To be used to assist in funding the one-off costs of any service reviews designed to improve the efficiency of the council.
Borough Investment Account	To facilitate income generation schemes and create a diverse and self-sustaining income portfolio to enable the council to bridge potential funding gaps.
Business Rates Retention	To mitigate the potential risk to the council's medium-term financial strategy by providing funds to smooth out the inherent fluctuations that occur in the Business Rates Retention System.
City Deal	To stabilise the budget across the MTFs following the City Deal revenue funding ceasing in 2023.
Capital Funding Reserve	This is to fund capital expenditure in line with the council's Corporate Plan priorities, as set out in the approved Capital Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
Repairs and Maintenance Fund	The revenue budget includes an annual provision for the costs of repairs and maintenance of the council's property assets. The purpose of the reserve is to meet the costs of any major repairs and maintenance works which cannot be met from this base budget.
Transformation Fund	The purpose of the reserve was to provide funding for projects which will generate a payback into the council's revenue budget through sustainable income generation and/or recurring cost savings. The fund has been allocated to the IT Digital Strategy capital costs in the capital programme.
Climate Change	To facilitate spending on initiatives that will reduce the council or the borough's impact on climate change.
Credit Union	To support the creation of a Credit Union within the borough.
Section 106 Reserve	This reserve is held for capital funding outside of S.106 receipts.
Asset Management	To fund potential future maintenance costs and part-fund future capital expenditure on short-life assets such as ICT and vehicles.
Business Grants Reserve	To deliver an extended programme of support for businesses beyond government grants to ensure that the council is doing as much as possible to help businesses get back on their feet. This was combined with Covid Funding and utilised in 21/22
Community Wealth Building	To implement a plan to retain wealth and grow the local economy through a progressive procurement framework and social value policies.

Earmarked Reserve	Reason / Use
Mental Health for Young People	To support positive mental health for young people through officer resource to deliver a programme of early intervention activity.
Covid Recovery Fund	To support the borough's recovery from Covid-19
Covid Commitments	To cover existing Covid-19 commitments. This funding has been utilised in year and allocated to other reserves.
Income Equalisation	To cover any potential temporary reliefs and losses on investment income over the recovery period from covid-19.
Leisure Reserve	To fund costs in relation to Leisure Services across the borough including capital schemes for Leisure Local
Income Investment Reserve	To fund the costs of developing new income generation projects which may not be able to be capitalised.
Collection Fund Deficit Distribution Fund	To smooth the impact of fluctuations in the level of business rate deficit distribution.
Inflationary and cost of living pressures	This funding has been created from various other reserves to offset any future inflationary and cost of living pressures.
Other	This reserve comprises five elements: approved carry forwards of underspends that have not yet been allocated, reserves created at quarter 3 21/22 for investment projects, surplus income relating to Sports Development service, Social Prescribing and miscellaneous ring-fenced grant income specific to certain service areas.

12. Other operating expenditure

2021/22 £'000		2022/23 £'000
478	Parish Council precepts	469
(185)	(Gains) and losses on the disposal of non-current assets	(188)
293	Total	281

13. Financing and investment income and expenditure

2021/22 £'000		2022/23 £'000
0	Interest payable and similar charges	0
866	Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (note 36d)	869
(91)	Interest receivable and similar income	(869)
(1,322)	Income and Expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value (note 16)	(467)
31	Allowance for impairment of outstanding debts	(96)
(341)	Losses or (surplus) on trading accounts	(546)
(857)	Total	(1,109)

14. Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure

2021/22 £'000		2022/23 £'000
(8,630)	Council tax income	(8,727)
(1,460)	Non-domestic rates income and expenditure	(4,122)
(3,820)	Non-ring fenced government grants	(4,091)
(960)	Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)	0
(192)	Other Covid-19 Funding Grants	0
(5,782)	Capital grants and developer contributions	(10,391)
0	Amounts transferred between Capital Grants Unapplied and Capital Grants Received In Advance	0
(20,844)	Total	(27,331)

14(a) LANCASHIRE BUSINESS RATES POOL

In 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 this Council was a member of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool. In a Business Rate Pool, tariffs, top-ups, levies and safety nets are combined. This can result in a significantly lower levy rate or even a zero levy rate meaning that more or all of the business rate growth can be retained within the pool area instead of being payable to the Government.

The Lancashire Business Rates Pool, which included most but not all of the local authorities in Lancashire, was designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and originally operated with allocations on the basis of the 50% business rates retention scheme.

In 2019/20 we successfully submitted a bid along with 15 other authorities in Lancashire to become a 75% Business Rates Pilot Pool. This meant that 75% of collected rates were retained in Lancashire rather than 50%.

In respect of 2020/21, the Government confirmed that 75% Business Rate Pilots would cease at the end of March 2020. As a result, applications for a 50% Lancashire Pool were successfully submitted for 2020/21 and then for 2021/22 and 2022/23, consisting of 10 district council's and the county council. The pool has operated on the same basis as in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 during 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.

The business rates income allocations in 2021/22 and 2022/23 are shown in the table below:

	Lancashire Business Rates Pool - Income Allocations for 2021/22 and 2022/23
District Authorities	40%
Lancashire County Council	9%
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	1%
	50%
Central Government	50%
Total	100%

As part of the pool arrangements, one authority must be designated as lead authority, which in the case of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool is Ribble Valley Borough Council. As part of this arrangement a fee of £20,000 is payable, charged equally to all members of the pool by Ribble Valley Borough Council in their role as lead.

The retained levy in the Lancashire Business Rates Pool has been distributed as follows:

- Lancashire County Council is paid 10% of the overall retained levy;
- Each district within the pool retains 90% of their retained levy.

Lancashire Business Rates Pool Members 2022/23	Authority Type	Tariffs and Top-Ups in Respect of 2022/23 £	Retained Levy on Growth 2022/23 £	10% Retained Levy Payable to/received by Lancashire County Council £	Net Retained Levy 2022/23 £
Burnley Borough Council	Tariff	6,043,499	-1,230,976	123,098	-1,107,878
Chorley Borough Council	Tariff	6,503,220	-1,101,286	110,129	-991,157
Fylde Borough Council	Tariff	8,101,273	-612,380	61,238	-551,142
Hyndburn Borough Council	Tariff	3,969,106	-1,538,593	153,859	-1,384,734
Pendle Borough Council	Tariff	3,388,618	-772,596	77,260	-695,336
Ribble Valley Borough Council	Tariff	4,311,424	-917,609	91,761	-825,848
Rossendale Borough Council	Tariff	2,713,519	-724,988	72,499	-652,489
South Ribble Borough Council	Tariff	10,327,203	-1,750,582	175,058	-1,575,524
West Lancashire Borough Council	Tariff	8,698,358	-754,599	75,460	-679,139
Wyre Borough Council	Tariff	6,837,509	-735,928	73,593	-662,335
Lancashire County Council	Top-Up	-158,098,681		-1,013,955	-1,013,955
Central Government	-	97,204,952		0	0
Total		0	-10,139,537	0	-10,139,537

Lancashire Business Rates Pool Members 2021/22	Authority Type	Tariffs and Top-Ups in Respect of 2021/22 £	Retained Levy on Growth 2021/22 £	10% Retained Levy Payable to/received by Lancashire County Council £	Net Retained Levy 2021/22 £
Burnley Borough Council	Tariff	6,043,499	-1,274,399	127,440	-1,146,959
Chorley Borough Council	Tariff	6,503,220	-958,378	95,838	-862,540
Fylde Borough Council	Tariff	8,101,273	-285,737	28,574	-257,163
Hyndburn Borough Council	Tariff	3,969,106	-1,216,541	121,654	-1,094,887
Pendle Borough Council	Tariff	3,388,618	-569,005	56,901	-512,104
Ribble Valley Borough Council	Tariff	4,311,424	-839,130	83,913	-755,217
Rossendale Borough Council	Tariff	2,713,519	-576,607	57,661	-518,946
South Ribble Borough Council	Tariff	10,327,203	-1,587,163	158,716	-1,428,447
West Lancashire Borough Council	Tariff	8,698,358	-688,578	68,858	-619,720
Wyre Borough Council	Tariff	6,837,509	-693,833	69,383	-624,450
Lancashire County Council	Top-Up	-158,098,681		-868,938	-868,938
Central Government	-	97,204,952		0	0
Total		0	-8,689,371	0	-8,689,371

The Net Retained Levy for this Council is shown within Business Rates Retention income on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, along with the council's own share of growth achieved in the year.

15. Property, Plant and Equipment

15a Movements in Property Plant and Equipment

2022/23	Other Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £'000	Community Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2022	27,953	16,128	220	3,897	48,198
Additions	3,416	961	97	7,180	11,654
Revaluations recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	1,680	0	29	0	1,709
Revaluations recognised in CIES	(2,379)	0	(14)	0	(2,393)
De-recognition - disposals	0	(1,787)	0	0	(1,787)
Assets reclassified	2,118	136	36	(1,017)	1,273
Other Movements					0
At 31 March 2023	32,789	15,439	367	10,060	58,654
Depreciation and Impairment					
At 1 April 2022	(1,549)	(11,903)	0	0	(13,452)
Depreciation charge	(1,130)	(878)	0	0	(2,007)
Depreciation written out of RR	516	0	0	0	516
Depreciation written out of CIES	621	0	0	0	621
Impairment losses recognised in RR	(35)	0	0	0	(35)
Impairment losses recognised in CIES	(67)	(26)	0	0	(93)
De-recognition - disposals	0	1,459	0	0	1,459
Assets reclassified	(4)	4	0	0	(0)
Other Movements					0
At 31 March 2023	(1,648)	(11,344)	0	0	(12,992)
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2023	31,141	4,095	367	10,060	45,662
At 31 March 2022	26,404	4,226	220	3,897	34,746

2021/22	Other Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £'000	Community Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total £'000
Cost or Valuation					
At 1 April 2021	28,383	14,796	157	1,535	44,871
Additions	533	2,119	38	3,937	6,627
Revaluations recognised in RR	(341)	0	(6)	0	(347)
Revaluations recognised in CIES	(1,753)	0	0	0	(1,753)
De-recognition - disposals	(476)	(846)	0	0	(1,322)
Assets reclassified	1,606	57	30	(1,575)	118
Other Movements	1	2	1	0	4
At 31 March 2022	27,953	16,128	220	3,897	48,198
Depreciation and Impairment					
At 1 April 2021	(1,025)	(11,850)	0	0	(12,875)
Depreciation charge	(1,071)	(898)	0	0	(1,969)
Depreciation written out of Revaluation Reserve	74	0	0	0	74
Depreciation written out of CIES	71	0	0	0	71
Impairment losses recognised in RR	0	0	0	0	0
Impairment losses recognised in CIES	0	0	0	0	0
De-recognition - disposals	402	846	0	0	1,248
Assets reclassified	0	0	0	0	0
Other Movements	0	(1)	0	0	(1)
At 31 March 2022	(1,549)	(11,903)	0	0	(13,451)
Net Book Value					
At 31 March 2022	26,404	4,226	220	3,897	34,746
At 31 March 2021	27,358	2,946	157	1,535	31,996

Infrastructure Assets

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

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

As indicated above the Council has taken the temporary relief offered by the update to the code, not to report gross cost and accumulated depreciation for infrastructure assets but this information is maintained in the permanent records of the Council. In adopting the temporary relief users of the financial statements are therefore only able to assess the remaining economic benefit to the council rather than the historical data.

Infrastructure Assets	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Net Book Value (modified historical cost)		
At 1 April	1,872	1,628
Additions	165	33
Disposals	0	(7)
Impairment	0	(5)
Assets reclassified	226	4
Depreciation charge	(634)	(284)
At 31 March	1,628	1,369
Net Book Value		
At 1 April	1,872	1,628
Cumulative movements	(244)	(259)
At 31 March	1,628	1,369

Reconciliation of note 15 to Property, Plant & Equipment on the Balance Sheet

Infrastructure Assets	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Infrastructure Assets	1,628	1,369
Other Property, Plant & Equipment	34,746	45,662
	36,374	47,031

15b Depreciation

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

Type of Asset	Years
Property (excluding components separately identified)	5-60
Property components - mechanical	25
Portable office facilities	10-15
Vehicles	3-10
IT equipment	3-5
Other equipment	5-15

15c Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2023 there were seven significant contractual commitments, totalling £10.164m, relating to capital expenditure, as listed in the table below.

Value (£'000)	Description
51	Bamber Bridge Sports Pitches
70	Ryden Ave Playground
85	Glass House Worden
143	EV Charger
161	Road Sweeper
394	McKenzie Arms Affordable Housing Bamber Bridge
9,260	Leisure Centres Refurbishment and Decarbonisation

15d Effects of Changes in Estimates

There were no material changes in accounting estimates for Property, Plant and Equipment in 2022/23.

15e Property, Plant and Equipment Valuations

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 five years. During 2022/23 the valuations were carried out on behalf of the council by Sanderson Weatherall LLP. Valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The basis of valuation is set out in Note 2 Accounting Policies.

	Other Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £'000	Community Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Total £'000
Carried at historical cost	107	15,427	134	10,060	25,728
Valued at current value as at:					
31 March 2022	24,332	12	196	-	24,541
31 March 2021	3,328	-	24	-	3,352
31 March 2020	3,533	-	-	-	3,533
31 March 2019	214	-	-	-	214
31 March 2018	1,274	-	12	-	1,286
Total cost or valuation	32,789	15,439	367	10,060	58,654

16. Investment properties

Rental income and operational expenditure has been accounted for in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

There are no restrictions on the Authority's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or its right to receipt of income or the proceeds of disposal.

At 31 March 2023, the council had no contractual obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property.

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

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Fair Value 1 April	10,144	11,159
Additions – Subsequent expenditure	38	74
Disposals	0	0
Net gains / (losses) from fair value adjustments	1,322	467
Transfers (to) / from Property Plant and Equipment	(345)	(959)
TOTAL	11,159	10,741

Fair Value Hierarchy – Investment Properties

All the council's investment properties have been value assessed as Level 2 (other significant observable inputs) on the fair value hierarchy for valuation purposes. See the Fair Value Measurement section of Note 2 Accounting Policies for an explanation of the fair value levels.

Transfers between Levels of the Fair Value Hierarchy

There were no transfers between levels 1 and 2 during the year.

Valuation techniques used to determine Level 2 and 3 Fair Values for Investment Properties

Significant Observable Inputs - Level 2

The fair value for the level 2 investment properties has been based on the market approach using current market conditions and recent sales prices and other relevant information for similar assets in the council's area. Market conditions are such that similar properties are actively purchased and sold and the level of observable inputs are significant, leading to the properties being categorised at Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy.

Highest and Best Use of Investment Properties

In estimating the fair value of the council's investment properties, the highest and best use of the properties is their current use.

Valuation Techniques

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

Valuation Process for Investment Properties

The fair value of the council's investment property is measured annually at each reporting date. 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 (RICS). During 2022/23 the valuations of investment properties were carried out on behalf of the council by Sanderson Weatherall LLP. The basis of valuation is set out in Note 2 Accounting Policies.

17. Intangible assets

The council accounts for its software as intangible assets, to the extent that software is not an integral part of a particular IT system and accounted for as part of the hardware item of Property, Plant and Equipment.

All software is given a finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the Authority. The following periods have been used in amortising the Authority's significant intangible assets.

Asset Description	Amortisation Period
IT work programme	5 years
Customer Contact Centre and Relationship Management System	5 years
Revenues and Benefits System	5 years
Human Resources System	5 years
Licensing Management System	5 years
Planning & Building Control System	5 years
Committee Management System	5 years
Financial Management Information System	5 years
Performance Management System	5 years

Amortisation is on a straight line basis. In 2022/23 amortisation of £0.000m was charged to the following lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Customer Experience & Ops	43	0
Finance & Assurance	2	0
Legal HR & Democratic Serv	20	0
Total	65	0

The movements on Intangible Asset balances during the year are as follows:-

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Cost at start of year	1,614	1,628
Additions in year	14	374
Disposals in year	0	(1,278)
Reclassifications in year	0	(319)
Gross cost at end of year	1,628	405
Accumulated amortisation at start of year	(1,451)	(1,516)
Disposals in year	0	1,166
Amortised in year	(65)	0
Accumulated amortisation	(1,516)	(350)
Net carrying amount at the start of the year	163	112
Net carrying amount at the year end	112	55

At 31 March 2023, there were no significant contractual commitments, and no individual intangible assets the amortisation of which is materially significant to the council.

18. Financial instruments

18a Categories of Financial Instrument

The following categories of Financial Instruments are carried in the Balance Sheet:

Long Term 31 March 2022 £'000	Current 31 March 2022 £'000		Long Term 31 March 2023 £'000	Current 31 March 2023 £'000
		Financial Assets		
		<i>Carried at Amortised Cost</i>		
0	21,272	Cash & cash equivalents (note 21) net of bank overdraft	0	8,586
0	34,026	Short Term Investments	0	27,660
186	2,747	Debtors	182	3,040
186	58,045	Total Financial Assets	182	39,286
		Financial Liabilities		
		<i>Carried at Amortised Cost</i>		
(152)	(3,717)	Creditors	(133)	(2,690)
(152)	(3,717)	Total Creditors	(133)	(2,690)
		<i>Memo: Items that are not Financial Instruments</i>		
0	3,884	Debtors	0	5,329
0	(27,590)	Creditors	0	(12,705)

There has been no reclassification of assets and no pledges of collateral have been made in the periods reported in these statements.

All of the financial instruments included in the table above are carried at amortised cost and so there are no risks associated with movements in fair values.

