



| Classification | Item No. |
|----------------|----------|
| Open | |

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| Meeting: | Audit Committee |
| Meeting date: | 18 March 2021 |
| Title of report: | Accounting Policies 2020/21 |
| Report by: | Interim Director of Financial Transformation |
| Decision Type: | Non key |
| Ward(s) to which report relates | All |

Executive Summary:

The Chief Finance Officer is responsible for the preparation of the council's statement of accounts in accordance with proper accounting practices, for each financial year ending 31 March. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Council Accounting in the United Kingdom (CIPFA and the Local Council (Scotland) Accounts Advisory Committee (LASAAC)) supported by the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

In preparing the statement of accounts, the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for selecting suitable accounting policies and ensuring they are applied consistently. Accounting policies are the specific principles, conventions, rules and practices applied in preparing and presenting the financial statements and set out how transactions are recognised, presented and measured in the accounts.

There have been no change in the substance of the accounting policies and a summary of the accounting policies is set out at Appendix A.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- Members note the accounting policies to be used in the production of the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts.

Key Considerations

1. Background

- 1.1 In preparing the statement of accounts, the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for selecting suitable accounting policies and ensuring they are applied consistently. Accounting policies are the specific principles, conventions, rules and practices applied in preparing and presenting the financial statements and set out how transactions are recognised, presented and measured in the accounts.
- 1.2 There have been no change in the substance of the accounting policies and a summary of the accounting policies is set out at Appendix A.
- 1.3 The Audit Committee is asked to note the accounting policies that will be used in the preparation of the 2020/21 Statement of Accounts.

Community impact / Contribution to the Bury 2030 Strategy

Ensuring compliance with Financial Procedures and Policies

Equality Impact and considerations:

24. *Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:*

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;*
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;*
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.*

25. *The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.*
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Assessment of Risk:

The following risks apply to the decision:

| Risk / opportunity | Mitigation |
|--|--|
| Failure to agree the accounting policies could lead to a qualification of the Council's Statement of Accounts. | The production of the policies in line with CIPFA guidance on an annual basis sets the basis on which the accounts are to be prepared. |

Consultation:

There are no consultation requirements.

Legal Implications:

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The proposals underpin the Council's statutory requirement for producing the annual Statement of Accounts.

Report Author and Contact Details:

Lisa Kitto, Interim Director of Financial Transformation and S151 Officer

Background papers:

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

| Term | Meaning |
|-------|---|
| CIPFA | Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy |
| | |

ACCOUNTING POLICIES FOR THE 2020/21 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**1. General Principles****1.1 Basis of preparation**

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2020/21 financial year and its position at the year end of 31 March 2021. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit 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 (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Local Council Accounting in the United Kingdom 2019/20 (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. The accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis, under the assumption that the Council will continue in existence for the foreseeable future.

1.2 Events after the Balance Sheet Date

Events may occur between the balance sheet date and the date when the Statement of Accounts is authorised for issue, which may have a bearing upon the financial results of the past year. Two types of events can be identified:

- Conditions existing at the end of the reporting period:
 - The Statement of Accounts would be adjusted to reflect such events.
- Conditions arising after the end of the reporting period:
 - The Statement of Accounts is not adjusted to reflect such events, but where a category of events would have a material effect, disclosure is made in the notes to the accounts of the nature of the events and their estimated financial effect.

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

1.3 Group Accounts

The Council has material interest in external entities that are classified as subsidiaries and which are consolidated into the Council's group accounts on a line by line basis, after eliminating intra group transactions.

An entity could be material but still not consolidated if all of its business is with the Council and eliminated on consolidation – i.e. the consolidation would mean that the group accounts are not materially different to the single entity accounts.

1.4 Pooled Budgets

The Council is the host partner of the pooled funds in respect of Health and Social care and the Better Care Fund. The arrangements are made in accordance with section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and allows budgets to be pooled between authorities and health and social care organisations.

The arrangements are accounted for as joint operations and, therefore, the Council accounts for its share of the funds' assets, liabilities, expenditure and income.

1.5 Prior Period Adjustments, Changes in Accounting Policies and Estimates and Errors

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

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

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

2. Accounting policies for income and expenditure

2.1 Accruals of Income and Expenditure

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

- Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised when the Council transfers the significant risks and rewards of ownership to the purchaser and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.
- Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the Council can measure reliably the percentage of completion of the transaction and it is probable that economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption; they are carried as inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including 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

- Revenue and expenditure recognised but cash not 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.

2.2 Capital Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services, are charged with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

- depreciation attributable to the assets used by the relevant service.
- revaluation and impairment losses on assets used by the service where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off.
- amortisation of intangible non-current assets attributable to the service.

The Council is not allowed to raise Council Tax to fund depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses or amortisation. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing requirement equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the Council in the approved Minimum Revenue Provision policy. Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses, and amortisation are replaced by Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). This adjusting transaction is included in the Movement in Reserves Statement with the Capital Adjustment Account charged with the difference between the two amounts.

