Divisions Affected - All

AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
13 March 2024

Statement of Accounts 2023/24

Report by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to**

   (a) Endorse the proposed timetable to produce the draft Statement of Accounts for 2023/24.
   (b) Note the consultation for back stop arrangements for the Statement of Accounts for 2022/23.
   (c) Ratify the accounting policies as approved by the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer and included as an annex to this report.

Executive Summary

2. This report sets out the approach taken to the preparation of the 2023/24 Statement of Accounts including:
   (a) The proposed date for publication of the draft 2023/24 Statement of Accounts, and
   (b) The approved Significant Accounting Policies which describe how the Council has interpreted and applied the CIPFA 2023/24 Code of Practice in Local Authority Accounting in the UK (the Code) and the basis of preparation of the accounts.

Statement of Accounts 2023/24

3. Subject to any further update nationally, draft accounts for 2023/24 are currently required to be published by the end of May 2024 so the public inspection period can begin in June 2024.

4. The impact of the 2022/23 accounts not being signed off creates challenges that affect the ability to meet this deadline. The Section 151 Officer must consider whether there is sufficient information available to ensure the Statement of Accounts are true and fair and free from material misstatement.

With the audit of 2022/23 not completed, it is not possible to know if there are any audit issues and any impact on prior year comparators in the 2023/24 accounts.

5. Taking this into consideration, it is not expected that it will be possible to publish draft accounts for 2023/24 by 31 May 2024. A more realistic publication date of 30 June 2024 will still provide time for the Committee time to consider the draft set of accounts prior to their audit. The Council's website will be updated to inform the public of the timing of the inspection period.

Consultation: Addressing the local audit backlog in England

6. In early February DLUHC issued a consultation with the aim of clearing the backlog of local audits in England. The consultation seeks views on amending the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as part of a package of cross-system measures to clear the backlog and put the system on a sustainable footing for the future. A summary of the three focal points of the consultation are set out below:

Reset	Recovery	Reform
Backstop date for all accounts up to 2022/23 to be signed off is 30 Sept 2024. Auditors are expected to complete as much work as possible.	Backstop dates have been set for accounts up to 2027/28. A draft of the Auditor's Annual Report needs to be issued by 30 November each year irrespective of position on the audit.	Build on recommendations of the Redmond Review and LUHC Committee report. HM Treasury to carry out a thematic review Financial Reporting Council to look at Local Audit Workforce Strategy CIPFA to introduce a Local Audit Qualification.

7. If audit work is not completed by 30 September 2024, then the 2022/23 Statement of Accounts would receive one of the following opinions:
   (a) *Modified Qualified Opinion*: The auditor reports that there are material misstatements or limitations in the financial statements, but not pervasive enough to invalidate them.
   (b) *Modified Adverse Opinion*: The auditor states that the financial statements are not presented fairly and do not comply with accounting standards and regulations.
   (c) *Disclaimer of Opinion*: The auditor disclaims any opinion on the financial statements due to severe limitations or uncertainties.

8. Details have not been made clear on any future year implication of receiving one of the above opinions. The consultation closed on 7 March and the outcome and any changes will be communicated at a future meeting.

Significant Accounting Policies 2023/24

9. The Council's Statement of Accounts is prepared in accordance with the Code[1]. The Council is required to adopt accounting policies that are set out in the Code which describe how the Council has interpreted and applied the Code.

10. The Code defines Accounting Policies as 'the specific principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an authority in preparing and presenting financial statements.'

11. The significant accounting policies adopted by the Council are disclosed within three notes to the Core Financial Statements in the Statement of Accounts set out below and listed in full in Annex 1:

    - Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
    - Critical judgements in applying accounting policies
    - Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

12. The Code prescribes that 'authorities shall apply the objective, underlying assumption and qualitative characteristics of useful financial information, in the selection and application of accounting policies and estimation techniques.'

13. The Code provides a detailed framework within which accounting policies must be set:

    - When the Code specifically applies to a transaction, other event or condition, the accounting policy or policies applied to that item shall be determined by applying the Code. Those policies need not be applied when the effect of applying them is immaterial.