18b Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

The amounts charged in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line (and shown in Note 13) are as follows:-

	2021/22			2022/23		
	Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services £'000	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure £'000	Total £'000	Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services £'000	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure £'000	Total £'000
Interest revenue on Financial Assets measured at amortised cost	(91)	0	(91)	(869)	0	(869)
Interest expense	0	0	0	0	0	0
Net (gain) / cost for the year	(91)	0	(91)	(869)	0	(869)

18c The Fair Value of Financial Assets and Financial Liabilities that are not measured at Fair Value (but for which Fair Value disclosures are required)

Financial liabilities and financial assets represented by loans and receivables and long term debtors and creditors are carried on the Balance Sheet at amortised cost. Their fair value can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that take place over the remaining life of the instruments (Level 2 of the fair value hierarchy), using the following assumptions:

- For non-PWLB loans payable (such as Finance Leases), PWLB new borrowing rates have been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures;
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised;
- Where an instrument has a maturity of less than 12 months or is a trade or other receivable the fair value is taken to be the carrying amount or the billed amount;
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

All financial assets and liabilities held by the council are carried in the Balance Sheet at amortised cost.

Financial Liabilities

	31 March 2022		31 March 2023	
	Carrying Amount £'000	Fair Value £'000	Carrying Amount £'000	Fair Value £'000
Short Term Borrowing	0	0	0	0
Finance Lease (short and long-term)	0	0	0	0
Short Term Creditors	(3,717)	(3,717)	(2,690)	(2,690)
Long Term Creditors	(152)	(152)	(133)	(133)
Total Liabilities	(3,869)	(3,869)	(2,823)	(2,823)

Long-term creditors comprises numerous commuted sums relating to grounds maintenance. Any difference between carrying amount and fair value of each of these small sums would be immaterial, and therefore they are carried at cost as a fair approximation of their value.

Financial Assets

	31 March 2022		31 March 2023	
	Carrying Amount £'000	Fair Value £'000	Carrying Amount £'000	Fair Value £'000
Cash and Cash Equivalents	21,272	21,272	8,586	8,586
Investments - Loans	34,026	34,026	27,660	27,660
Short Term Debtors	2,747	2,747	3,040	3,040
Long Term Debtors	186	186	182	182
Total Assets	58,231	58,231	39,468	39,468

Long-term debtors comprise a number of small debts such as some small loans. Any difference between carrying amount and fair value of each of these small sums would be immaterial, and therefore they are carried at cost as an approximation of their fair value.

18d Nature and extent of risks arising from financial instruments

Key risks

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

- Credit risk – that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the council.
- Liquidity risk – that the Authority might not have liquid funds available to make payments when due.
- Market risk – the possibility of financial loss arising from movements in interest rates.

Overall procedures for managing risk

In managing investment risk the council works within the legal framework set out in the Local Government Act 2003 and associated regulations. This requires compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice, the Prudential Code, and investment guidance issued through the Act. A key requirement is that the council should annually consider its Treasury Management Strategy which incorporates the following:

Prudential indicators specifying:

1. Maximum and minimum exposure to fixed and variable rates;
2. Limits on the maturity structure of the debt portfolio;
3. Limits on total borrowing.

An Investment Strategy specifying:

1. The use that should be made of credit ratings and other indicators to determine the financial standing of counterparties;
2. The use of sovereign ratings to limit investments to specific countries;
3. The maximum amounts that might be deposited with any institution;
4. The lengths of time for which deposits can be made.

Credit risk

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

This risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet minimum creditworthiness criteria, provided by the council's treasury advisor Link Asset Services. The creditworthiness service combines the credit ratings from all three ratings agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poors) in a sophisticated modelling process. The Annual Investment Strategy also imposes a maximum amount and time to be invested with a financial institution located within each category.

The key areas of the Investment Strategy are as follows:

- The Council only lends to UK-incorporated financial institutions. This strategy does not therefore specify a minimum sovereign rating.
- The Council may use AAA rated Money Market Funds.
- The Council may lend to the UK Government (which includes the Debt Management Office), and UK Local Authorities.

Sundry Debtors

Assessment of the expected credit loss on the outstanding balance of short-term debtors is made using a provision matrix based on the age of the outstanding debt and previous experience of recovery rates. At 31 March 2023, the outstanding gross amount was £4.153m (£3.958m at 31 March 2022) and the maximum exposure to credit loss was assessed as £3.040m (£2.748m at 31 March 2022).

Loss allowances on Debtors has been assessed using overdue debtor information and calculates losses based on lifetime credit losses for all debtors overdue by more than 30 days. Debtors are assessed individually where information on the likelihood of collection exists; otherwise debtors are collectively assessed for credit risk as one group. No collateral is held as security.

Expected Credit Loss

The council is required to disclose any material expected credit loss on its financial assets held at the end of the financial year, both in the following twelve months and over the lifetime of those assets.

The council's material financial assets consist of a combination of:

- deposits and investments, all of which have a life of less than twelve months, and
- short term debtors for trade receivables

The council's Investment Strategy restricts investments to a narrow range of counterparties. At 31 March 2023 it had deposits totalling £35.573m (£55.297m at 31 March 2022) with a number of different institutions. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. Review of the specific deposits and investments held at 31 March 2023, including consideration of the uncertainties resulting from the Covid 19 pandemic, has indicated that there is no material risk of credit loss.

Assessment of the expected credit loss on the outstanding balance of trade receivables is made using a provision matrix based on the age of the outstanding debt and previous experience of recovery rates. At 31 March 2023, the outstanding gross amount was £4.153m (£3.958m at 31 March 2022) and the maximum exposure to credit loss was assessed as £3.040m (£2.748m at 31 March 2022). The risk of loss has been fully provided for. No collateral is held as security.

Liquidity risk

The authority has ready access to borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board and the money markets. There is therefore no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments.

The council manages its liquidity position through the risk management procedures outlined above as well as through cash flow management procedures required by the council.

Market risk

Interest rate risk – The council has limited exposure to interest rate movements on its investments. Short term investments are not carried at fair value on the Balance Sheet, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate investments do not impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Service or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

To mitigate risk the Treasury Strategy reviews interest rate forecasts and fixes prudential indicators for fixed and variable interest rate exposure.

If all variable interest rates had been 1% higher (with all other variables held constant) the financial effect would have been as shown in the following table:

	£'000
Gain - Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	507
Gain - Impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Service	507

The impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as above but with the movements being reversed.

Price risk

The council has no material exposure to this risk.

Foreign Exchange Risk

The council has no material exposure to this risk.

19. Inventories

	2021/22			2022/23		
	Consumable Stores £'000	Maintenance Materials £'000	Total £'000	Consumable Stores £'000	Maintenance Materials £'000	Total £'000
Balance at 1 April	85	26	111	84	30	114
Purchases	658	288	946	0	0	0
Issued in year	(671)	(284)	(955)	0	0	0
Written off in year	12	0	12	(84)	(30)	(114)
Balance at year end	84	30	114	0	0	0

20. Short term debtors

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Trade receivables	1,988	329
Prepayments	593	791
Other receivable amounts	7,578	10,357
Gross carrying amount at the year end	10,159	11,477
Less provision for bad debts	(3,528)	(3,104)
Net carrying amount at the year end	6,631	8,373

21. Cash and cash equivalents

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

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Cash held by the Authority	1	1
Bank current and call accounts	17,271	8,585
Short term deposits (maturing within 3 months)	4,000	0
Total cash and cash equivalents	21,272	8,586

22. Short term creditors

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Trade payables	(4,173)	(3,717)
Other payables	(27,134)	(11,679)
Total	(31,307)	(15,396)

23. Provisions

The movements in provisions during the year were as follows:

	Business Rates Appeals £'000
Balance at 1 April 2021	(2,081)
Additional provisions made in 2021/22	396
Amounts used in 2021/22	(666)
Balance at 31 March 2022	(2,351)
Additional provisions made in 2022/23	228
Amounts used in 2022/23	386
Balance at 31 March 2023	(1,737)

The council has only one class of provision, this relates entirely to Business Rates Appeals. Due to the localisation of Business Rates, which became effective from the 1st April 2013, the council now bears part of the risk for future appeals against rateable valuations of business premises. Therefore, the council has set aside a provision for any potential liabilities as a result of appeals. At the end of 2022-23, the council is responsible for a 40% share of this liability along with the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (50%), Lancashire County Council (9%) and the Lancashire Fire Authority (1%). These were borne wholly by the Government under the old scheme. The council's estimate of the value of outstanding appeals up to 31 March 2023 is £4.343m (£5.878m at 31 March 2022). The council has made a provision for 40% of this figure totalling £1.737m (£2.351m at 31 March 2022). Appeals are assessed and decided by the Valuation Office Agency, an executive agency of HM Revenue & Customs, rather than by the council and as such the timing of the settlement of any successful appeals is uncertain.

24. Usable reserves

Movements in the Authority's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement (page 42). The purpose of General Fund Earmarked Reserves is detailed in Note 11 (page 65).

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
General Fund Working Balance	(4,141)	(4,538)
General Fund Earmarked Reserves	(20,280)	(16,633)
Total General Fund Balance	(24,421)	(21,171)
Capital Receipts Reserve	0	(170)
S106 Contributions from developers	(5,494)	(5,264)
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	(2,410)	(3,379)
Other Capital Grants and Contributions	(2,729)	(3,770)
Total Capital Grants and Contributions Unapplied	(10,633)	(12,413)
Total Usable Reserves at year-end	(35,054)	(33,754)

25. Unusable reserves

	Note	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Revaluation Reserve	25a	(5,987)	(7,892)
Capital Adjustment Account	25b	(38,139)	(43,771)
Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	25c	(20)	(20)
Pensions Reserve	25d	32,424	(12,982)
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	25e	2,636	90
Accumulated Absences Account	25f	314	204
Total Unusable Reserves		(8,772)	(64,371)

25a Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains arising from increases in the valuation of Property, Plant & Equipment and Intangible Assets. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- Revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost
- Used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation, or
- Disposed of and the gains are realised

The reserve holds only gains accumulated since 1 April 2007, the date it was created. Gains prior to that date are consolidated in the Capital Adjustment Account.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	(6,476)	(5,987)
Upward revaluation of assets	(372)	(3,055)
Downward revaluation & impairment not charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	645	831
Difference between fair value and historic cost depreciation	216	319
Balance at 31 March	(5,987)	(7,892)

25b Capital Adjustment Account

This 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 additions to those assets. The account contains the following:

- Sums set aside to finance capital expenditure.
- Accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties.
- Revaluation gains on Property, Plant and Equipment accumulating prior to 1 April 2007.
- The difference between the charges required by accounting practice for the amortisation of assets (depreciation and impairment) and the de-recognition of assets, and the capital charges required by statute.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	(35,191)	(38,139)
<i>Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the CIES:</i>		
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	2,915	2,388
Revaluation (gains)/losses on property, plant & equipment	1,369	1,772
Amortisation of intangible assets	65	0
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	964	1,420
Net cost of disposal of assets	74	448
	5,387	6,028
Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(216)	(319)
Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	5,171	5,709
<i>Capital financing applied in the year:</i>		
Capital receipts used to finance new capital expenditure	(185)	(18)
Grants and contributions used in the year to fund capital expenditure	(3,580)	(8,701)
Statutory & voluntary provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	(298)	(358)
Capital expenditure charged to the General Fund Balance	(2,734)	(1,832)
	(6,797)	(10,909)
Movements in the market value of Investment Properties	(1,322)	(467)
Balance at 31 March	(38,139)	(43,806)

25c Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve

This account shows the sums recognised on the disposal of non-current assets but for which cash settlement has yet to take place.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	(20)	(20)
Transfer to Capital Receipts Reserve on receipt of cash	0	0
Balance at 31 March	(20)	(20)

25d Pensions Reserve

This account contains postings arising from the difference between the requirements of accounting practice and statute in respect of pensions. The costs of benefits are charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when they are earned rather than when they are paid. Statutory arrangements however require that benefits be financed only when the Authority makes contributions to the pension fund.

A debit balance on the Pension Reserve therefore shows that benefits earned by employees exceed the payments made by the authority to fund them, with a credit balance showing the reverse. Statutory arrangements require that adequate funding will ultimately be set aside.

The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve at 31st March 2022 therefore showed a substantial shortfall between the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the authority had set aside to meet them. The credit balance at 31st March 2023 reflects the surplus position on the pension fund. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid and to maintain a solvency funding level of 100%.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	39,770	32,424
Re-measurements of the net defined benefit liability.	(12,771)	(48,283)
Reversal of charges posted to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.	7,231	4,883
Employer contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year.	(1,806)	(2,006)
Balance at 31 March	32,424	(12,982)

25e Collection Fund Adjustment Account

This account manages the differences arising from the recognition of Council Tax and Business Rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from Council Tax payers and Business Rates payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	4,490	2,636
Amount by which Council Tax and Business Rate income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement differs from the amount required by statute.	(1,854)	(2,546)
Balance at 31 March	2,636	90

The following table breaks down the above total into the amounts in respect of each source of Collection Fund income.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Amounts in respect of Council Tax	(3)	17
Amounts in respect of Business Rates	2,639	56
Additional amount in respect of Business Rates	0	17
Balance at 31 March	2,636	90

25f Accumulated Absences Account

The cost of compensated absences (e.g. leave entitlement) not taken by employees during the year of account, is charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Statutory arrangements require however that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from this account.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Balance at 1 April	325	314
Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on an accruals basis differs from remuneration chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(11)	(110)
Balance at 31 March	314	204

26. Cash flow statement – operating activities

26a Net surplus or deficit adjustment on the provision of services for non-cash movements

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

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Depreciation	2,604	2,291
Impairment and valuation changes	1,682	1,869
Amortisation	65	0
Increase / (decrease) in impairment for bad debts	911	(424)
(Increase) / decrease in debtors	510	(188)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	3,369	(17,301)
(Increase) / decrease in inventories	(3)	114
Movement in pension liability	6,891	4,141
Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or derecognised	74	448
Contributions (to) / from Provisions	270	(614)
Movement in investment property values	(1,322)	(467)
Net adjustment	15,051	(10,131)

26b Adjustment for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities

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

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(185)	(188)
Capital Grants credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services	(5,784)	(11,345)
Net adjustment	(5,969)	(11,533)

26c Interest received and interest paid

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Interest received	91	869
Interest paid	0	0
Net cash flow in / (out)	91	869

27. Cash Flow Statement – investing activities

The following items have been included within investing activities in the cash flow statement:

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Purchase of property, plant & equipment, investment property & intangible assets	(6,190)	(11,576)
Purchase of short and long term investments	(21,026)	(16,660)
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	185	188
Proceeds from short and long term investments	16,017	23,026
Other receipts relating to investing activity (government grants)	5,752	9,212
Total cash flows from investing activities	(5,262)	4,190

28. Cash Flow Statement – financing activities

The following have been included within financing activities in the cash flow statement:

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Cash Receipts from Short and Long Term Borrowing	0	0
Cash paid to reduce lease liabilities.	0	0
Other Payments for financing activities - change in indebtedness relating to NNDR (due from Government and Preceptors) and Council Tax (due from Preceptors).	3,521	961
Total cash flows from financing activities	3,521	961

29. Members allowances

The council paid the following amounts to its members during the year:

	2021/22	2022/23
	£'000	£'000
Allowances	353	380
Expenses	0	3
Total	353	383

30. Officers remuneration

2022/23 Remuneration										
	Note	Salary	Expenses / Allowances	Compensation for Loss of Office	Benefits in Kind	Pension Contribution	Total Remuneration	Charges to CBC (50%)	Charges from CBC (50%)	Net Cost to SRBC
Post Title		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive	A	112	0	0	0	0	112	(56)		56
Chief Executive	B	0	0	0	0	0	0		22	22
Deputy Chief Executive	C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46	46
Director (Customer & Digital)	D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58	58
Director (Commercial & Property)	E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Interim Director (Commercial & Property)	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	40
Director (Communities)	G	83	0	0	0	14	98	(49)	0	49
Director (Governance)	H	80	0	0	0	14	94	(47)	0	47
Director (Finance & s151 Officer)	I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50
Director (Planning & Development)	J	56	0	0	0	9	65	(33)	0	33
Interim Director (Planning & Development)	K	50	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	50
Director (Change & Delivery)	L	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	45	45

A	The Chief Executive is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post. The Chief Executive left the authority on 31st December 2022.
B	The Chief Executive is employed by Chorley Borough Council from 01st January 2023. The Chief Executive is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.
C	The Deputy Chief Executive is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post. From 01st January 2023 the postholder has been employed by Chorley Borough Council as Chief Executive. The Deputy Chief Executive post remained vacant for the rest of the year.
D	The Director (Customer & Digital) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.
E	The Director (Commercial & Property) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post. The Director (Commercial & Property) left the authority on 07th November 2022. Salary includes discretionary redundancy payment of £25k, of which 50% was funded by South Ribble Borough Council.
F	The Interim Director (Commercial & Property) was contracted by Chorley Borough Council through an employment agency from 05th December 2022.. The Interim Director (Commercial & Property) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.
G	The Director (Communities) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.
H	The Director (Governance) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.
I	The Director (Finance & s151 Officer) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.
J	The Director (Planning & Development) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post. The Director (Planning & Development) left the authority on 11th December 2022.
K	The Interim Director (Planning & Development) was contracted by South Ribble Borough Council through an employment agency from 28th November 2022. This post is not a shared post and the full cost remains within South Ribble Council.
L	The Director (Change & Delivery) is employed by Chorley Borough Council from 01st April 2022 following the expansion of shared services between the two councils. The Director (Change & Delivery) is a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder is employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council have been charged 50% of the cost of the post.