2.3 Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates income

Council Tax, Retained Business Rates and Business Rates Top-up Grant income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the year will be treated as accrued income.

Business Rates, Business Rates Top-up Grant and Council Tax income will be recognised in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement within the Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income line. As a billing Council, the difference between the Business Rates and Council Tax included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the amount required by regulation credited to the General Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account and reported in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Each major preceptor's share of the accrued Business Rates and Council Tax income is available from the information that is required to be produced in order to prepare the Collection Fund Statement.

Business Rates and Council Tax income is recognised when it is probable that the economic benefits or service potential associated with the transaction will flow to the Council, and the amount of revenue can be measured reliably.

Revenue relating to Council Tax and Business Rates is 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

2.4 Depreciation

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

| Category | Measurement Basis |
|--|--|
| Dwellings | Component Life |
| Other Buildings | Straight line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer. |
| Vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment | straight-line allocation over the useful life of the asset as estimated by a suitably qualified officer. |
| Infrastructure | Straight line allocation up to 25 years |

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

2.5 Employee Benefits

2.5.1 Benefits Payable During Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within 12 months of the year-end. They include such benefits as wages and salaries, paid annual leave, paid sick leave, flexi and time off in lieu (TOIL) as well as bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. mobile phones) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Council.

2.5.2 Employee Accumulated Absence Accrual

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 current accounting year. The accrual is charged to Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services, but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday entitlement occurs.

2.5.3 Termination Benefits

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

officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy and are charged on an accruals basis to the relevant services lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

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

2.5.4 Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Council are members of three separate pension schemes:

- The Greater Manchester Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council.
- The Teachers' Pension Scheme, administered by Capita Teachers' Pensions on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).
- The NHS Pension Scheme, administered by EA Finance NHS Pension

These schemes provide defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees working for the Council.

However, the arrangements for the teachers' and NHS schemes means that liability for these benefits cannot be identified specifically to the Council. These schemes are therefore accounted for as if they are a defined contribution scheme and no liability for future payments of benefits is recognised in the Balance Sheet.

2.5.5 The Greater Manchester Local Government Pension Scheme

The Greater Manchester Local Government Pension Scheme is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme. The liabilities of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method; an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates and projections of future earnings for current employees. Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate (based on the indicative rate of return on a basket of high quality corporate bonds, Government gilts and other factors).

The assets of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet at their fair value:

- quoted securities – current bid price
- unquoted securities – professional estimate
- unitised securities – current bid price
- property – market value

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

- current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned in the current 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 - 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.

2.5.6 Remeasurement 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 Greater Manchester Pension Fund - cash paid as employer contributions to the pension scheme in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

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 accounting standards. In the Movement in Reserves Statement, this means that there are appropriations to and from the Pensions Reserve, to remove the notional debits and credits for retirement benefits and replace them with debits for the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year-end. The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

2.6 Government Grants and Contributions

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

- the Council will comply with the conditions attached to the payments, and

- the grants or contributions will be received.

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

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

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is posted to the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve. Where it has been applied, it is posted to the Capital Adjustment Account. Amounts in the Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account once they have been applied to fund capital expenditure.

Where revenue grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement but have yet to be used to fund revenue expenditure, they are posted to the Revenue Grant Reserve. When eligible expenditure is incurred in future years the grant is transferred back into the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.

2.7 Overheads and Support Services

The costs of support services such as administration and management are charged to services in accordance with the Council's arrangements for accountability and performance

2.8 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

2.8.1 Provisions

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council a legal or constructive obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. For instance, the Council may be involved in a court case that could eventually result in the making of a settlement or the payment of compensation.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year that the Council

becomes aware of the obligation and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried in the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year – where it becomes less than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made) the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service revenue account.

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

2.8.2 Contingent Liabilities

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

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

2.8.3 Contingent Assets

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

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

2.9 Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute (REFCUS)

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but that does not result in the creation of a non-current asset has been charged as expenditure to the relevant service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in the year. Where the Council has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from existing capital resources or by borrowing, a transfer in the Movement in Reserves Statement from the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account then reverses out the amounts charged so that there is no impact on the level of Council Tax.

2.10 Revenue Recognition

Revenue is defined as income arising as a result of the Council's normal operating activities and where income arises from contracts with service recipients it is

recognised when or as the Council has satisfied a performance obligation by transferring a promised good or service to the service recipient.

Revenue is measured as the amount of the transaction price which is allocated to that performance obligation. Where the Council is acting as an agent of another organisation the amounts collected for that organisation are excluded from revenue

2.11 Value Added Tax (VAT)

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

Accounting policies for assets and liabilities

3.1 Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

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

3.2 Fair Value Measurement

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

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

The Council uses both in house and external valuers to provide a valuation of its non-financial assets and liabilities, for recognition or disclosure as appropriate, in line with the highest and best use definition within IFRS 13 Fair Value Measurement.