    - Where the Code does not specifically apply to a transaction, other event or condition, management shall use its judgement in developing and applying an accounting policy that results in information that is:
        a) relevant to the decision-making needs of users, and
        b) reliable, in that the financial statements:
            i) represent faithfully the financial position, financial performance and cash flows of the authority
            ii) reflect the economic substance of transactions, other events and conditions and not merely the legal form
            iii) are neutral, i.e. free from bias
            iv) are prudent, and
            v) are complete in all material respects.

[1] The Code is the CIPFA Code of practice on local authority accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24

- In making the judgement management shall refer to, and consider the applicability of, the Code requirements dealing with similar and related issues. Management may also consider the most recent pronouncements of standard-setting bodies and accepted public or private sector practices to the extent, but only to the extent, that these do not conflict with the requirements of the Code.

- An authority shall select and apply its accounting policies consistently for similar transactions, other events and conditions, unless the Code specifically requires or permits different treatment.

- An authority shall change an accounting policy only if the change is required by the Code or results in the financial statements providing reliable and more relevant information about the effects of transactions, other events and conditions on the authority's financial position, financial performance or cash flows.

- Where an authority changes an accounting policy, it shall apply the changes retrospectively unless the Code specifies transitional provisions that shall be followed. A change in accounting policy shall be applied retrospectively by adjusting the opening balance of each affected component of net worth for the earliest period presented and the other comparative amounts disclosed for each prior period presented as if the new accounting policy had always been applied, except to the extent that it is impracticable to so do.

Approval of Accounting Policies

14. The code states that the Chief Finance Officer is responsible for selecting 'suitable' accounting policies and ensuring that they are applied consistently in the preparation of the statement of accounts. The Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer has approved the Summary of Significant Accounting Policies for 2023/24 as set out in Annex 1. All significant accounting policies have been selected with reference to the Code. There are no additions or amendments to the policies that were in place for 2022/23.

15. The Council's auditors will review the adopted accounting policies as part of the audit of the statement of accounts. There is also an expectation that the auditors will be able to evidence that the accounting policies have been approved by the Audit and Governance Committee in its capacity as 'Those Charged with Governance'. The Audit and Governance Committee is therefore asked to ratify the accounting policies as set out in Annex 1.

Financial Implications

16. There are no financial implications arising directly from the report.

Comments checked by:
Kathy Wilcox, Head Financial Strategy and Deputy Section 151 Officer
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Legal Implications

17. There are no legal implications arising directly from the measures set out. However, the Council will need to ensure that arrangements are put in place to comply with any amendments to the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and statutory guidance, including the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in England and Wales.

    Comments checked by:
    Paul Grant, Head of Legal & Deputy Monitoring Officer,
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LORNA BAXTER
Director of Finance

Annex 1: Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Background papers: Nil

Contact Officer: Richard Quayle, Chief Accountant,
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March 2024

Annex 1 – Proposed Notes to the Accounts

Please note that the numbering of the notes is likely to be different in the draft set of accounts as we are looking to change the sequence of them to make it more helpful for readers to cross reference notes to the main statements. The paragraph numbering below will not appear, it has been included here for ease of reference.

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies General

1. The Statement of Accounts summarises the County Council's transactions for the 2023/24 financial year and its position at the year-end 31 March 2024. It has been compiled in accordance with *The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2023/24* (the *Code)*, published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

2. <u>Going Concern</u>
3. The accounts are prepared on a going concern basis; that is, on the assumption that the functions of the County Council will continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future from the date that the accounts are authorised for issue.

4. <u>Accruals of Income and Expenditure</u>
5. Activity is accounted for in the year that it takes place, not simply when the cash payments are made or received.
6. Where income and expenditure has been recognised, but the cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recognised in the Balance Sheet. Where it is doubtful that debts will be settled, the balance of debtors is reduced, and a charge is made to revenue for the income that might not be recoverable.

7. <u>Government Grants and Contributions</u>
8. Government grants and third-party contributions are accounted for on an accrual basis and are recognised in the Statement of Accounts when there is reasonable assurance that the County Council will comply with the conditions attached to their payment and that the grants or contributions will be received.