The comparative information for 2021/22 is shown below:

2021/22 Remuneration										
Post Title	Note	Salary £'000	Expenses / Allowances £'000	Compensation for Loss of Office £'000	Benefits in Kind £'000	Pension Contribution £'000	Total Remuneration £'000	Charges to CBC (50%) £'000	Charges from CBC (50%) £'000	Net Cost to SRBC £'000
Chief Executive	A	146	0	0	2	0	148	(74)	0	74
Deputy Chief Executive	B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	61	61
Director (Customer & Digital)	C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	54
Director (Commercial & Property)	D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	47
Director (Communities)	E	78	1	0	0	13	92	(46)	0	46
Director (Governance)	F	78	0	0	0	13	91	(46)	0	46
Director (Finance & s151 Officer)	G	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46	46
Director (Planning & Development)	H	76	1	0	0	13	90	(45)	0	45

A	The Chief Executive was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.
B	The Deputy Chief Executive was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.
C	The Director (Customer & Digital) was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.
D	The Director (Commercial & Property) was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by Chorley Borough Council and South Ribble Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.
E	The Director (Communities) was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.
F	The Director (Governance) was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.
G	The Director (Finance & s151 Officer) was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was appointed on 26th April 2021 and was employed by Chorley Borough Council; South Ribble Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post. Prior to 26th April 2021, the s151 Officer role was undertaken by the Deputy Director of Finance on an interim basis with costs shared equally between South Ribble and Chorley Borough Councils.
H	The Director (Planning & Development) was a shared post with Chorley Borough Council; the postholder was employed by South Ribble Borough Council and Chorley Borough Council were charged 50% of the cost of the post.

The table below shows the number of employees, other than senior officers listed above, that has a total remuneration of £50,000 or more, excluding pension contributions.

Total Remuneration Banding	Number of employees 21-22	Number of employees 22-23
£50,000 to £55,000	9	6
£55,001 to £60,000	2	0
£60,001 to £65,000	4	2
£65,001 to £70,000	0	4
£70,001 to £75,000	2	0
£75,001 to £80,000	0	1
Balance at 31 March	17	13

The following table gives details of employee exit packages in 2021-22 and 2022-23.

Exit Package cost banding	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other agreed departures		Total number of exit packages		Total cost of exit packages	
	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23	21-22	22-23
£0 to £20,000	0	0	11	6	11	6	£106,290	£30,297
£20,001 to £40,000	0	0	3	1	3	1	£78,929	£29,629
£40,001 to £60,000	0	0	1	2	1	2	£55,000	£82,500
£60,001 to £80,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	£0	£0
£80,001 to £100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	£0	£0
£100,001 to £150,000	0	0	1	0	1	0	£102,231	£0
£150,001 to £200,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	£0	£0
Total	0	0	16	9	16	9	£342,450	£142,426

31. External audit costs

The Authority has incurred the following costs relating to external audit:

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Fees for statutory inspection and audit (Scale Fee)	34	41
Additional Fees outside of Scale Fee	31	34
Fees for the certification of grant claims and returns	18	32
Balance at 31 March	83	107

32. Grant income

The Authority credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (Note 14)		
National non-domestic rates	(3,332)	(2,619)
New Homes Bonus	(363)	(802)
Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)	(960)	0
Other Covid-19 Funding Grants	(192)	0
Other Revenue Grants & Contributions	(125)	(291)
Community Infrastructure Levy & Other Developer Contributions	(2,495)	(2,954)
Developer Contributions - Amounts Transferred to Grants Received In Advance	0	0
Other Capital Grants & Contributions	(3,287)	(7,433)
Total	(10,754)	(14,099)
Credited to Services		
Benefits Related Grants	(14,600)	(14,033)
Covid-19 Funding Grants	(2,663)	(1,261)
Other Grants & Contributions	(2,109)	(3,154)
Developer's Contributions payable to City Deal	(3,757)	(3,608)
Total	(23,129)	(22,056)
Grand Total	(33,883)	(36,155)

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

Grant Receipts in Advance	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Various contributions	(1,078)	(215)
Total	(1,078)	(215)

33. Related parties

The financial statements must disclose material transactions with related parties, to draw attention to the possible extent to which the Council might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the council.

◆ **Central Government**

Central government has effective control over the operations of the council as it provides the statutory framework within which it operates and the majority of its funding in the form of grants. Details of government grants received are given in note 32.

◆ **Members of the Council**

Members have direct control over the council's financial and operating policies. Elected members are required to complete a Notice of Registerable Interests and notify the council of any changes within 28 days. Declarations of interests in items relating to the personal interest of partners, relatives, or friends, are also recorded in the minutes of the meeting and the member will leave the meeting. Declarations are open to public inspection.

Note 29 relates to the allowances paid to members. The amounts paid to individual members are reported on the Council's web site.

- Members are also appointed to represent the Council on various external organisations some of which receive financial assistance from the Council. The amounts paid were immaterial and were properly approved.

◆ **Officers**

The Staff Code of Conduct requires declaration, to the departmental Chief Officer, of close personal relationships with Councillors and Contractors, financial and non-financial interests in, or membership of, external organisations, and all hospitality or gifts. These arrangements are subject to monitoring and reporting by the Council's HR Department.

In 2022/23 one senior officer made the following additional declarations: a family relationship with a senior officer in one of the Council's major precepting authorities. Although there are significant transactions between the two parties in relation to business rates and council tax, the administration of these is strictly defined by a statutory framework.

There were no other significant transactions with organisations in which Council officers had declared interests.

◆ **Preston Community Transport**

The Council made a contribution of £15k to Preston Community Transport in 2022/23 to support shopmobility and other transport initiatives across the Borough (£15k in 2021/22).

◆ **Partnerships, Companies and Trusts**

Shared Services Partnership – In January 2009 this partnership was established under an Administrative Collaboration Agreement entered into by South Ribble and Chorley Borough Councils; originally for the provision of accountancy, exchequer, treasury management, procurement and assurance services across the administrative areas of the two Councils.

The partnership has since been expanded to include a shared Management Team, including Chief Executive as well as the legal, HR, democratic services, communications and visitor economy and transformation and partnerships functions. The agreement between the two councils has been updated to reflect the new arrangements.

A Shared Services Joint Committee has been established to discharge the Chorley and South Ribble Councils' functions of providing these services.

In 2022/23 gross expenditure of £10.792m (2021/22 £7.828m) was incurred on the shared services – reflecting the continued expansion of the Shared Service approach. Costs were fully funded by recharges between the two Councils.

As at 31st March 2023, there are outstanding creditor / debtor balances of £732k and £980k respectively.

◆ **Subsidiary Companies**

During 2022/23 the Council operated a wholly owned company – South Ribble Leisure Limited.

The Company produces accounts as a separate entity, and these are consolidated within the Group Accounts included in this statement.

34. Capital expenditure and financing

The total capital expenditure in the year is shown below, together with the resources that have been used to finance it.

The statement incorporates details of the movements in the Capital Financing Requirement. This is a measure of the capital expenditure historically incurred by the Authority that has yet to be financed. This will be discharged by future charges to the revenue account.

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	2,500	3,511
<i>Capital investment:</i>		
Property, Plant and Equipment	6,793	11,557
Investment property	37	74
Intangible Assets	14	374
Infrastructure Assets	0	33
Community Assets	0	97
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	964	1,420
<i>Sources of finance:</i>		
Capital Receipts	(185)	(18)
Government Grants and Other Contributions	(3,580)	(8,701)
<i>Sums set aside from revenue:</i>		
Earmarked Reserves	(2,615)	(1,532)
Revenue Financing	(119)	(300)
Minimum Revenue provision	(298)	(358)
Closing Capital Financing Requirement	3,511	6,157
<i>Explanation of movements in year:</i>		
Assets financed by prudential borrowing	1,309	3,003
Provision made for debt repayment	(298)	(358)
Increase / (Decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	1,011	2,645

35. Leases

35a Authority as lessee

Finance leases

At 31 March 2023, the council was not party to any Finance Leases as lessee

Operating leases

The Authority has operating leases for office equipment and vehicles. The future minimum lease payments are as follows:

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Not later than one year	10	11
Later than one and not later than five years	7	1
Total	17	12

The operating lease rentals charged in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement during the year were as follows:

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Minimum lease payments	11	12
Total	11	12

35b Authority as lessor

Finance Leases

The council has leased one property for 125 years. In the following table the gross investment in the lease is reconciled to the present value of the minimum lease payments:

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Finance lease debtor (present value of minimum lease payments)	20	20
Unearned finance income	86	84
Total	106	104

The gross investment in the lease and the minimum lease payments will be received over the following periods:

	Gross Investment in the Lease		Minimum Lease Payments	
	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Not later than one year	1	1	1	1
Later than one and not later than five years	4	4	4	4
Later than five years	101	99	101	99
Total	106	104	106	104

No contingent rents were receivable in the years of account.

Operating leases

The council lets certain offices and industrial units. The future minimum lease payments receivable are:

	31 March 2022 £'000	31 March 2023 £'000
Not later than one year	1,048	1,021
Later than one and not later than five years	1,094	1,453
Later than five years	13,372	13,147
Total	15,514	15,621

36. Defined benefit pension scheme

36a Governance

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers and other employees, the Authority offers retirement benefits through the Local Government Pension Scheme. This scheme is administered by Lancashire County Council who have appointed a Pension Fund Committee (comprising a mix of County Councillors and representatives from other employers) to manage the Fund. The Committee is assisted by an investment panel which advises on investment strategy and risk management. The scheme is funded and pays defined benefits based on how long employees are active members, and their salary when they leave (a "final salary" scheme) for service up to 31 March 2014 and on revalued average salary (a "career average" scheme) for service from 1 April 2014 onwards.

36b Funding the liabilities

Regulations require actuarial fund valuations to be carried out every 3 years. Contributions for each employer are set having regard to their individual circumstances. Contributions must be set with a view to targeting the Funds solvency (the detailed provisions are set out in the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement). The latest valuation, carried out as at 31 March 2022, showed there was a surplus of £1.395m against the Fund's solvency funding target. An alternative way of expressing the position is that the Fund's assets were sufficient to cover 115% of its liabilities – this percentage is known as the solvency funding level of the Fund

At the previous valuation at 31 March 2019 the surplus for all employers was £12m, equivalent to a solvency funding level of 100%.

As part of this valuation, the Administering Authority has set an average recovery plan of approximately 10 years for employers in deficit and 16 years for employers in surplus where a surplus offset applies. The next actuarial valuation will take place with an effective date of 31 March 2025. If experience up to that date were to be in line with the assumptions made for this current actuarial valuation and contributions are paid at the agreed rates or amounts, there would be a surplus at 31 March 2025 of c£1,504m, equivalent to a funding level of 114%.

The latest valuation, which will be effective as at 31st March 2022 has determined primary contribution rates for 2023/24 – 2025/26 at 18.7% a secondary rate adjustment of -0.8% for the financial years 2023-24 to 2025-26, giving an overall total contribution rate of 17.9%.

36c Risks

The primary risk is that the Fund's assets will, in the long-term, fall short of its liabilities to pay benefits to members.

Investment risk management seeks to balance the maximisation of the opportunity for gain and minimise the risk of loss, on the fund's investments. The Fund achieves this through asset diversification to reduce exposure to market risk (price risk, currency risk, and interest rate risk), by ensuring counterparties meet credit criteria, and that investments are within the limits set by the investment strategy.

Other risks - The fund managers have to ensure that the fund has adequate liquidity to meet its obligations as they arise. They must also be sensitive to any actions of government or changes in European legislation which might affect funding requirements.

Sensitivity to these risks is estimated in paragraph 36i.

36d Transactions relating to retirement benefits

The council recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the revenue account in the Cost of Services, when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are actually paid as pensions. However, the charge required to be made against council tax is based on the cash payable to the fund during the year. An adjustment is therefore made to the General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following table shows the transactions made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
<i>Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>		
<i>Cost of Services:</i>		
Administration	55	60
Current service cost	3,638	3,954
Past service cost	0	0
Effect of curtailments	165	0
Incorporation of South Ribble Community Leisure Limited Net Liability	5,687	0
Transfer of South Ribble Leisure Limited Net Liability	(2,931)	0
<i>Net interest on the net defined benefit liability:</i>		
Interest costs	3,078	4,112
Expected return on scheme assets	(2,212)	(3,243)
Total post-employment benefit charged to the (Surplus) / Deficit on the Provision of Service	7,480	4,883
<i>Other post-employment benefit charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>		
Return on plan assets, excluding amount included in interest expense	(12,967)	(3,099)
Experience gain & loss	387	17,423
Actuarial gains & losses from changes in demographic assumptions	(1,118)	(59,202)
Actuarial gains & losses from changes in financial assumptions	691	(3,405)
Prior year adjustment	(12)	0
Total re-measurements recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	(13,019)	(48,283)
Total post-employment benefit charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(5,539)	(43,400)
<i>Movement in Reserves Statement</i>		
Reversal of net charges made to the (Surplus) / Deficit on the Provision of Services	(7,480)	(4,883)
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year	1,806	2,006

36e Pension assets and liabilities recognised in the balance sheet

The amount included in the balance sheet arising from the Authority's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plans is as follows:

	Scheme Liabilities Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(148,401)	(108,199)
Fair value of plan assets	117,241	120,684
Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation	(31,160)	12,485

36f Reconciliation of movements in the fair value of the scheme (plan) assets

	Scheme Assets Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
1 April	101,964	117,241
Adjustment to brought forward balance	(32)	0
Revised 1 April Balance	101,932	117,241
Interest on plan assets	2,212	3,243
Re-measurement gain/(loss)		
Return on plan assets, excluding amount included in interest expense	12,967	3,099
Employer contributions	589	245
Employee contributions	606	657
Benefits paid	(4,429)	(3,741)
Incorporation of South Ribble Community Leisure Limited Net Liability	6,404	0
Transfer of South Ribble Leisure Limited Net Liability	(2,985)	0
Other	(55)	(60)
31 March	117,241	120,684

The liabilities show the underlying commitments that the Authority has in the long-run to pay retirement benefits. In a change to previous years, there is an overall net asset of £12.485m on the pension scheme which has a substantial impact on the net worth of the Authority as recorded in the Balance Sheet.

Where a shortfall exists at the effective date of the valuation, a deficit recovery plan will be put in place which requires additional contributions to correct the shortfall. Equally, where there is a surplus in some circumstances it might be appropriate to offset this against contributions for future service, in which case contribution reductions will be put in place to allow for this.

36g Reconciliation of present value of the scheme liabilities (defined benefit obligation)

	Scheme Liabilities Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
1 April	(139,207)	(148,401)
Adjustment to brought forward balance	(1)	
Current service cost	(3,638)	(3,954)
Past Service Cost	0	0
Interest cost	(3,078)	(4,112)
Contributions by scheme participants	(606)	(657)
Re-measurement gains and (losses)		
Changes in financial assumptions	(691)	59,202
Experience gains & losses	(387)	(17,423)
Gains & losses from changes in demographic assumptions	1,118	3,405
Curtailments	(165)	0
Benefits paid	4,429	3,741
Incorporation of South Ribble Community Leisure Limited Net Liability	(12,091)	0
Transfer of South Ribble Leisure Limited Net Liability	5,916	0
31 March	(148,401)	(108,199)

36h Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised

	Fair value of scheme assets			
	2021/22	Percentage	2022/23	Percentage
	£'000	total of asset	£'000	total of asset
Cash				
Cash and cash equivalents		0.0%		0.0%
Cash accounts	3,251	2.8%	959	0.8%
Net Current Assets	(301)	(0.3%)	0	0.0%
Subtotal Cash	2,950	2.5%	959	0.8%
Equities				
Financials	140	0.1%	140	0.1%
	140	0.1%	140	0.1%
Bonds				
UK corporate	482	0.4%	0	0.0%
Overseas corporate	433	0.4%	249	0.2%
Government	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Overseas fixed interest	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Subtotal bonds	915	0.8%	249	0.2%
Property				
Retail	104	0.1%	243	0.2%
Commercial	1,768	1.5%	1,575	1.3%
Subtotal property	1,872	1.6%	1,818	1.5%
Private equity				
UK	2,593	2.2%	2,089	1.7%
Overseas	7,068	6.0%	8,025	6.6%
Subtotal private equity	9,661	8.2%	10,114	8.3%
Other				
Infrastructure	13,356	11.4%	18,773	15.6%
UK Pooled Equity Funds	1,104	0.9%	1,277	1.1%
Overseas Pooled Equity Funds	56,231	48.1%	57,480	47.7%
Property funds	10,223	8.7%	10,623	8.8%
Credit funds	15,691	13.4%	17,512	14.5%
Pooled income fund	5,098	4.3%	1,739	1.4%
Subtotal alternatives	101,703	86.8%	107,404	89.1%
Total	117,241	100.0%	120,684	100.0%

36i Basis for estimating assets and liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels etc. The liabilities have been assessed by Mercer Limited, an independent firm of actuaries. Estimates for the County Council Fund are based on the latest valuations as at 31 March 2022.