The highest and best use of the asset or liability being valued is considered from the perspective of a market participant. Inputs to the valuation techniques in respect of the Council's fair value measurement of its assets and liabilities are categorised within the fair value hierarchy as follows:

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

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

3.3 Financial Instruments

3.3.1 Classification of Financial Instruments

The Council's financial assets and liabilities have been classified as follows:

3.3.2 Financial Assets

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

There are three main classes of financial assets measured at:

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

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

3.3.3 Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

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

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

3.3.4 Financial Assets measured at Fair Value through other Comprehensive Income (FVOCI)

These assets relate to financial instruments where the amounts received relating to them are solely principal and interest but they are held to collect cash and sell the assets. The interest received on these assets is spread evenly over the life of these instruments.

Changes in fair value are posted to Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure and are balanced by an entry in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

When the asset is de-recognised, the cumulative gain or loss previously recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure is transferred from the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve and recognised in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services.

3.3.5 Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit of Loss (FVPL)

These assets relate to financial instruments where the amounts received relating to them are not principal and interest (e.g. equity investments). Dividends received are accounted for at the point they are received.

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

- instruments with quoted market prices – the market price
- other instruments with fixed and determinable payments – discounted cash flow analysis.

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

An equity instrument that has been classed as FVPL can be designated as FVOCI if it is not held for trading (e.g. a strategic investment). Once this designation has been made it cannot be reversed. This designation would mean that any gains and losses would be held in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

3.3.6 Expected Credit Loss Model

The Council recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost (or where relevant FVOCI), 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 Council.

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

3.3.7 Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost. Annual charges to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest payable are based

on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised.

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

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

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

3.4 Heritage Assets

The Council's Heritage Assets are held by the Council principally for their contribution to knowledge and/or culture. These include Civic Regalia, Artefacts and various gifts & bequests some of which are held in the Museum and Art Gallery. These are recognised and measured, including treatment of revaluation gains and losses, in accordance with the Council's accounting policies on Property Plant and Equipment.

The land and building assets identified to date include Radcliffe Tower, the Dungeon and Rodger Worthington's grave. As there is no available valuation for these assets they have been reported at nominal value as recommended by the Council's property valuer.

However, some of the measurement rules are relaxed allowing the Council's Heritage Assets to be included on the Balance Sheet at their insured value where

available. Where insurance valuations are not available there is a narrative disclosure.

Heritage assets are deemed to have an indefinite life, therefore are not depreciated as the charge made would be minimal and immaterial. Nevertheless, where there is evidence of physical deterioration to a Heritage Asset, or doubts arise to its authenticity, the value of the asset has to be reviewed.

3.5 Investment Property

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

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, based on the highest and best use value of the asset. Investment properties are not depreciated, and an annual valuation programme ensures that they are held at highest and best use value at the Balance Sheet date. Gains and losses on revaluation are charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal.

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

3.6 Leases

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

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

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

The Council as Lessee

Operating Leases:

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

The Council as Lessor

Operating Leases:

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

3.7 Property, Plant and Equipment

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

3.7.1 Recognition

Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred. The Council has a £15,000 de-minimis limit for the recognition of Capital Expenditure.

3.7.2 Measurement

Assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

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

Assets that are being constructed by the Council will initially be recognised at cost. The Council does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred in the cost of acquisition, construction and completion of qualifying assets.

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

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

| Category | Measurement Basis |
|---|--|
| Community assets, infrastructure assets and assets under construction | Depreciated historical cost |
| Dwellings | Current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV-SH). |
| Surplus Assets | Fair value, determined by the measurement of the highest and best use value of the asset |
| All Other operational Assets | Current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV). |

Where there is no market-based evidence of current value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value. For non-property assets that have short useful lives or low values (or both), depreciated historical cost basis is used as a proxy for current value.

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

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

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

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

3.7.3 Impairment

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

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

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

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

3.7.4 Component Accounting

Component accounting is applied only to housing stock in accordance with the analysis provided by the valuer.

3.7.5 Disposals

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

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

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

3.8 Reserves

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by transferring amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the Surplus or Deficit on the

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

Certain reserves are held to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, local taxation, retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the Council. These reserves are further explained in the relevant policies.

3.9 Schools

In line with accounting standards and the Code on group accounts and consolidation, all maintained schools are considered to be entities controlled by the Council. Rather than produce group accounts the income, expenditure, assets, liabilities, reserves and cash flows of each school are recognised in the Council's single entity accounts.

The Council has the following types of maintained schools under its control:

- Community
- Voluntary Aided
- Voluntary Controlled
- Foundation

Schools' non-current assets (school buildings and playing fields) are recognised on the Balance Sheet where the Council directly owns the assets, where the Council holds the balance of control of the assets or where the school or the school governing body own the assets or have had rights to use the assets transferred to them through a licence arrangement.

When a maintained school converts to an Academy, the school's non-current assets held on the Council's Balance Sheet are treated as a disposal. The carrying value of the asset is written off to Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

The written-off asset value is not a charge against the General Fund, as the cost of non-current asset disposals resulting from schools transferring to an Academy is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.