9. Grants and contributions relating to capital and revenue expenditure are recognised immediately in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as income, except to the extent that the grant or contribution has a condition that the County Council has not satisfied. Conditions are stipulations that require the grant or contribution to be returned to the provider if the terms of the grant or contribution are not met.

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

11. Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are reversed out of the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement - where the grant/contribution 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.

12. 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 any conditions that would require repayment of the grant or contribution if not met, and the grants and contributions will be received.

13. Grants and contributions are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when recognised as due to the Council (i.e. specific revenue grants and contributions are credited to the relevant service line in the Cost of Services, and capital grants and contributions and non-ring-fenced grants are credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income and Expenditure).

14. Where specific revenue grants and contributions are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, but the associated expenditure has not yet been incurred, the grant is set aside in an Earmarked Revenue Reserve so that it can be matched with the expenditure in a subsequent year.

15. Capital grants and contributions are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account (if the grant eligible expenditure has been incurred); or to the Capital Grants Unapplied Account.

16. Revenue grants and contributions that have been credited to the relevant directorate line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that remain unapplied as at the Balance Sheet Date and are required to meet committed expenditure in future years are transferred to an earmarked reserve through the Movement in Reserves Statement.

<u>Council tax and business rates income</u>

17. The council tax and business rates income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) for the year is the accrued income for the year. The difference between the income included in the CIES and the amount required by regulation to be credited to the County Fund is taken to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account and included as an adjusting item in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

18. The district councils in Oxfordshire are acting as agents of the County Council in collecting council tax and business rates. The cash collected from council taxpayers and business rates payers belongs proportionately to the district councils and the major preceptors. There is therefore a debtor/creditor position between each district council and the County Council to recognise that the net cash paid to the County Council in the year is not the same as its share of cash collected. The County Council recognises its share of council tax and business rates debtor and creditor balances, impairment allowances for doubtful debts and provisions for losses on appeal in its Balance Sheet. The Cash Flow Statement of the County Council includes the net council tax and business rates cash received from the Collection Fund in the year.

Employee Benefits

Benefits Payable during Employment

19. Short-term employee benefits are recognised as an expense in the year in which employees render service to the Council.

Termination Benefits

20. Termination benefits are charged, on an accruals basis, to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

Post-Employment Benefits

The County Council participates in four pension schemes:
The Local Government Pension Scheme;
The Fire-fighters' Pension Scheme;
The Teachers' Pension Scheme; and
The NHS Pension Scheme.

21. These schemes provide defined benefits to members. However, the arrangements for the teachers' pension scheme and the NHS pension scheme mean that liabilities for these benefits cannot be identified to the County Council. These schemes are therefore accounted for as if they are defined contributions schemes – no liability for future payment of benefits is recognised in the Balance Sheet and the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are charged with the employer's contributions payable in the year.

22. The County Council also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award are accounted for on the same basis as defined benefit schemes.

23. For the schemes treated as defined benefit schemes the Cost of Services includes:

24. Current service cost – the increase in the present value of a scheme's liabilities resulting from employee service in the current period. This is included in the relevant directorate line within the Cost of Services.

25. Past service cost – the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities for employee service in prior periods, resulting from a scheme amendment or curtailment. This is included in Other Corporate Costs within the Cost of Services.

26. Gain/loss on settlement – changes in liabilities relating to actions that relieve the County Council of primary responsibility for a pension obligation. This is included in Other Corporate Costs within the Cost of Services.

27. The net interest on the defined benefit liability (asset) – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time - is included in the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Remeasurements comprising 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 actuary has updated their assumptions – and the return on scheme assets, excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined liability (asset), are recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure within the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

28. Scheme assets attributable to the County Council are measured at fair value as at the Balance Sheet date. Scheme liabilities attributable to the County Council are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method. The net pensions liability is recognised in the Balance Sheet.

29. The amount chargeable to the County Fund for providing pensions for employees is the amount payable for the year in accordance with the statutory requirements governing each particular pension scheme. Where this amount does not match the amount charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services for the year the difference is taken to the Pensions Reserve via the Movement in Reserves Statement.