The main assumptions used in their calculations have been as follows:-

	Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22	2022/23
Mortality assumptions		
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners		
Men	22.3 yrs.	21.5 yrs.
Women	25.0 yrs.	23.8 yrs.
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners		
Men	23.7 yrs.	22.8 yrs.
Women	26.8 yrs.	25.6 yrs.
Rate of inflation (CPI)	3.40%	2.70%
Rate of increase in salaries	4.90%	4.20%
Rate of increase in pensions	3.50%	2.80%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	2.80%	4.80%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes in the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period, and for each assumption assumes that other factors remain unchanged.

	Impact on the defined benefit obligation in the scheme £'000
Longevity (increase 1 year)	2,259
Rate of inflation (increase of 0.25% p.a.)	4,474
Salary inflation (increase of 0.25% p.a.)	603
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities (increase of 0.5%)	(8,293)
Change in 2022/23 investment returns (increase of 1.0%)	(1,193)

36j Impact on the Authority's Future Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at a constant rate as possible. The FSS sets out the process for determining the recovery plan in respect of each employer. At this actuarial valuation the average recovery period adopted for employers in deficit is 10 years, and for employers in surplus is 16 years. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The latest triennial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2022.

The scheme will need to take account of the national changes to the scheme under the Public Pensions Services Act 2013. Under the Act, the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales and the other main existing public service schemes may not provide benefits in relation to service after 31 March 2014. The Act provides for scheme regulations to be made within a common framework, to establish new career average revalued earnings schemes to pay pensions and other benefits to certain public servants.

The authority will pay £1.781m expected contributions to the scheme in 2023/24.

The weighted average duration of the defined benefit obligation for scheme members is 17 years.

37. Contingent assets and liabilities

At 31 March 2023, the Council did not have any contingent assets or liabilities.

Collection Fund Statement

The Collection Fund (England) is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection from taxpayers, and distribution to local authorities and the Government, of council tax and non-domestic rates (Business Rates).

2021/22 Business Rates £'000	2021/22 Council Tax £'000		2022/23 Business Rates £'000	2022/23 Council Tax £'000
		Income		
0	(73,622)	Council Tax Receivable	0	(77,221)
(32,215)	0	Business Rates Receivable	(34,940)	0
(32,215)	(73,622)	Total Income	(34,940)	(77,221)
		Expenditure		
		Apportionment of Previous Year Surplus/(Deficit)		
(6,117)	0	Central Government	(2,530)	0
(4,295)	80	South Ribble Borough Council (note 14)	(2,024)	112
(885)	474	Lancashire County Council	(455)	694
0	72	Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire	0	109
(106)	24	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	(51)	34
		Precepts, Demands and Shares		
17,822	0	Central Government	17,007	0
14,258	8,563	South Ribble Borough Council (note 14)	13,606	8,636
3,208	52,742	Lancashire County Council	3,061	55,400
0	8,202	Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire	0	8,650
356	2,618	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	340	2,827
24,241	72,775	Total Expenditure	28,954	76,462
		Transfers from General Fund		
0	(54)	Discretionary Discounts	0	0
		Charges to Collection Fund		
0	0	Write offs of uncollectable amounts	0	0
418	1,031	Increase / (Decrease) in Bad Debt Provision	807	880
1,667	0	Increase / (Decrease) in Provision for Appeals	(1,535)	0
128	0	Cost of Collection Allowance	128	0
0	0	Disregarded Amounts	0	0
78	0	Renewable Energy Schemes	78	0
170	0	Enterprise Zone	170	0
80	0	Transitional Protection Payments	(121)	0
2,541	977	Total Charges to the Collection Fund	(473)	880
(5,433)	130	(Surplus) / deficit arising during the year	(6,459)	121
		Collection Fund Balance		
12,031	(132)	(Surplus) / deficit brought forward at 1 April	6,598	(2)
(5,433)	130	(Surplus) / deficit arising during the year	(6,459)	121
6,598	(2)	(Surplus) / deficit carried forward at 31 March	139	119
		Allocated to		
2,639	(3)	Transfer to / (from) Collection Fund Adjustment Account (Note 25e)	56	17
3,299	0	Central Government	69	0
594	0	Lancashire County Council	13	86
0	0	Police & Crime Commissioner for Lancashire	0	12
66	1	Lancashire Combined Fire Authority	1	4
6,598	(2)	(Surplus) / deficit carried forward at 31 March	139	119

Notes to the Collection Fund

1. Accounting for Council Tax

The amount of Council Tax to be credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for both billing authorities and major preceptors is their share of the accrued income. However, statute requires that the amount to be credited to the General Fund should be the authority's precept or demand for the year plus its share of the previous year's Collection Fund surplus or deficit. The difference between this regulatory charge and the accrued income is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account. This adjustment is included in the Movement in Reserves Statement and also appears in Note 10.

Revenue relating to council tax shall be measured at the full amount receivable (net of any impairment losses) as they are non-contractual, non-exchange transactions and there can be no difference between the delivery and payment dates.

Since the collection of council tax is an agency arrangement, debtor and creditor balances belong proportionately to the billing authority and the major preceptors. This results in a debtor/creditor position between the billing authority and each major preceptor.

2. Council Tax details of charge

For the purpose of calculating Council Tax residential properties are classified into eight valuation bands. Each valuation band is proportionate to the central Band D property. This enables calculation of the total tax base. The Council Tax Base for 2022/23 was calculated as follows: -

Band	No. Dwellings	Total No. Equivalent dwellings	Proportion of Band D Charge	Band D Equivalent
A (disabled)	23	21	5:9	11.70
A	10,125	8,336	6:9	5,557.30
B	13,287	11,537	7:9	8,973.20
C	12,605	11,243	8:9	9,993.80
D	8,245	7,596	9:9	7,596.00
E	4,211	3,969	11:9	4,851.00
F	1,646	1,595	13:9	2,303.90
G	550	512	15:9	853.30
H	23	21	18:9	42.00
Total	50,715	44,830		40,182.20
Less local Council Tax Support Scheme discounts				(3,039.20)
Less adjustments for losses on collection				(743.80)
Addition for anticipated changes in the base				185.70
Band D Equivalent Number of Properties				36,584.90

Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund by the precepting authorities for the forthcoming year and dividing this by the council tax base. This results in a basic Band D charge (excluding Parish Precepts) of £2,051.25 for 2022/23 (£1,978.15 for 2021/22). The other valuation bands are proportionate to this. The full list of charges is as follows:

Band	Proportion of Band D Charge	Council Tax Levied Excluding Parish Precepts	
		2021/22 £	2022/23 £
A	0.67	1,318.77	1,367.50
B	0.78	1,538.56	1,595.42
C	0.89	1,758.36	1,823.33
D	1.00	1,978.15	2,051.25
E	1.22	2,417.74	2,507.08
F	1.44	2,857.33	2,962.92
G	1.67	3,296.92	3,418.75
H	2.00	3,956.30	4,102.50

3. Accounting for business rates

The NDR income for the year credited to the Collection Fund is the accrued income for the year, regulations determine when it should be released from the Collection Fund and paid out to major preceptors (excluding police bodies) and the Government. The amount credited to the General Fund under statute is the Authority's estimated share of NDR for the year from the National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) 1 return.

The NDR income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the Authority's share of the Collection Fund's accrued income for the year from the NNDR 3 return. The difference between this value and the amount required by regulation to be credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account via the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Revenue relating to non-domestic rates shall be measured at the full amount receivable (net of any impairment losses) as they are non-contractual, non-exchange transactions and there can be no difference between the delivery and payment dates.

The cash collected by the Authority from NDR payers belongs proportionately to all the major preceptors (excluding police bodies) and Government. The difference between the amounts collected on behalf of the other major preceptors, Government and the payments made to them is reflected as a debtor or creditor balance as appropriate.

Regulations require that only the deficit or surplus estimated in the annual National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR) 1 Return before the year-end be recovered from or shared with preceptors. Therefore, a deficit of £5.060m was shared between preceptors during 2022/23, being the estimate included in NNDR1 2022/23, whereas the actual amount for 2021/22 was a deficit of £6.598m.

Note 14 Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure shows net Non-Domestic Rates Income and Expenditure for 2022/23 to be a net income of £4.122m (2021/22 net income of £1.460m). This can be reconciled to South Ribble Borough Council's share of Business Rates Income in the Collection Fund statement in the following table:

2021/22 £'000		2022/23 £'000
(14,257)	South Ribble Borough Council's share of Business Rates	(13,606)
10,327	Tariff Payable to the Lancashire Business Rates Pool	10,327
160	Levy Payable to the Lancashire Business Rates Pool	(36)
0	Amount Payable to County Wide Fund	0
(78)	Amounts retained by South Ribble Borough Council in respect of Renewable Energy Schemes	(78)
0	Amounts due to Lancashire County Council in respect of Designated Area Growth (21-22)	(170)
(1,907)	South Ribble Borough Council share of accumulated surplus or deficit for year (transferred to Collection Fund Adjustment Account - Note 25f)	(2,565)
4,295	South Ribble Borough Council share of previous year's estimated surplus or (deficit) as per NNDR1 under regulation	2,006
(1,460)	NNDR Net Income per Note 14	(4,122)

This council is part of the Lancashire Business Rates Pool which began on 1 April 2016. In a Business Rate Pool, tariffs, top-ups, levies and safety nets can be combined. This can result in a significantly lower levy rate or even a zero levy rate meaning that more or all of the business rate growth can be retained within the pool area instead of being payable to the Government. For more information on the Lancashire Business Rates Pool see Note 14(a).

4. Business rates details of charge

Business Rates are organised on a national basis. In 2005/2006 the Government introduced a Small Business Rate Relief Scheme. This results in there being two multipliers – one for small businesses at 49.9p in 2021/22 (49.9p in 2020/21) and one for larger businesses at 51.2p in 2022/23 (51.2p in 2021/22).

The Business Rates income for 2022/23, after reliefs and provisions, was £35.668m (£30.129m in 2021/22).

The rateable value for the council's area at the end of the financial year 2022/23 was £89.974m (£90.678m in 2021/22).

Group Accounts

Introduction

The authority is required to adhere to proper accounting practices comprised primarily of the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), International Accounting Standards and statutory guidance issued under section 12 of the Local Government Act 2003.

An authority with interests in subsidiaries, associates and/or joint ventures is required to prepare Group Accounts in addition to their single entity financial statements unless these interests are not considered to be material.

Group Accounts are the financial statements of a group in which the assets, liabilities, reserves, income, expenses and cash flows of the parent (reporting authority) and its subsidiaries, plus the investments in associates and interests in joint ventures are presented as those of a single economic entity.

South Ribble Leisure Limited is a company with charitable purposes, limited by shares and is wholly owned by South Ribble Borough Council. The company commenced trading on 1 September 2021. Its objectives include;

- provision of leisure and sports facilities and services;
- connection of the leisure centres with the corporate objectives of improving health and well-being and reducing health inequalities across the Borough;
- development of a leisure local model from leisure centres which seeks to widen access to facilities in hard to reach areas and groups within the Borough;

The company is overseen by a Board of Directors which consists of three South Ribble Council officers, one of whom is designated the Managing Director of the Company. The Managing Director resigned from the Company in November 2022 on leaving his post at Chorley Council.

The Council maintains control of the company's activities through the scrutiny of the Leisure Strategic Partnership Board, which regularly reviews the financial and operational performance of the company.

South Ribble Leisure Limited produce accounts with a year-end date of 31 March. The accounts for the period from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with Section 1A of FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'. The accounts are filed at Companies House in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

1. Prior Period Error

South Ribble Leisure Limited has discovered an error in some of the figures reported in the 2021-22 consolidated group accounts. The net pension liability of £2.931m was transferred from the Council to South Ribble Leisure Limited on 1st September 2021. The transfer was accounted for correctly, however the disclosures in the Group Accounts were not updated meaning that the net pension liability and corresponding unusable reserves are understated by this amount.

In order to Correct this the council has made the following restatements to the Group Accounts:

Balance Sheet

	Originally Stated 31st March 2022 £'000	Restated 31st March 2022 £'000	Amount of Restatement £'000
Net Pension Liability	(30,390)	(33,321)	(2,931)
Unusable Reserves	(9,543)	(6,612)	2,931

Movement in Reserves Statement

	Originally Stated 31st March 2022 £'000	Restated 31st March 2022 £'000	Amount of Restatement £'000
Unusable Reserves	(9,543)	(6,612)	2,931
Total Reserves	(44,883)	(41,952)	2,931

2. Accounting Policies

The notes which follow the main statements detail any variations from the accounting policies used by the authority and should be read in conjunction with the relevant notes to authority's accounts. The consolidation has been done on a merger basis as South Ribble Leisure Limited is wholly owned by the Council.

Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

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

2021/22				2022/23		
Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000		Gross Expenditure £'000	Gross Income £'000	Net Expenditure £'000
10,441	(2,703)	7,738	Commercial and Property	6,325	(871)	5,454
3,740	(1,299)	2,441	Communities	4,163	(512)	3,651
26,195	(18,041)	8,154	Customer and Digital	25,965	(17,815)	8,150
3,599	(1,627)	1,972	Governance	3,831	(1,445)	2,386
5,368	(5,251)	117	Planning and Development	11,775	(9,013)	2,762
2,919	(740)	2,179	Policy	3,496	(875)	2,621
2,684	(2,670)	14	Budgets Not in Directorates	1,190	(1,510)	(320)
54,946	(32,331)	22,615	Cost of Services	56,745	(32,041)	24,704
478	(185)	293	Other Operating Expenditure	469	(188)	281
2,575	(3,404)	(829)	Financing and Investment Income and expenditure	4,163	(5,272)	(1,109)
10,977	(31,821)	(20,844)	Taxation and non-specific grant income	10,604	(37,935)	(27,331)
68,976	(67,741)	1,235	(Surplus)/Deficit on provision of services	71,981	(75,436)	(3,455)
		273	(Surplus)/Deficit on revaluation of Property Plant and Equipment Assets			(2,189)
		(14,094)	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability			(51,078)
		(13,821)				(53,267)
		(12,586)				(56,722)

Group Movement in Reserves Statement

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

	General Fund £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March 2021	(26,913)	0	(8,283)	(35,196)	2,899	(32,297)
<u>Movements in 2021/22</u>						
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	1,235	0	0	1,235	(13,821)	(12,586)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis	971	0	(2,350)	(1,379)	1,379	0
Prior Year adjustment	0	0	0	0	2,931	2,931
(Increase)/decrease in year	2,206	0	(2,350)	(144)	(9,511)	(9,655)
Balance at 31 March 2022	(24,707)	0	(10,633)	(35,340)	(6,612)	(41,952)
<u>Movements in 2022/23</u>						
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(3,455)	0	0	(3,455)	(53,267)	(56,722)
Adjustments between accounting basis & funding basis	6,691	(170)	(1,781)	4,740	(4,740)	0
(Increase)/decrease in year	3,236	(170)	(1,781)	1,285	(58,007)	(56,722)
Balance at 31 March 2023	(21,471)	(170)	(12,414)	(34,055)	(64,619)	(98,674)

Group Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet 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 the reserves held by the authority. Reserves are reported in two categories, usable and unusable. Usable reserves are 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 that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). Unusable reserves are 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 reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations.

31 March 2022 £'000		Notes	31 March 2023 £'000
36,374	Property, Plant & Equipment	15	47,031
11,159	Investment Property	16	10,741
112	Intangible Assets	17	55
186	Long-Term Debtors		182
0	Other Long-Term Assets - pensions	36	13,233
47,831	Long-Term Assets		71,242
34,026	Short-Term Investments	18	27,660
114	Inventories	19	0
6,424	Short-Term Debtors	20	8,539
21,903	Cash and Cash Equivalents	21	9,353
62,467	Current Assets		45,552
(31,443)	Short-Term Creditors	22	(16,035)
(2,351)	Provisions	23	(1,737)
(33,794)	Current Liabilities		(17,772)
(152)	Long-Term Creditors	18	(133)
(33,321)	Net Pension Liability	36	(0)
(1,078)	Grant Receipts in Advance - capital	32	(215)
(34,551)	Long-Term Liabilities		(348)
41,953	Net Assets		98,674
(35,341)	Usable Reserves	24 & MiRS	(34,055)
(6,612)	Unusable Reserves	25	(64,619)
(41,953)	Total Reserves		(98,674)



Louise Mattinson
Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer
xx November 2023

Group Cash Flow Statement

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the authority during the reporting period. The statement shows how the authority generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which the operations of the authority are funded by way of 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 (i.e. borrowing) to the authority.

The cash flows in respect of South Ribble Leisure Limited have been consolidated within a cash flow statement for the group. All South Ribble Leisure Limited's cash flows in 2022/23 arose from operating activities. There were no investing or financing activities.

2021/22 £'000		2022/23 £'000
(1,235)	Net surplus or (deficit) on the provision of services	3,455
15,700	Adjustments to net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	(9,621)
(5,969)	Adjustments for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities	(11,533)
8,496	Net cash flows from Operating Activities	(17,699)
(5,262)	Investing Activities	4,190
3,521	Financing Activities	961
6,755	Net increase or (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	(12,548)
15,148	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	21,903
21,903	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	9,355

Group Account Notes

Introduction

The following notes have been prepared on an exception basis with only those items which have materially changed from the Council's Statement of Accounts being included. For all other items, reference should be made to the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on page 45 and Balance Sheet on page 43 and the appropriate note.

1. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

The Expenditure and Funding Analysis shows how annual expenditure is used and funded from resources (government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) by local authorities in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the council's committees. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2021/22				2022/23		
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance	Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis	Net Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
£'000	£'000	£'000	Directorate	£'000	£'000	£'000
1,289	6,449	7,738	Commercial and Property	5,120	334	5,454
1,402	1,039	2,441	Communities	(417)	4,440	4,023
5,793	2,361	8,154	Customer and Digital	6,675	1,475	8,150
1,696	276	1,972	Governance	678	1,708	2,386
(36)	153	117	Planning and Development	2,106	284	2,390
2,211	(32)	2,179	Policy	1,944	677	2,621
(570)	584	14	Budgets not in Directorates	(459)	139	(320)
11,785	10,830	22,615	Net Cost of Service	15,647	9,057	24,704
(9,579)	(11,801)	(21,380)	Other Income and Expenditure	(12,412)	(15,747)	(28,159)
2,206	(971)	1,235	(Surplus)/Deficit in year	3,235	(6,690)	(3,455)
(26,913)			Opening General Fund Balance at 1 April	(24,707)		
2,205			Add (Surplus)/Less Deficit on General Fund Balance in Year	3,235		
(24,708)			Closing General Fund Balance at 31 March	(21,472)		

2. Expenditure and Income analysed by nature

The expenditure and income of the Group is analysed as follows;

	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Expenditure/Income		
Expenditure		
Employee benefits expenses	19,953	18,972
Other service Expenses	30,911	32,574
Depreciation, amortisation, impairment	3,992	5,113
Interest payments	3,078	4,112
Precepts, tariffs and levies	10,968	10,761
Loss on the disposal of assets	74	448
Total Expenditure	68,976	71,980
Income		
Fees, charges and other service income	(20,435)	(26,720)
Interest and investment income	(2,303)	(4,112)
Income for council tax and non-domestic rates	(20,577)	(22,971)
Government grants and contributions	(24,241)	(21,444)
Gain on the disposal of assets	(185)	(188)
Total income	(67,741)	(75,435)
Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	1,235	(3,455)

3. Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

3a Governance

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers and other employees, both South Ribble Borough Council and South Ribble Leisure Ltd offer retirement benefits through the Local Government Pension Scheme. Both schemes are administered by Lancashire County Council who have appointed a Pension Fund Committee (comprising a mix of County Councillors and representatives from other employers) to manage the Funds. The Committee is assisted by an investment panel which advises on investment strategy and risk management. The scheme is funded and pays defined benefits based on how long employees are active members, and their salary when they leave (a "final salary" scheme) for service up to 31 March 2014 and on revalued average salary (a "career average" scheme) for service from 1 April 2014 onwards.

3b Funding the liabilities

Regulations require actuarial fund valuations to be carried out every 3 years. Contributions for each employer are set having regard to their individual circumstances. Contributions must be set with a view to targeting the Funds solvency (the detailed provisions are set out in the Fund's Funding Strategy Statement). Whilst the South Ribble Leisure Ltd is a new fund, as it was established on the date that the company began trading operations on 1st September 2021, the South Ribble Borough Council fund has been in operation since the establishment of the council in 1974. Details of the council valuation, carried out as at 31st March 2022, can be found at Note 36.

South Ribble Borough Council have signed a Deed of Guarantee and undertake to guarantee any deficit arising on the South Ribble Leisure Ltd pension fund should the company cease to operate.

The latest valuation, effective as at 31st March 2022 has determined contribution rates for 2023/24 and the two following years.

3c Transactions relating to retirement benefits

The cost of retirement benefits for both the council and South Ribble Leisure Ltd are recognised in the Cost of Services in the revenue account, when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are actually paid as pensions. However, within the Group Accounts, the charge required to be made is based on the cash payable to the fund during the year. An adjustment is therefore made to the Group General Fund via the Group Movement in Reserves Statement. The following table shows the transactions made in the Group Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Group General Fund Balance via the Group Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	2021/22	2022/23
<i>Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>		
<i>Cost of Services:</i>		
Administration	60	68
Current service cost	4,037	4,503
Past service cost	0	0
Effect of curtailments	165	0
Incorporation of South Ribble Community Leisure Trust Net Liability	5,687	0
Transfer of South Ribble Leisure Limited Net Liability	0	0
<i>Net interest on the net defined benefit liability:</i>		
Interest costs	3,137	4,169
Expected return on scheme assets	(2,243)	(3,243)
Total post-employment benefit charged to the (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Service	10,843	5,497
<i>Other post-employment benefit charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement</i>		
Return on plan assets, excluding amount included in interest expense	(13,023)	(3,549)
Experience (gains) and losses	396	18,114
Actuarial (gains) and losses from changes in demographic assumptions	(1,118)	(59,321)
Actuarial (gains) and losses from changes in financial assumptions	(337)	(6,322)
Prior Year Adjustment	(12)	0
Total re-measurements recognised in Other Comprehensive Income	(14,094)	(51,078)
Total post-employment benefit charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(3,251)	(45,581)
<i>Movement in Reserves Statement</i>		
Reversal of net charges made to the (Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(10,843)	(5,497)
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year	1,933	2,234

3d Pension assets and liabilities recognised in the balance sheet

The amount included in the balance sheet arising from the Group's obligations in respect of its defined benefit plans are as follows;

	Scheme Liabilities Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(153,826)	(112,082)
Fair value of plan assets	120,505	124,815
Net asset / (liability) arising from defined benefit obligation	(33,321)	12,733

3e Reconciliation of fair value of the scheme (plan) assets

	Scheme Assets Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
1 April	101,964	120,505
Adjustment to brought forward balance	(32)	0
Revised 1 April Balance	101,932	120,505
Interest on plan assets	2,243	3,339
Re-measurement gain/(loss)		
Return on plan assets, excluding amount included in interest expense	13,023	3,549
Employer contributions	716	473
Employee contributions	651	739
Benefits paid	(4,404)	(3,722)
Incorporation of South Ribble Community Leisure Trust Assets	6,404	
Transfer of South Ribble Leisure Assets	0	0
Other	(60)	(68)
31 March	120,505	124,815

3f Reconciliation of present value of the scheme liabilities (defined benefit obligation)

	Scheme Liabilities Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000
1 April	(139,207)	(153,826)
Adjustment to brought forward balance	(1)	0
Current service cost	(4,037)	(4,503)
Past service cost	0	0
Interest cost	(3,137)	(4,265)
Contributions by scheme participants	(651)	(739)
<i>Re-measurement gains and (losses)</i>		
Changes in financial assumptions	337	62,119
Experience gains and losses	(396)	(18,114)
Gains and losses from changes in demographic assumptions	1,118	3,524
Curtailments	(165)	0
Benefits paid	4,404	3,722
Incorporation of South Ribble Community Leisure Trust Liabilities	(12,091)	0
Transfer of South Ribble Leisure Limited Liabilities	0	0
Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation	(153,826)	(112,082)

3g Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised

	Fair value of scheme assets			
	2021/22	Percentage total of assets	2022/23	Percentage total of assets
Cash				
Cash and cash equivalents	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Cash accounts	3,333	2.7%	992	0.8%
Net Current Assets	(301)	-0.2%	0	0.0%
Subtotal Cash	3,032	2.5%	992	0.8%
Equities				
Financials	143	0.1%	144	0.1%
Subtotal Equities	143	0.1%	144	0.1%
Bonds				
UK corporate	508	0.4%	0	0.0%
Overseas corporate	433	0.4%	249	0.2%
Government	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other bonds	0	0.0%	8	0.0%
Overseas fixed interest	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Subtotal bonds	941	0.8%	257	0.2%
Property				
Retail	104	0.1%	243	0.2%
Commercial	1,820	1.5%	1,637	1.3%
Subtotal property	1,924	1.6%	1,880	1.5%
Private equity				
UK	2,593	2.2%	2,089	1.7%
Overseas	7,068	5.9%	8,025	6.4%
Subtotal private equity	9,661	8.1%	10,114	8.1%
Other				
Infrastructure	13,356	11.1%	18,773	15.0%
Other	3,101	2.5%	4,024	3.2%
UK Pooled Equity Funds	1,104	0.9%	1,277	1.0%
Overseas Pooled Equity Funds	56,231	46.7%	57,480	46.2%
Property funds	10,223	8.5%	10,623	8.5%
Credit funds	15,691	13.0%	17,512	14.0%
Pooled income fund	5,098	4.2%	1,739	1.4%
Subtotal Other	104,804	86.9%	111,428	89.3%
Total	120,505	100.00%	124,815	100.00%

Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2022/23 was approved by Governance Committee on 23 May 2023 and appears below.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Annual Governance Statement is a point in time assessment of the council's governance framework. It considers information assembled over the course of the previous 12 months to make an evidence-based assessment of the systems, processes, culture and values that feed into our internal control environment and our compliance with them. This document draws the evidence together and provides a valued judgement of our governance environment.

The AGS provides an overview of the council's key governance systems and explains how they are tested and the assurance that can be relied upon to show that these systems and processes operating effectively. The Statement comprises an overview of the key elements of its governance framework and what evidence has been received in order to determine the effectiveness of the arrangements. In addition, the Statement contains an update on the areas for improvement identified last year, together with proposed areas for improvement for the coming year.

2. What is Corporate Governance

South Ribble Borough Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law, to the highest standards and that there is a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control). Public money must be protected and properly accounted for. We also have a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to continually review and improve the way we work, while at the same time offering value for money and delivering an efficient and effective service.

To meet this responsibility, we have put in place arrangements for overseeing what we do (this is what we mean by governance). These arrangements are intended to make sure we do the right things, in the right way, for the right people, in a fair, open, honest and accountable way.

Our Governance Framework is based on the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework¹. It promotes and demonstrates our commitment to the principles of good governance and incorporates the council's values that emphasise how we do things at South Ribble Borough Council. It is important to note that a robust governance framework only has value if it is complied with and contains sufficient controls to ensure this.

The adopted Local Code of Corporate Governance incorporates and demonstrates how the 7 principles detailed by the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework, and set out below, are complied with.

Good governance means:-

- behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

¹ The CIPFA / SOLACE (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy / Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers) framework "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government".

- defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits
- determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- developing the council’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Our Local Code was reviewed and updated this year and approved by Governance Committee on 7 March 2023 and can be accessed through this hyperlink [here](#).

3. The Council’s Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the systems, processes, culture and values by which we direct and control our activities including those by which we account to, engage with and lead the community. It enables us to monitor how we are achieving our long-term aims and to demonstrate where this has led to improved services that are delivering value for money. The council has responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of governance.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot remove all risk of failing to achieve our priorities and aims, so it can only offer reasonable protection. It is based on an ongoing process that is designed to:

- Identify and prioritise the risks that could prevent us achieving our aims and objectives
- Assess the likelihood and impact of the risk occurring
- Manage the risks efficiently, effectively and economically.

The local code should enable members to satisfy themselves that council has processes, systems and checks which ensure our objectives are being met lawfully, in accordance with the corporate and medium term financial strategies and in a way that demonstrates value for money. The framework is the basis for the decision-making structures, compliance with it enables members to have sufficient information to test recommendations and to make a reasonable, evidence based decisions.

There has been evidence of improvement in the governance framework with external audit recognising in earlier years that significant works have been undertaken to develop and implement robust policies and processes to support it. It is important that the Council acknowledge that the work completed is only the beginning and we must continue to commit to improvement. We must demonstrate this commitment through honest self-assessment and regularly reviewing how we can be better, using the governance framework to self-identify issues and improvements and take steps to implement them quickly.

However, there continue to be failures in the governance environment and as a result members cannot draw full assurance in relation to compliance, but it is important to recognise that these are being identified by ourselves through audits and reviews and demonstrate that there is a greater level of honesty and transparency in the way the Council is working.

Values of good governance

The Council also promotes and demonstrates the values of good governance by upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour. The following strong arrangements are in place to ensure that appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained:

- Codes of Conduct (Members and Officers)
- Member Officer Protocol
- Suite of HR policies
- Suite of Counter Fraud Policies

The Code of Conduct for Members has been comprehensively reviewed, led by members of the Standards Committee and supported by the Independent Persons. It was strengthened with changes proposed in updated guidance from the Local Government Association incorporated.

The end of the pandemic

A recent meeting of the Constitution Working Group has recommended the removal of changes to Standing Orders introduced during Covid. This will remove some procedural restrictions relating to the attendance of the public and their participation in meetings taking us back to the pre-pandemic position. The Working Group feel this promotes greater transparency in decision making.

4. How we review the effectiveness of the Governance Framework

This section identifies the structures, committees, bodies and officer roles which serve to review the appropriateness of the governance arrangements and their application.

The Council has a responsibility to keep the effectiveness of its governance arrangements under review to ensure continuous improvement. This review is informed by the work of the Governance Committee supported by management, internal and external auditors and other review agencies.

Governance Committee - The Governance Committee provides member oversight and scrutiny of the Council's business controls. The Governance committee undertakes all of the core functions of an audit committee as identified in the relevant CIPFA guidance. An assessment has been undertaken during 2020/21 and this confirmed that the Committee are operating in line with CIPFA's Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police 2018. Looking forward, new guidance has been issued by CIPFA which includes a self-assessment of good practice exercise. It is proposed to work with the Committee this Summer to review how the Committee functions are discharged.

Shared Services Joint Committee - The Joint Committee monitors service performance of the shared services partnership between South Ribble Borough and Chorley Borough Councils, and is a good example of our effective governance of partnerships.

Standards Committee - the committee's role is to promote high ethical standards. Standards Committee reports to full Council on an annual basis on the work that it carried out. There have been no hearings this year.

Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee have continued to play an active role in the business of the Council, holding the Executive to account and assisting in the development of Policy and feeding into the budget cycle. It was Chaired by a councillor who is not part of the administration.

The Scrutiny Budget and Performance Panel meets to challenge and comment on the quarterly performance and budget monitoring reports prior to consideration by Cabinet as part of our new rigorous Performance Management Framework.

The Scrutiny Chair attends the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee and reports back to each meeting. The Council plays a leading role in the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network which shares learning and best practice amongst Members.

Member Training

The Council holds the North West Employers Member Development Charter and has a cross-party Member Development Steering Group that takes an overview of Member training and development. A Member Personal Development Planning is now embedded with member PDP's being completed.

During the year all Member training was provided on a number of different topics and Member briefings held to support member understanding of council business.

Members have also attended a number of external training courses and conferences via the LGA and other providers.

Management Team / Leadership Team

This has been a period of change for both the Senior Management Team and Senior Leadership Team. A new Chief Executive started employment on 1 January 2023 and fulfils the Head of Paid Service role. The Director of Commercial Services and Director of Planning and Development have both left the authority. This has necessitated some temporary arrangements in relation to these roles. The recruitment to the Senior Leadership Team has continued with all Head of Service roles now filled.

Section 151 Officer / Director of Finance

The Director of Finance/ Section 151 Officer is a member of the Senior Management Team.

Statutory Regulation / Monitoring Officer

This role is fulfilled by the Director of Governance who is also a member of the Senior Management Team.

Corporate Governance Group / Officer arrangements

In developing this Annual Governance Statement, the council's senior officers have worked collectively to understand and assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the council's governance framework. This work has been overseen by a Corporate Governance Group comprising:

- Chief Executive
- Deputy Chief Executive (currently vacant)
- Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
- Director of Finance S151 Officer
- Director Change and Delivery
- Head of Audit and Risk

The Corporate Governance Group (CGG) have worked with the council's Senior Management Team who have individually produced and collectively reviewed service assurance statements which assess compliance with and understanding of the council's governance framework. This assessment has supported the production of this document.

It is also important to note the ongoing role that all the council's senior officers have in ensuring that good governance is enacted in the working of the organisation.

A terms of reference for the CGG have been developed which will further enhance the governance monitoring and reporting arrangements. These will ensure greater accountability of Heads of Service for their responsibilities to the governance environment. Whilst the Director of Governance will continue to be responsible for maintaining and monitoring the governance framework, the CGG will support the drive for its embedding in the organisation.

Programme Board

A corporate programme board continues to meet quarterly to review and monitor the performance of the Corporate Strategy projects and performance measures ahead of reporting to Cabinet. The board is made up of the Senior Management Team as those accountable for overall programme delivery

and ensuring compliance with the Performance Management Framework. The board receive an update report highlighting issues, concerns and risks by exception. The board will discuss issues and identify solutions before cascading directions back to project managers and teams.

Data Security / Information Governance

The Data Protection Officer function is fulfilled by the Director of Governance. The Senior Information Risk Owner is the Director (Customer and Digital).

The Information Security Council consisting of the SIRO, DPO, and Head of ICT, Customer and Digital oversees data security, information governance and compliance. The terms of reference are in the process of being refreshed to ensure clear responsibility lines are established. The ISC will work with the Senior Leadership Team to monitor performance and assess development and training needs.

Organisational Development

The HR Hub has brought together in one place both the OD strategy and wider eLearning opportunities making it easier to manage and identify gaps in staff's knowledge and / or experience but also a framework to address them. Greater use of the system has been developed with Managers able to monitor completion of mandatory training within their teams.

The Personal Development Review process has now run through a complete cycle with the on line system enabling live monitoring of completion of the different stages.

Corporate Complaints / Local Ombudsman

The number of customer complaints processed as stage one complaints have decreased year on year, from 199 in 2021/22 to 178. In terms of numbers this is not a significant change year on year but does represent a reduction.

The Council are aware of 6 complaints which were made to the Local Government Ombudsman in the year 2022/23. None of the complaints were upheld.

External Audit

The Council receive regular reports on elements of its internal control environment, including performance management, risk management, financial management and governance.

The most recent review undertaken (which is for the period 2021/22) has acknowledged the Council's continued commitment to enhance the governance environment, identifying only improvements that should be made. This is a continuing endorsement of the work the council have done in recent years.

Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny

This year the Centre for Governance and Public Scrutiny undertook an independent step-back review of the council's governance environment paying close attention to:

- The impact of changes to the Constitution
- Member roles and relationships
- Executive decision-making, accountability and transparency
- Public participation.

Whilst the CfG&PS identified no issues a number of recommendations were made and Council have resolved to adopt them. These are in the process of being fully considered.

Internal Audit and the Head of Audit Opinion

Internal Audit is responsible for providing assurance on the quality and effectiveness of the system of governance and internal control. A risk based Internal Audit Plan is produced. The reporting process for Internal Audit requires a report of each audit to be submitted to the relevant service. This report includes recommendations for improvements that are included within a Management Action Plan and require agreement or rejection by service managers.

The Internal Audit Annual Report contains a statement/ judgement on overall levels of internal control (a view based on the relative significance of the systems reviewed during the year, in the context of the totality of the control environment).

The Annual Internal Audit report contains the following opinion from the Head of Internal Audit:

Based on the work undertaken and evidence available to Internal Audit including other sources of assurance, it is considered that the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk management and control processes are **adequate** for the financial year ended 31st March 2023 except for the significant control weaknesses identified during the course of the year including:

Commercial Directorate Procurement review;
 Utilities management review;
 Open water Management review
 General Data Protection regulations – data retention.

5. Governance Environment: Areas to Strengthen

There have been a number of limited assurance Internal Audit reports issued this year. Some of the failings identified could have had very serious consequences for the Council.

A routine Internal Audit of the creditors system highlighted a failure to adhere to financial management procedures in relation to payments to a contractor. Based upon this finding, an audit of the procurement within the directorate was commissioned. This identified significant governance failings in terms of procurements undertaken and compliance with the contract procedure rules and confirmed the failures to provide proper financial management. A comprehensive management action plan was agreed, and its implementation has progressed in year. The actions still require embedding.

A Directorate Development Group has been established. Its purpose is to ensure the failings identified are being proactively addressed. This is intended to be a supportive environment, recognising that whilst the Heads of Service are new to the organisation, they must own the need to improve and lead on embedding the culture of good governance. It will monitor improvement, identify barriers to compliance and seek solutions. It is chaired by the Chief Executive.

One of the more significant issues identified was procedural failing in relation to Information Security. Council policies were not adhered to in relation to systems access. Whilst it should not be concluded that there was anything improper done, the risk of such activity taking place was not adequately considered, controlled or managed.

The Senior Management Team have undertaken works to ensure the extent of this non-compliance is known and further works are being undertaken to improve monitoring arrangements in relation to council system access and external spend. This is not to identify failures in the governance framework as such, but to highlight and understand situations that could lead to a breakdown in control arising.

The improvements to the IT network, systems and software have been delivered in line with the Council's Digital Strategy and have strengthened the council's data security arrangements and made us more resilient. Whilst there is an impact on the wider governance environment, these works were necessary and urgent. They were the foundation actions to provide a solid base for the governance environment. They will enable greater digitisation of processes and control of access to information. This is also an opportunity to redesign processes for use on the new systems to ensure they meet the council's needs and obligations. In the short term there will be challenges for the council, but the longer term benefits will be realised as the new procedures are implemented. An initial piece of work has been undertaken to identify key procedures to be developed using the Microsoft Approval platform. Existing procedures were considered and prioritised. Some are identified in the Action Plan below.

The Service Assurance Statements have identified some additional areas of corporate failure to comply with policies. This is evidence that the governance environment needs to be embedded further with greater emphasis and attention given to the operation of the Governance Framework and compliance with procedures and systems. These areas for improvement are recognised in the actions in the table below.

Statutory Officers are working with the Senior Leadership Team to embed the importance of compliance with the governance framework, attending Directorate Management meetings. The Corporate Governance Group receive reports from Heads of Service detailing where the governance framework is working well and where there are challenges. This provides an opportunity to share good practice but is an on-going review of issues that maybe shared across the organisation.

A strong governance environment, as set out in part 2 above, needs all the elements working together in concert. We are not there yet. Failings continue to be identified, the main area being around compliance. However, we have established ways to resolve the identified issues as we continue to strive to improve.

The following table relates to the action plan from the 2021/22 Annual Governance Statement. The improvements are specific and the table indicates whether the action is completed or outstanding.

Theme	Areas for improvement	Suggested improvement	Progress
Process/ System	Failure to identify, monitor and report of fraud risks facing the Authority	To develop the Council's approach to fraud following the assessment of the Council's arrangements against Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally 2020-2025	Outstanding This work was arranged to be undertaken in conjunction with Preston CC. Unfortunately the allocated officer from PCC was not available to support the review Carried forward to 23/24.
	Failure to have a system in place to ensure key corporate policies are regularly reviewed, version controlled and remain up to date and accurate.	Devise and implement a corporate process to ensure all staff revisit key policies so a good level of awareness is maintained across the organisation	In progress This will be delivered through the Microsoft Approvals platform and the process is in development. Carried forward to 23/24
	Contract Management System	Directors to ensure all contracts are entered onto the corporate CMS in a timely fashion including current "live" contracts.	This has been delayed pending the implementation of the new intranet Carried forward to 23/24
	Risk Management	A range of reports to be developed to allow Directors to challenge data held with GRACE including partnership, project and operational risks.	Completed

	Cyber Security, use of ICT equipment and system access	<p>Once approved, awareness of the contents of the Shared Information Security Framework should be raised using all communication methods.</p> <p>A programme of Cyber security training sessions should be developed and delivered to highlight to all officers and members the risks faced by the council.</p> <p>Align where appropriate all IT forms and processes across the shared council environment.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Carried Forward to 2023/24</p> <p>In progress – key processes have now been identified for development on the Microsoft Approvals platform which will be fully integrated with Council systems. IT are working with staff leads for different processes to ensure the procedure meets the needs of the Council Prioritisation of the key processes has been undertaken to ensure that the highest risk processes are being addressed first.</p>
Staff development	Equality	Once approved, the refreshed equality framework should be rolled out including training and updating of EIAs on website	Completed
	Organisational Development	<p>OD to ensure monitoring reports are issued to Directors on a regular basis. This is to include monitoring of compliance with new HR policies and processes.</p> <p>All Directors to ensure all mandatory training is completed within the agreed timescales.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Whilst there has been progress in relation to this action performance remains below target and remains a priority Carried Forward to 2023/24</p>
	OD Strategy to be developed (May 22) Mandatory training modules to be completed in full		

Corporate	Constitution	Constitution to be reviewed and updated where applicable.	In progress Will be completed in Q2 2023 carried forward to 2023/24
	Business continuity	To put forward a business case for the future management of business continuity to standardize and align process across the two authorities. To establish a forward plan of testing to ensure plans are robust, encompass all council activity and are fit for purpose.	Complete

Following the assessment of our governance environment, no significant failings were identified by the Corporate Governance Group, although as the council have committed to continuous improvement the group have identified areas where it could be enhanced. Although, as stated, last years actions are not being rolled forward into this years' plan, some are being adapted into new actions to reflect in year changes. The table will form the basis for a more detailed action plan for delivery of the improvements. It is intended to report progress against the plan to Governance Committee mid year and year end.

Theme	Areas of identified failings	Suggested improvement
Process/ System	Failure to identify, monitor and report of fraud risks facing the Authority	To develop the Council's approach to fraud following the assessment of the Council's arrangements against Fighting Fraud and Corruption Locally 2020-2025
	Failure to have a system in place to ensure key corporate policies are regularly reviewed, version controlled and remain up to date and accurate.	Devise and implement a corporate process to ensure all staff revisit key policies so a good level of awareness is maintained across the organisation
	Contract Management System	Directors to ensure all contracts are entered onto the corporate CMS in a timely fashion including current "live" contracts.

	Inventories	To improve the quality of the council's asset inventory records to enable accurate insurance cover to be provided
	Cyber Security, use of ICT equipment and system access	A programme of Cyber security training sessions should be developed and delivered to highlight to all officers and members the risks faced by the council.
	IT system access	Review and improve leaver form and process to ensure all relevant teams and points of contact are notified in a timely fashion to action.
Staff development	Performance Development Review	Undertake a review of the PDR process to identify barriers for its use and improvements to the system
	Mandatory training modules to be completed in full	<p>All Directors to ensure all mandatory training is completed within the agreed timescales.</p> <p>Corporate Governance Group to review and hold Directors to Account on below target completion rates.</p> <p>Enhanced training to be provided on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Data Protection/Information Governance • Procurement
Corporate	Constitution	Constitution to be reviewed and updated where applicable. This is to specifically include the Financial Procedure Rules and Scheme of Delegation.
	Business continuity	<p>Business Continuity Plans to be held using the dedicated system and allocated into Category A and B Services.</p> <p>Testing Exercise of the Business Continuity Plans to be undertaken</p>
	Data Security and Information Management	Embed the Information Security Council and processes for owning and monitoring performance.

		<p>Review existing data security and information policies.</p> <p>Establish reporting into Corporate Governance Group.</p>
	Transparency Code	Full review of all obligations and performance to ensure the publication of all mandatory data sets
	Agreed Audit Actions	Improve percentage implementation rates of service management actions agreed with Internal Audit.
	Risk	Define risk management appetite and implement escalation and reporting mechanisms for non-strategic risks
	Procurement	<p>Review and centralise the conflict of interest procedure.</p> <p>Further develop the contract management process to include registration of the contract on the transparency register and align with the decision-making process.</p>

6. Conclusion

The council is fully committed to ensuring that its governance arrangements are and continue to be as robust as possible. As part of that process the council will monitor implementation of all actions set out in our Action Plan.

.....

Leader of the Council

.....

Chief Executive

Date:

On behalf of the Members and Senior Officers of South Ribble Borough Council.

GLOSSARY TO THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Annual Audit Letter	An External Audit report presented to Council and containing the findings of the Audit Commission's work. It is a requirement of the Code of Practice for Auditors.
Assurance	An evaluated opinion based on evidence and gained from review.
CIPFA	Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
Control Environment System of Internal Control	Comprises the organisation's policies, procedures and operations in place to : Establish and monitor the achievement of the organisation's priorities; Identify, assess and manage the risks to achieving the organisation's objectives; Facilitate policy and decision making; Ensure the economical, effective and efficient use of resources; Ensure compliance with policies, legislation and regulations; Safeguard the organisation's assets; Ensure the integrity and reliability of information, accounts and data.
Corporate Governance	Corporate governance is the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions and relate to their communities.
Corporate Governance Group	In 2017 this involved the following officers: Chief Executive; Section 151 Officer; Monitoring Officer; Head of Shared Assurance; Corporate Governance Manager; Corporate Improvement Manager.
SOLACE	Society of Local Authority Chief Executives

Glossary of Terms

Accounting Policies

The rules and practices adopted by the authority that determine how the transactions and events are reflected in the accounts.

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 or services are received rather than when the payment is made.

Agency Services

These are services that are performed by or for another Authority or public body, where the principal (the Authority responsible for the service) reimburses the agent (the Authority carrying out the work) for the costs of the work.

Appointed Auditors

From 1 April 2015 the appointment of External Auditors to Local Authorities is undertaken by Public Sector Audit Appointments Limited (PSAA), an independent company limited by guarantee and incorporated by the Local Government Association in August 2014. This role was previously undertaken by The Audit Commission. Grant Thornton UK LLP is the council's appointed Auditor.

Balances

The balances of the Authority represent the accumulated surplus of income over expenditure on any of the Funds.

Capital Adjustment Account

The Account accumulates (on the debit side) the write-down of the historical cost of non-current assets as they are consumed by depreciation and impairments or written off on disposal. It accumulates (on the credit side) the resources that have been set aside to finance capital expenditure. The same process applies to capital expenditure that is only capital by statutory definition (revenue expenditure funded by capital under statute). The balance on the account thus represents timing differences between the amount of the historical cost of non-current assets that has been consumed and the amount that has been financed in accordance with statutory requirements.

Capital Expenditure

This is expenditure on the acquisition of a fixed asset, or expenditure, which adds to, and not merely maintains, the value of an existing fixed asset.

Capital Financing Charges

This is the annual charge to the revenue account in respect of interest and principal repayments and payments of borrowed money, together with leasing rentals.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

CFR is a measure of the capital expenditure historically incurred by the Authority that has yet to be financed. This will be discharged by future charges to the revenue account. In determining Council Tax charges, authorities have to make a specific provision for the financing of capital expenditure. The outstanding amount for which provision has to be made is known as the Capital Financing Requirement.

Capital Receipts

Income received from the sale of land or other capital assets, a proportion of which may be used to finance new capital expenditure, subject to the provisions contained within the Local Government Act 2003.

Carrying Amount

The Balance Sheet value recorded of either an asset or a liability.

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)

CIPFA is the leading professional accountancy body for public services.

Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (The Code)

The Code incorporates guidance in line with IFRS, IPSAS and UK GAAP Accounting Standards. It sets out the proper accounting practice to be adopted for the Statement of Accounts to ensure they 'present fairly' the financial position of the council. The Code has statutory status via the provision of the Local Government Act 2003.

Collection Fund

The council as a billing authority has a statutory obligation to maintain a separate Collection Fund. This shows the transactions of the council in relation to the collection from taxpayers of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) and its distribution to local government bodies and the Government.

Community Assets

These are non-current assets that the council intends to hold in perpetuity which have no determinable finite useful life and, in addition, may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples include parks and historical buildings not used for operational purposes.

Contingency

This is money set aside in the budget to meet the cost of unforeseen items of expenditure, or shortfalls in income, and to provide for inflation where this is not included in individual budgets.

Contingent Liabilities or Assets

These are amounts potentially due to or from individuals or organisations which may arise in the future but which at this time cannot be determined accurately, and for which provision has not been made in the council's accounts.

Council Tax

A local tax on residential properties within the council's area, set by the charging (South Ribble Borough Council) and precepting authorities. The level is determined by the revenue expenditure requirements for each authority divided by council tax base for the year.

Council Tax Base

The amount calculated for each billing authority from which the grant entitlement of its share is derived. The number of properties in each band is multiplied by the relevant band proportion in order to calculate the number of Band D equivalent properties in the area. The calculation allows for exemptions, discounts, appeals and a provision for non-collection.

Council Tax Requirement

This is the estimated revenue expenditure on General Fund services that will be financed from the Council Tax after deducting income from fees and charges, General Fund Balances, specific grants and any funding from reserves.

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 Service Cost

Current Service Cost is the increase in the present value of a defined benefit pension scheme's liabilities expected to arise from employee service in the current period, i.e. the ultimate pension benefits "earned" by employees in the current year's employment.

Current Value

The current value of an asset reflects the economic environment prevailing for the service or function the asset is supporting at the reporting date.

Curtailment

Curtailments will show the cost of the early payment of pension benefits if any employee has been made redundant in the previous financial year.

Debtors

These are sums of money due to the council that have not been received at the date of the Balance Sheet.

Deferred Capital Receipts

These represent capital income still to be received after disposals have taken place and wholly consists of amounts due in relation to Finance Leases.

Defined Benefit Scheme

This is a pension or other retirement benefit scheme other than a defined contribution scheme. Usually, the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable and the benefits are not directly related to the investments of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded (including notionally funded).

Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities (DLUHC)

DLUHC is a Central Government department with the overriding responsibility for determining the allocation of general resources to Local Authorities.

Depreciation

This is the measure of the wearing out, consumption, or other reduction in the useful economic life of property plant and equipment assets.

Derecognition

Financial assets and liabilities will need to be removed from the Balance Sheet once performance under the contract is complete or the contract is terminated.

Discounts

Discounts represent the outstanding discount received on the premature repayment of Public Works Loan Board loans. In line with the requirements of the Code, gains arising from the repurchase or early settlement of borrowing have been written back to revenue. However, where the repurchase or borrowing was coupled with a refinancing or restructuring of borrowing with substantially the same overall economic effect when viewed as a whole, gains have been recognised over the life of the replacement loan.

Earmarked Reserves

The council holds a number of reserves earmarked to be used to meet specific, known or predicted future expenditure.

External Audit

The independent examination of the activities and accounts of Local Authorities to ensure the accounts have been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and proper practices and to ensure the Authority has made proper arrangements to secure value for money in its use of resources.

Fair Value

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.

Finance Lease

A finance lease is a lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a fixed asset to the lessee.

Financial Instruments

A financial instrument is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another. The term 'financial instrument' covers both financial assets and financial liabilities and includes both the most straightforward financial assets and liabilities such as trade receivables and trade payables and the most complex ones such as derivatives and embedded derivatives.

Financial Regulations

These are the written code of procedures approved by the council, intended to provide a framework for proper financial management. Financial regulations usually set out rules on accounting, audit, administrative and budgeting procedures.

General Fund

This is the main revenue fund of the Authority and includes the net cost of all services financed by local taxpayers and Government grants.

Highways Network Asset

A grouping of interconnected components, expenditure on which is only recoverable by continued use of the asset created, i.e. there is no prospect of sale or alternative use. Components include carriageways, footways and cycle tracks, structures, street lighting, street furniture, traffic management systems and land. District Council's such as South Ribble Borough Council rarely hold such assets as they are not Highways Authorities.

Housing Benefit

This is an allowance to persons receiving little or no income to meet, in whole or part, their rent. Benefit is allowed or paid by Local Authorities but Central Government refunds part of the cost of the benefits and of the running costs of the services to Local Authorities. Benefits paid to an Authority's own tenants are known as rent rebate and that paid to private tenants as rent allowance.