30. Fire-fighters injury awards are disability benefits paid by the County Council that do not form part of the fire-fighters pension scheme. However, the measurement of these long-term benefits is subject to the same degree of uncertainty as the measurement of fire-fighters post-employment benefits and therefore they are accounted for in the same way as fire-fighters post-employment benefits.

Property, Plant and Equipment

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

vehicles, plant and equipment, surplus assets, assets under construction and infrastructure.

32. Expenditure on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment is capitalised on an accrual's basis, provided that it is probable that future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the County Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. This excludes expenditure on routine repairs and maintenance, which is charged directly to service revenue accounts as an expense when incurred.

33. 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 (this only applies when the County Council has an obligation to carry out such activities when the item is acquired, constructed or installed)

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

35. Property, Plant and Equipment is subsequently carried in the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historic cost
- Other Property, Plant and Equipment assets (excluding surplus assets) – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use
- Surplus assets – fair value (at highest and best use), determined as the price that would be received to sell such an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date
- Where there is no market-based evidence of current value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost is used as an estimate of current value.
- Where non-property assets have short useful lives or low values (or both), depreciated historic cost basis is used as a proxy for current value.

36. A *de minimis* level of £20,000 is applied for land and buildings and £15,000 for vehicles and plant, other than for schools local capital spend where a *de minimis* of £2,000 is applied.

37. Revaluations of property assets are undertaken on a three-year rolling programme as shown below. Material changes to asset valuations are adjusted in the interim periods.

		Date of Last Revaluation	Date of Next Revaluation

Year 1	Secondary and Special Schools, Other Educational Premises (Children's, Youth and Sports Centres)	2021/22	2024/25
Year 2	Primary, Nursery, Junior and Infant Schools	2022/23	2025/26
Year 3	Social Care Premises, Libraries, Museums and Adult Learning, Fire & Rescue Service Premises, Community Safety, Staff Housing, Central Offices and Highways Depot	2023/24	2026/27

38. Investment properties valuations are reviewed annually. Assets held for sale are revalued at the point of reclassification to that category.

39. 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 directorate.

40. Decreases in valuations 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 directorate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

Assets are assessed each year as to whether there is an indication of impairment. Where indications exist and the recoverable amount of the asset is materially lower than the carrying amount, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall. Where impairment losses are identified they are accounted for in the same way as decreases in valuations.
Where an impairment loss is reversed subsequently, the reversal is credited to the relevant directorate, up to the amount of the original loss, adjusted for depreciation that would have been charged if the loss had not been recognised.

Depreciation of Property, Plant and Equipment

41. Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment with a finite life, which is determined at acquisition or revaluation. Assets in the course of construction are not depreciated until they are brought into use. Depreciation is an estimation technique that is calculated using the straight-line method with the following asset lives:

Buildings	60 years (or less if specified by the valuer)
Vehicles, plant and equipment	between 5 and 30 years
IT equipment and infrastructure	between 3 and 5 years
Infrastructure (roads and bridges)	35 years

42. Land is determined to have an infinite life and is not depreciated.

43. Where an item of Property, Plant and Equipment asset has major components whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately.

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

<u>Infrastructure Assets</u>

45. Infrastructure assets are recognised in the Balance Sheet under Property, Plant and Equipment and include carriageways, structures (e.g. Bridges), footways and cycle tracks, street lighting and street furniture which together form a single integrated network.

46. Expenditure on the acquisition or replacement of components of the network is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Council and the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

47. Infrastructure assets are generally measured at depreciated historical cost.

48. Where impairment losses are identified they are accounted for by writing down the carrying amount of the asset to the recoverable amount.

49. Depreciation is charged on a straight-line basis on parts of the infrastructure network assets that are subject to deterioration or depletion.

50. When a component of the infrastructure network is disposed of or decommissioned, the carrying amount of the component in the Balance Sheet written off to Other Operating Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Receipts from disposals, if any, are credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal.

51. The written off value of disposal is appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no charge against the Council Tax.