Impairment

A reduction in the value of assets below its value brought forward in the Balance Sheet. Examples of factors which may cause such a reduction in value include general price decreases, a significant decline in a fixed asset's market value and evidence of obsolescence or physical damage to the asset.

Infrastructure Assets

Fixed Assets which generally cannot be sold and from which benefit can be obtained only by continued use of the asset created. Examples of such assets are highways, footpaths, bridges and water and drainage facilities.

Intangible Assets

These are assets that do not have physical substance but are identifiable and controlled by the council. Examples include software, licenses and patents.

International Financial Reporting Standard (IFRS)

Defined Accounting Standards that must be applied by all reporting entities to all financial statements in order to provide a true and fair view of the entity's financial position, and a standardised method of comparison with financial statements of the other entities.

Inventories

Amounts of unused or unconsumed stocks held in expectation of future use. Inventories are comprised of the following categories:

- Goods or other assets purchased for resale
- Consumable stores
- Raw materials and components
- Products and services in intermediate stages of completion
- Finished goods

Investment Properties

Property, which can be land or a building or part of a building or both, that is held solely to earn rentals or for capital appreciation or both, rather than for operational purposes.

Joint Venture

A joint venture is a joint arrangement whereby the parties who have joint control of the arrangement have rights to the net assets of the arrangement.

Leasing Costs

This is where a rental is paid for the use of an asset for a specified period of time. Two forms of lease exist: finance leases and operating leases.

Materiality

Information is material if omitting it or misstating it could influence the decisions that users make on the basis of financial information about a specific reporting authority.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

This is a financial planning document that sets out the future years financial forecasts for the council. It considers local and national policy influences and projects their impact on the general fund revenue budget, and capital programme. At South Ribble Borough Council this usually covers a three year timeframe.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

The council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge. MRP is the minimum amount which must be charged to an Authority's revenue account each year and set aside as provision for credit liabilities, as required by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and calculated in accordance with The Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003.

Non-Domestic Rate (NDR) (also known as Business Rates)

NDR is the levy on business property, based on a national rate in the pound applied to the 'rateable value' of the property. The Government determines national rate poundage each year which is applicable to all Local Authorities.

Net Book Value (NBV)

The amount at which non-current assets are included in the balance sheet, i.e. their historical cost or current value less the cumulative amounts provided for depreciation.

Net Realisable Value (NRV)

NRV is the open market value of the asset in its existing use (or open market value in the case of non-operational assets) less the expenses to be incurred in realising the asset.

Operating Lease

This is a type of lease, usually of computer equipment, office equipment, furniture, etc. where the balance of risks and rewards of holding the asset remains with the lessor. The asset remains the property of the lessor and the lease costs are revenue expenditure to the Authority.

Precept

The amount levied by various Authorities that is collected by the council on their behalf. The major precepting Authorities in South Ribble are Lancashire County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire, and the Lancashire Combined Fire and Rescue Authority. Parish precepts are also collected on behalf of a number of Parish and Town Councils in the area.

Premiums

These are discounts that have arisen following the early redemption of long term debt, which are written down over the lifetime of replacement loans where applicable.

Prior Period Adjustments

These are material adjustments which are applicable to an earlier period arising from changes in accounting policies or for the correction of fundamental errors.

Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

PPE are tangible assets (i.e. assets that have physical substance) that are held for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes, and are expected to be used during more than one year.

Provisions

Amounts set aside to meet liabilities or losses which it is anticipated will be incurred but where the amount and/or the timing of such costs are uncertain.

Public Works Loan Board (PWLB)

An arm of Central Government which is the major provider of loans to finance long term funding requirements for Local Authorities.

Related Parties

Related parties are Central Government, other Local Authorities, precepting and levying bodies, subsidiary and associated companies, Elected Members, all senior officers from Director and above and the Pension Fund. For individuals identified as related parties, the following are also presumed to be related parties:

- members of the close family, or the same household; and
- partnerships, companies, trusts or other entities in which the individual, or member of their close family or the same household, has a controlling interest.

Remeasurement of the Net Defined Benefit Liability

Remeasurement of the Net Defined Benefit Liability (asset) comprises:

- b) actuarial gains and losses
- c) the return on plan assets, excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), and
- d) any change in the effect of the asset ceiling, excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset).

Reporting Standards

The Code of Practice prescribes the accounting treatment and disclosures for all normal transactions of a Local Authority. It is based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), International Standards (IAS) and International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee (IFRIC) plus UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (GAAP) and Financial Reporting Standards (FRS).

Regulation(s)

Various Acts of Parliament, Statutory Instruments and Bills that require local authorities to account for transactions in a particularly way which might depart from proper accounting practice, IFRS or other Reporting Standards.

Reserves

Amounts set aside to help manage future risks, to provide working balances or that are earmarked for specific future expenditure priorities.

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve records the accumulated gains on the non-current assets held by the Authority arising from increases in value as a result of inflation or other factors (to the extent that these gains have not been consumed by subsequent downward movements in value).

Revenue Support Grant

The main Government grant paid to local authorities. It is intended to adjust for differences in needs between areas so that, if all local authorities were to spend at the level which the Government assess that they need to spend, the council tax would be the same across the whole country.

Revenue Expenditure Funded From Capital Under Statute (REFCUS)

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provision but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset that has been charged as expenditure to the CIES.

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) is a professional body that accredits professionals within the land, property and construction sectors worldwide.

Members holding RICS qualifications may use the following designations after their name: MRICS (Member), FRICS (Fellow), AssocRICS (Associate). Those with the designation MRICS or FRICS are also known as chartered surveyors.

Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP)

Prepared and published by CIPFA, the Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP) is reviewed annually to ensure that it develops in line with the needs of modern Local Government, Transparency, Best Value and public services reform. SeRCOP establishes proper practices with regard to consistent financial reporting for services and in England and Wales, it is given legislative backing by regulations which identify the accounting practices it propounds as proper practices under the Local Government Act 2003.

Treasury Management

This is the process by which the Authority controls its cash flow and its borrowing and lending activities.

Treasury Management Strategy (TMS)

A strategy prepared with regard to legislative and CIPFA requirements setting out the framework for treasury management activity for the council.

Voluntary Revenue Provision

The council is required to pay off an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year through a revenue charge (the Minimum Revenue Provision - MRP), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required, this is the Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

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Grant Thornton UK LLP
Royal Liver Building
Liverpool
L3 1PS

28th November 2023

Dear Ms Jones,

Re: South Ribble Borough Council Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

**South Ribble Borough Council
Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2023**

This representation letter is provided in connection with the audit of the financial statements of South Ribble Borough Council and its subsidiary undertaking, South Ribble Leisure Ltd, for the year ended 31 March 2023 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the group and Council financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 and applicable law.

We confirm that to the best of our knowledge and belief having made such inquiries as we considered necessary for the purpose of appropriately informing ourselves:

Financial Statements

- i. We have fulfilled our responsibilities for the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 ("the Code"); in particular the financial statements are fairly presented in accordance therewith.
- ii. We have complied with the requirements of all statutory directions affecting the group and Council and these matters have been appropriately reflected and disclosed in the financial statements.
- iii. The Council has complied with all aspects of contractual agreements that could have a material effect on the group and Council financial statements in the event of non-compliance. There has been no non-compliance with requirements of any regulatory authorities that could have a material effect on the financial statements in the event of non-compliance.
- iv. We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control to prevent and detect fraud.
- v. Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable. Such accounting estimates include valuation of land and buildings, valuation of investment property and the valuation of the net pension surplus. We are satisfied

that the material judgements used in the preparation of the financial statements are soundly based, in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements. We understand our responsibilities includes identifying and considering alternative, methods, assumptions or source data that would be equally valid under the financial reporting framework, and why these alternatives were rejected in favour of the estimate used. We are satisfied that the methods, the data and the significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates and their related disclosures are appropriate to achieve recognition, measurement or disclosure that is reasonable in accordance with the Code and adequately disclosed in the financial statements.

- vi. We confirm that we are satisfied that the actuarial assumptions underlying the valuation of pension scheme assets and liabilities for IAS19 Employee Benefits disclosures are consistent with our knowledge. We confirm that all settlements and curtailments have been identified and properly accounted for. We also confirm that all significant post-employment benefits have been identified and properly accounted for.
- vii. Except as disclosed in the group and Council financial statements:
 - a. there are no unrecorded liabilities, actual or contingent
 - b. none of the assets of the [group and]Council has been assigned, pledged or mortgaged
 - c. there are no material prior year charges or credits, nor exceptional or non-recurring items requiring separate disclosure.
- viii. Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code.
- ix. All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements and for which International Financial Reporting Standards and the Code require adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.
- x. We have considered the adjusted misstatements, and misclassification and disclosures changes schedules included in your Audit Findings Report. The group and Council financial statements have been amended for these misstatements, misclassifications and disclosure changes and are free of material misstatements, including omissions.
- xi. We have considered the unadjusted misstatements schedule included in your Audit Findings Report and attached. We have not adjusted the financial statements for these misstatements brought to our attention as they are immaterial to the results of the Council and its financial position at the year-end. The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.
- xii. Actual or possible litigation and claims have been accounted for and disclosed in accordance with the requirements of International Financial Reporting Standards.
- xiii. We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.
- xiv. We have updated our going concern assessment. We continue to believe that the group and Council's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis and have not identified any material uncertainties related to going concern on the grounds that :
 - a. the nature of the group and Council means that, notwithstanding any intention to cease the group and Council operations in their current form, it will continue to be appropriate to adopt the going concern basis of accounting because, in such an event, services it performs can be expected to continue to be delivered by related public authorities and preparing the financial statements on a going concern basis will still provide a faithful representation of the items in the financial statements

- b. the financial reporting framework permits the entry to prepare its financial statements on the basis of the presumption set out under a) above; and
- c. the group and Council's system of internal control has not identified any events or conditions relevant to going concern.

We believe that no further disclosures relating to the group and Council's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements

- xv. The group and Council has complied with all aspects of ring-fenced grants that could have a material effect on the group and Council's financial statements in the event of non-compliance.
- xvi. We have considered the year end value of land and building assets which have not been subject to external valuation and we are satisfied that the basis of valuation remains appropriate and assets are not materially misstated. We have not identified any material changes to the properties.

Information Provided

- xvii. We have provided you with:
 - a. access to all information of which we are aware that is relevant to the preparation of the group and Council's financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
 - b. additional information that you have requested from us for the purpose of your audit; and
 - c. access to persons within the Council via remote arrangements, from whom you determined it necessary to obtain audit evidence.
- xviii. We have communicated to you all deficiencies in internal control of which management is aware.
- xix. All transactions have been recorded in the accounting records and are reflected in the financial statements.
- xx. We have disclosed to you the results of our assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud.
- xxi. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to fraud or suspected fraud that we are aware of and that affects the group and Council, and involves:
 - a. management;
 - b. employees who have significant roles in internal control; or
 - c. others where the fraud could have a material effect on the financial statements.
- xxii. We have disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud, or suspected fraud, affecting the financial statements communicated by employees, former employees, analysts, regulators or others.
- xxiii. We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.
- xxiv. We have disclosed to you the identity of the group and Council's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which we are aware.
- xxv. We have disclosed to you all known actual or possible litigation and claims whose effects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Annual Governance Statement

We are satisfied that the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) fairly reflects the Council's risk assurance and governance framework and we confirm that we are not aware of any significant risks that are not disclosed within the AGS.

Narrative Report

The disclosures within the Narrative Report fairly reflect our understanding of the group and Council's financial and operating performance over the period covered by the financial statements.

Approval

The approval of this letter of representation was minuted by the Council's Governance Committee at its meeting on 28 November 2023

Yours faithfully

Name: Councillor Ian Watkinson

Position: Chair of Governance Committee

Date: To be confirmed – *this will be the date the accounts are formally signed*

Name: Louise Mattinson

Position: Director of Finance (S151 Officer)

Date: To be confirmed – *this will be the date the accounts are formally signed*

Signed on behalf of the Council

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer	Governance Committee	28 th November 2023

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2023/24

Is the report confidential ?	No
Is the decision key ?	No

Purpose of report

1. To report on Treasury Management performance and compliance with Prudential Indicators for the period ended 30th September 2023.
2. To present monitoring figures for the quarter ended 30th September 2023, including updated interest rate forecasts from Link Asset Services.

Recommendation to Governance Committee

3. That the report be noted.

Reasons for recommendations

4. Production of a Mid-Year Report is a requirement under the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Other options considered and rejected

5. Not applicable

Corporate priorities

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

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Background to the report

7. At its meeting on 1st March 2023, Council approved the Treasury Management Policy Statement; Prudential Indicators; Investment Strategy; and the Annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2023/24.
8. The Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2022/23 was presented to Governance Committee on 8th August 2023.
9. The Code of Practice for Treasury Management requires Councils to review their treasury strategies and activities half yearly. This report satisfies that requirement.

Capital Expenditure and Financing 2023/24

10. The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term activities. These activities may either be:
 - financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc.), which has no impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
 - if sufficient financing is not available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.
11. Capital expenditure is monitored monthly and reported to Cabinet every quarter.

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12. The report for the quarter ended 30th September 2023 was considered by Cabinet on 15th November 2023 and highlighted a reduced forecast borrowing requirement for the year of £12.609m compared to an original forecast of £18.057m (£21.306m at July 2023).

Table 1 - Capital Expenditure and Financing	Budget 2023/24 Approved at Council Feb 2023	Budget 2023/24 Approved by Cabinet for 4 months to July 2023	Slippage and reprofiling of budget (to)/from future years	Quarter 2 2023/24 Variations	Revised Budget 2023/24 as at 31st September 2023
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
COSTS					
Good homes, green spaces and healthy places	24,168	32,174	(10,931)	68	21,310
A fair economy that works for everyone	14,021	15,760	(13,453)	-	2,306
Thriving communities	88	1,571	-	-	1,571
An exemplary council	1,753	3,264	(1,171)	-	2,093
Total Forecast Expenditure	40,030	52,768	(25,556)	68	27,280
					-
RESOURCES					
Decarbonisation Grant		1,713	-	-	1,713
Disabled Facilities Grants	774	1,450		68	1,518
LCC Home Adaptations		-			-
Homes England	5,760	6,169	(1,500)		4,669
Lottery Funding		-			-
EV Charging		160	-	-	160
Sport England		82	-	-	82
Town Deal	10,000	11,550	(9,866)		1,684
Brownfield Grant - Town Deal		516	-	-	516
Other Grants		22	-	-	22
Government Grants	16,534	21,662	(11,366)	68	10,364
Capital Receipts	1,549	1,549	(1,549)	-	-
CIL	745	597	(597)	-	-
External Contributions		161	-	-	161
Revenue Contributions		-	-	-	-
Reserves	1,600	3,849	(1,238)		2,611
Section 106 - Affordable	1,413	3,268	(2,053)		1,215
Section 106 - Other	132	376	(56)		320
Unsupported Borrowing	18,057	21,306	(8,697)		12,609
Total Forecast Resources	40,030	52,768	(25,556)	68	27,280

Full details are outlined in the report to Cabinet 15th November 2023; 2023/24 Capital Programme and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report position at 30th September 2023.

Capital Financing Requirement 2023/24

13. The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's indebtedness. It represents the unfinanced capital expenditure in 2023/24 plus unfinanced capital expenditure from prior years which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.
14. The CFR is not matched in full by external borrowing, as the Council has "under borrowed" by using its own cash balances to finance capital expenditure. There is some loss of interest as a result, but had external loans been taken, then the interest payable would have been at a higher rate. Use of the Council's own cash helps to achieve savings in net interest.
15. The Council's underlying borrowing need is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum

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Revenue Provision (MRP), to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need.

16. The Council's CFR for the year is shown below and represents a key prudential indicator;

Table 2 - Capital Financing Requirement	2022/23	2023/24
	Outturn	Forecast as at 30/9/23
	£'000	£'000
Opening CFR – 1 April 2023	3,511	6,157
Increase in Borrowing (Table 1) during 2023/24	3,004	12,609
Less MRP – charged in 2023/24	(358)	(346)
Closing CFR – 31 March 2024	6,157	18,420

The CFR and Gross Debt

17. In order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and are only for capital purposes, the Council ensures that its gross external borrowing does not exceed the total of the CFR.
18. The borrowing position is summarised below, and no borrowing has been undertaken. Planned Capital Expenditure will be contained within the Council's overall Treasury position where possible, however borrowing will potentially be required in the future to fund the planned Capital Programme. The Council will however retain its "under-borrowed" position.

Table 3 - Actual Debt : CFR	2022/23	2023/24
	Actual	As at 30/9/23
	£'000	£'000
Debt < 12 mth	0	0
Debt > 12 mth	0	0
Gross Debt	0	0
Capital Financing Requirement (Table 2)	6,157	18,420
Under / (Over) Borrowing	6,157	18,420

19. **The authorised limit.** This is the "affordable borrowing limit" required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The limit set for 2023/24 by Council on 1st March 2023 was

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£30.401m and actual debt is currently NIL. The Council has therefore maintained borrowing within its authorised limit throughout the year.

20. **The operational boundary.** This is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. The operational boundary set for 2023/24 was £27.637m and actual debt is currently NIL. The Council remained within its operational boundary throughout the year.

Investments

21. The Council's investment policy is governed by DLUHC investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by Council for 2023/24. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies, Standard and Poor's, Moody's and Fitch Group, supplemented by additional market data. Link Asset Services, the Council's treasury advisors, provide suggested investment durations for the approved counterparties.
22. The approved Counterparties for 2023/24 are outlined at **Appendix B**.
23. Cash has been invested in term deposits and is also held in highly liquid accounts. This enables the Council to take advantage of the better rates of the term deposits whilst also managing the Council's cash flow requirements.
24. Investment returns had started to improve by the beginning of this Financial Year from very low rates in the immediately previous years, and rates continued to rise in the period to September 30th. Yields have provided a return to date of 3.85% compared with 1.64% in 2022/23.
25. The Council has continued to achieve budget savings by maintaining a position of under borrowing, which means that it has used its own cash balances to finance capital expenditure rather than taking additional external loans, and has invested where prudent to provide a return with cash not immediately required.
26. Average Investment performance for the year to date is summarised overleaf;

Table 4 - Average Investment Yield	Average Daily Investment	Earnings to 30/09/23	Average Rate
	£'000	£	%
Debt Management Office	9,923	237,991	4.81
Local Authority Investments	14,665	261,881	3.58
Notice Accounts	4,286	13,019	1.22
Call Accounts	1,767	21,553	1.22
Money Market Funds	11,994	289,191	4.70
Total	42,634	823,636	3.85

This compares to a Link "benchmark" yield of 4.74%. Many of the Council's investments, especially those in existence at the beginning of the financial year, were made prior to recent interest rate rises – hence the shortfall compared to the benchmark, however any new

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investments will attract higher rates of return. It should also be noted that investment income is forecast to exceed the amount budgeted for.

27. Actual investments as at 30th September 2023 are summarised below;

Table 5 - Actual Investments as at 30/9/23	Type	Amount £'000	Rate %	Date	Maturity
Chorley Borough Council	Term	6,000	4.70%	15-Mar-23	15-Jan-24
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham	Term	5,000	5.40%	26-Sep-23	14-Mar-24
Stockport MBC	Term	5,000	5.30%	26-Sep-23	16-Feb-24
Debt Management Office	Term	4,500	5.26%	08-Sep-23	19-Oct-23
Debt Management Office	Term	9,500	5.17%	29-Sep-23	19-Oct-23
Fixed Term Deposit sub total		30,000	Listed in Order of Maturity		
Barclays BPA Deposit Account	Call	717	2.00%	On Call	
Call Accounts sub total		717			
Federated	MMF	4,950	5.25%	On Call	
Aberdeen Standard	MMF	4,950	5.21%	On Call	
Blackrock	MMF	4,950	5.09%	On Call	
Money Market Funds sub total		14,850			
Total		45,567			

These investments are within the approved Counterparty Limits outlined at **Appendix A**.

Advice of Link Asset Services

28. Link Asset Services' assessment of the Economy and Interest Rates is presented at **Appendices B & C**.
29. Latest forecasts show PWLB borrowing rates peaking December 2023 - June 2024 then gradually reducing, however the volatility of world and domestic markets must be stressed.

Summary

30. Members are asked to note that the Council has;

- remained within its Prudential Indicators;
- adhered to its approved Counterparty Limits;
- not entered into any new borrowing over the course of the 6 months to 30th September;

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- retained its “under borrowed” position;
- has achieved an increased investment yield of 3.85%

Climate change and air quality

31. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

32. Not applicable

Risk

33. Regular monitoring and reporting of the Council’s Treasury Management position ensure compliance with Prudential Indicators and the Treasury Management Code of Practice.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

34. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. All financial implications in respect of treasury management activity arise as a result of the annual Treasury Strategy for 2023/24 approved previously by Council. This report presents details of actual performance achieved as a result of implementing the approved strategies.
35. The Council is compliant with its Prudential Indicators, Counterparty limits and the latest PWLB reforms.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

36. Presentation of this report is required to comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services (2017 edition).

Background documents

- CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice & Guidance Notes
- Treasury Management Policy Statement 2023/24 to 2025/26 (Council 1st March 2023)
- Treasury Management Outturn Report 2022/23 (Governance Committee 1st August 2023)
- 2023/24 Corporate Capital Programme and Balance Sheet Monitoring Report Position at 30th September 2023 (Cabinet 15th November 2023)

Appendices

Appendix A: Approved Counterparty limits 2023/24

Appendix B: Link Commentary - Economic Outlook

Appendix C: Link Interest Rate Forecasts

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Louise Mattinson

Director of Finance (s151 Officer)

Report Author	Email	Telephone	Date
Jean Waddington (Principal Financial Accountant)	jean.waddington@chorley.gov.uk	01257 515233	8 th November 2023

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APPENDIX A

Investment Counterparties 2023/24

Category	Institutions	LAS Colour Code	Maximum Period	Limit per Institution
Banks & Building Societies: Call Accounts / Term Deposits / Certificates of Deposit (CDs)				
Government related/guaranteed entities	DMADF (DMO)	Yellow	6 months	Unlimited
	UK Local Authority	Yellow	1 year 2 years	£3m per LA £2m per LA; £4m in total
UK part-nationalised institutions	Royal Bank of Scotland group	Blue	1 year	£4m per group
UK-incorporated Institutions	UK banks and building societies of high credit quality	Orange	1 year	£5m per group (or institution if independent)
		Red	6 months	
		Green	3 months	
Money Market Funds				
Money Market Funds	MMFs of high credit quality - AAA rated		Instant access	£5m per fund

Yellow	5 years
Purple	2 years
Blue	1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks)
Orange	1 year
Red	6 months
Green	100 days
No colour	Not to be used

Summarised View from Link Treasury Advisors – The Economy and Interest Rates 2023/24

A SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE FUTURE PATH OF BANK RATE

- Our central forecast for interest rates was previously updated on 25 September and reflected a view that the MPC would be keen to further demonstrate its anti-inflation credentials by keeping Bank Rate at 5.25% until at least H2 2024. We expect rate cuts to start when both the CPI inflation and wage/employment data are supportive of such a move, and that there is a likelihood of the overall economy enduring at least a mild recession over the coming months, although most recent GDP releases have surprised with their on-going robustness.
- Naturally, timing on this matter will remain one of fine judgment: cut too soon, and inflationary pressures may well build up further; cut too late and any downturn or recession may be prolonged.
- In the upcoming months, our forecasts will be guided not only by economic data releases and clarifications from the MPC over its monetary policies and the Government over its fiscal policies, but also international factors such as policy development in the US and Europe, the provision of fresh support packages to support the faltering recovery in China as well as the on-going conflict between Russia and Ukraine, and Gaza and Israel.
- On the positive side, consumers are still anticipated to be sitting on some excess savings left over from the pandemic, which could cushion some of the impact of the above challenges and may be the reason why the economy is performing somewhat better at this stage of the economic cycle than may have been expected. However, as noted previously, most of those excess savings are held by more affluent households whereas lower income families already spend nearly all their income on essentials such as food, energy and rent/mortgage payments.

PWLB RATES

- Gilt yield curve movements have broadened since our last Newsflash. The short part of the curve has not moved far but the longer-end continues to reflect inflation concerns. At the time of writing there is 60 basis points difference between the 5 and 50 year parts of the curve.

THE BALANCE OF RISKS TO THE UK ECONOMY

- The overall balance of risks to economic growth in the UK is to the downside.

Downside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates include: -

- Labour and supply shortages prove more enduring and disruptive and depress economic activity (accepting that in the near-term this is also an upside risk to inflation and, thus, could keep gilt yields high for longer).
- The Bank of England has increased Bank Rate too fast and too far over recent months, and subsequently brings about a deeper and longer UK recession than we currently anticipate.
- UK / EU trade arrangements – if there was a major impact on trade flows and financial services due to complications or lack of co-operation in sorting out significant remaining issues.
- Geopolitical risks, for example in Ukraine/Russia, the Middle East, China/Taiwan/US, Iran and North Korea, which could lead to increasing safe-haven flows.

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Upside risks to current forecasts for UK gilt yields and PWLB rates: -

- Despite the recent tightening to 5.25%, the Bank of England proves too timid in its pace and strength of increases in Bank Rate and, therefore, allows inflationary pressures to remain elevated for a longer period within the UK economy, which then necessitates Bank Rate staying higher for longer than we currently project.
- The pound weakens because of a lack of confidence in the UK Government's pre-election fiscal policies, resulting in investors pricing in a risk premium for holding UK sovereign debt. Longer-term US treasury yields rise strongly if inflation remains more stubborn there than the market currently anticipates, consequently pulling gilt yields up higher. (We saw some movements of this type through October although generally reversed in the last week or so.)
- Projected gilt issuance, inclusive of natural maturities and QT, could be too much for the markets to comfortably digest without higher yields compensating.

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APPENDIX C

Updated Interest Rate Forecasts (as at 7/11/23) supplied by Link Asset Services (%)

Link Group Interest Rate View		07.11.23											
	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26
BANK RATE	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	5.30	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
6 month ave earnings	5.60	5.50	5.40	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.60	3.40	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10
12 month ave earnings	5.80	5.70	5.50	5.20	4.70	4.20	3.70	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
5 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10 yr PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50
25 yr PWLB	5.50	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.00	4.00	4.00
50 yr PWLB	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Monitoring Officer	Governance Committee	Tuesday, 28 November 2023

Constitution Update

Is this report confidential?	No
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Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members of Governance Committee of proposed and consequential amendments to Part 2: Governance How we run the Council and make decisions.

Recommendations

2. That the committee note the proposed changes detailed in the report and recommend them to full council for approval.

Reasons for recommendations

3. The proposed changes reflect decisions that have gone before or incorporate changes and it is correct to ensure the Constitution properly reflects the decision making and organisational position of the Council.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (Please bold one)

An exemplary council	Thriving communities
A fair local economy that works for everyone	Good homes, green spaces, healthy places

Background to the report

6. The Council have made a number of decisions which amend the Constitution this report confirms the wording and presentation to be used.

2B Cabinet

7. This section of the Constitution has been reviewed in full to ensure it properly reflects the current delegated authorities being used in addition the provisions concerning the Cabinet Portfolios has been updated to reflect current arrangements.
8. The full text is at Appendix 1 and member can be assured that it continues to provide a robust and transparent framework for the discharge of Executive Powers.

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2M Community Hub Areas

9. This section has been reviewed and continues to meet the aims of the Council. The list of Community Hub Areas has been updated to reflect the changes adopted in September 2023.

Climate change and air quality

10. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

11. No implications

Risk

12. No implications

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

13. These are administrative changes proposed with no new financial implications.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

14. The changes proposed reflect decision made by the Council.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1- 2B Cabinet

Appendix 2 - 2M Community Hub Areas

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Chris Moister (Director of Governance)	chris.moister@southribble.gov.uk		

2B Cabinet

1. Cabinet

The Cabinet is the main decision making body of the Council.

Cabinet Members are appointed by the Leader and reported to the first business meeting of the municipal year.

Its powers and functions are known as “Executive Functions”

Membership

- (a) Political Balance. The cabinet is not required to have proportional political balance.
- (b) Membership. The Leader and Deputy Leader together with not less than 1 or more than
- (c) 8 other Councillors appointed by the Leader (maximum of 10 in total)
- (d) Chairing the Cabinet. The Leader, or in his/her absence the Deputy Leader, will chair any meeting at which he/she is present. In the absence of both a member of Cabinet appointed by those present will chair the meeting.

Terms of Reference

The Cabinet is responsible for all the functions of the Council unless they are delegated elsewhere, either by law or under this Constitution.

The main functions of the Cabinet are:

- (a) To recommend to full Council the Corporate Plan and Corporate Risk Register, Annual Revenue Budget, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy
- (b) To recommend any in-year changes to the budget that are reserved to full Council.
- (c) To recommend to full Council the policies and strategies that form the Policy Framework.
- (d) To consider and review reports on the Council's performance
- (e) To approve the award of contracts that are reserved to Cabinet
- (f) To agree strategies and plans that are not in the Policy Framework
- (g) To consider reports on significant changes or issues relating to service delivery;
- (h) To receive and consider reports from Scrutiny Committee, including referrals from the call-in process;
- (i) To receive reports from members sitting on strategic partnerships

The Leader

The Leader is elected by a simple majority at the annual Council meeting following the four-yearly council elections. The Leader holds office for 4 years and remains in position until the annual Council meeting following the next council elections, unless:

- (a) He/she resigns as Leader; or
- (b) He/she is disqualified or is otherwise removed from office; or
- (c) The Council passes a resolution to remove the Leader (in accordance with Council Standing Orders) or

- (d) He/she is no longer a member of Council

(N.B. if the Leader is not elected or does not stand for election, he/she will remain in office during the period between the election and the annual Council meeting when a new Leader will be elected);

The Deputy Leader

- (a) The Leader will appoint a member to be Deputy Leader of the Council. The Deputy Leader must be a member of the Cabinet.
- (b) The Deputy Leader will hold office until the end of the Leader's term of office, unless:
- (a) He/she resigns as Deputy Leader; or
 - (b) He/she is removed by the Leader; or
 - (c) He/she is disqualified or is no longer a member of the Council.
- (c) If for any reason the Leader is unable to act or the office of Leader is vacant, the Deputy Leader will act in his/her place.

The Cabinet Members

- (a) The Leader will also appoint between one and eight other members of the Council to serve on the Cabinet.
- (b) Cabinet members shall hold office until:
- They resign from office as a Cabinet member; or
 - They are removed from office by the Leader; or
 - They are disqualified or a no longer a member of the Council;
- (c) If for any reason neither the Leader or Deputy Leader is able to act or both offices are vacant the Cabinet must act in the Leader's place or arrange for a member of the Cabinet to act in the Leader's place.

Changes to the Cabinet

- (a) The Leader shall notify the Chief Executive in writing of the size and composition of the Cabinet and of any subsequent changes and the date from which any changes are to take effect.
- (b) The Chief Executive must inform all members of the Council of any changes to the size and composition of the Cabinet within seven working days of being notified by the Leader and follow the procedure in the Cabinet Procedure Rules to report to full Council.

Proceedings of the Cabinet

- (a) The Cabinet will conduct its proceedings in accordance with the Cabinet Procedure rules set out in Part 4E of this Constitution.

Scheme of Delegation for Executive Functions

- (a) The Executive Leader may exercise all Executive Functions.
- (b) The Executive Leader has implemented the following delegations for Executive Functions
- The Executive Cabinet may exercise any Executive Function.

A Portfolio holder may take any Executive decision which relates to his or her Portfolio. The Executive Leader may take any decision which an individual Portfolio holder could take where the relevant Portfolio holder is unable or unwilling to take that decision. The Executive Leader may alter the allocation of responsibilities within any Portfolio.

- Chief Officers may take any Executive decision which relates to the services under their control except where the relevant Portfolio holder has instructed them not to make such a decision.
- Chief Officers may nominate other Officers to take decisions which they have the power to take.

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions must be made in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and any policies of the Council.

The following principles shall be observed by decision makers exercising Executive functions:

- Key decisions should normally be made by the Cabinet as a whole;
- Decisions which significantly affect more than one Portfolio should normally be made by the Cabinet as a whole
- Decisions of an operational or managerial nature should normally be made by Chief Officers
- Decisions of a strategic nature would normally be made by Members.

No decision shall be open to legal challenge on the basis that these principles have been breached.

Membership

Cabinet Portfolios are:

Portfolio	Key Areas
Leader and Cabinet Member – Policy, Reform, Comms	Corporate Strategy Shared Services Public Service Reform Transformation Strategic Partnerships

	Strategic Developments Comms and events
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member – Property, Assets, Commercial Services and Major Developments	Delivery and Management of Major Developments Community Centres Parks and Play Space Car Parking
Cabinet Member for Finance and Public Protection	Medium Term Financial Strategy Budget Licensing Environmental Heal Public Safety
Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Waste Services	Streetscene Grounds Maintenance Waste and Recycling Climate Change and Biodiversity
Cabinet Member for Customer Services and Digital	Customer Services and Gateway Digital Strategy and IT
Cabinet Member for Planning, Business Support and Economic Development	Development Control Local Plan and Planning Policy Investment and Skills (including Skills Factory) UKSPF
Cabinet Member for Wealth Building, Social Justice, Equality and Diversity	Cross Cutting administrations' policy and organisational priorities Equality, Inclusion and Diversity
Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing	Leisure Centres (via leisure company) Active Health HAF Community Hubs

Lead Members and Member Champions

These roles are to support the Executive, will be appointed by the Leader in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and reported to Council for information.

2M Community Hub Areas

1. Community Hub Areas

After consulting with councillors, Council partners and members of the public, the Council decided to establish Community Hub areas in order to strengthen communications with members of the local community and to increase their involvement in Council decisions about services which affect them.

2. Membership

- (a) **Membership.** Community Hub Areas consist of all councillors from the wards in each area identified below.
- (b) **Boundaries/Names.** The current boundaries and names of the Community Hub areas are as follows:
 - 1) Western Parishes
Hoole, Longton and Hutton West, New Longton and Hutton East
 - 2) Penwortham
Broad Oak, Charnock, Howick and Priory, Middleforth
 - 3) Central Villages
Farington East, Farington West and Lostock Hall
 - 4) Leyland
Broadfield, Bucksahw and Worden, Earnshaw Bridge, Leyland Central, Moss Side, Seven Stars, St Ambrose
 - 5) Bamber Bridge, Lostock Hall and Walton le Dale
Bamber Bridge East, Bamber Bridge West, Lostock Hall, Walton-le-Dale East and Walton-le-Dale West

Terms of Reference

Each Community Hub area is responsible for drawing up a Community Hub Plan to identify neighbourhood priorities. These plans will be drawn up by elected members working alongside the public and the council's partners in the manner outlined in the Area Procedure Rules (see 4B)

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