<u>Charges to Revenue for Property, Plant and Equipment</u>

52. Services, support services and trading accounts are charged with a capital charge for all Property, Plant and Equipment used in the provision of services. The charge covers the annual provision for depreciation and revaluation and impairment losses where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be written off.

53. The County Council is not required to raise council tax to fund depreciation or revaluation/impairment losses. However, it is required to make an annual contribution from revenue towards the reduction in its overall borrowing

requirement (referred to as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)). Depreciation and revaluation/impairment losses are therefore replaced by the MRP contribution in the County Fund Balance by way of an adjusting transaction with the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Disposals and Non-current Assets Held for Sale

54. When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. To be classified as an Asset Held for Sale the asset must meet the following criteria:

- Available for immediate sale in its present condition
- The sale must be highly probable
- Actively marketed at a reasonable sale price
- The sale should be expected to be completed within 1 year

55. Assets Held for Sale are measured at the lower of their carrying value and fair value less costs to sell at initial reclassification. Gains in fair value are recognised only up to the amount of any previously recognised losses in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. Decreases in fair value less costs to sell are recognised in Other Operating Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale.

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

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

58. When an asset is disposed of, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet is written off to Other Operating Expenditure 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 as part of the gain or loss on disposal. Any revaluation gains in the Revaluation Reserve are transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account.

59. Receipts from the disposal of assets in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. Capital receipts are appropriated to the Capital Receipts Unapplied reserve from the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

60. The written off value of assets disposed of is appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no charge against the Council Tax.

Investment Property

61. Investment properties are those that are used solely to earn rentals and/or for capital appreciation.

62. Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (at highest and best use), being the price that would be received to sell such an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. Investment properties are not depreciated and are revalued annually according to market conditions. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Gains and losses on disposal are posted to Other Operating Expenditure. The gains and losses are reversed out of the County Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account (or Capital Receipts Unapplied for disposal receipts over £10,000) in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that they do not impact on Council Tax.

Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute

63. Capital expenditure on non-current assets not owned by the County Council and grants given by the County Council for capital purposes are charged to the relevant directorate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. In accordance with statutory provisions this expenditure is transferred from the County Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement, such that there is no impact on council tax.

Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and similar contracts (service concession arrangements)

64. PFI type contracts involve a private sector entity (the operator) constructing or enhancing property used in the provision of a public service and operating and maintaining that property for a specified period of time. The operator is paid for its services over the period of the arrangement. Where the County Council controls or regulates the services provided by the operator and controls the residual interest in the property at the end of the term of the arrangement the contract meets the tests for accounting as a service concession arrangement.

65. Properties used in service concession arrangements are recognised as Property, Plant and Equipment of the County Council. The original recognition of the assets at fair value (based on the cost to purchase the assets) is matched by the recognition of liabilities for amounts due to the operators to pay for the assets and deferred income where the operator part funds the assets from income from third parties. Once recognised on the Balance Sheet these assets are revalued and depreciated in the same way as other Property, Plant and Equipment owned by the County Council.

66. The amounts payable to the service concession arrangement operators each year are analysed into five elements:

- The value of services received during the year – charged to the relevant directorate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

- Finance costs – an interest charge on the outstanding finance liability – charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement
- Payments towards the finance liability – applied to write down the Balance Sheet liability towards the operator
- Contingent rents – inflationary increases in the amounts to be paid for the property arising during the contract – charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Note for the County Council's current service concession arrangement there is no inflation applied to the elements of the contract payments relating to the property build costs and therefore no contingent rents.
- Lifecycle replacement costs – recognised as a capital prepayment in the Balance Sheet and transferred to Property, Plant and Equipment when capital works are undertaken.

67. Deferred income is released to the relevant directorate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on a straight-line basis over the service concession period.

Leases

68. 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.

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

70. 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.

71. Where the County Council is the lessee, property, plant and equipment held under a finance lease is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value at the lease's inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Premiums paid on entry into a lease are applied to writing down the lease liability. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred. The lease payments are apportioned between a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the asset – applied to writing down the liability, and a finance charge – charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Once recognised on the Balance Sheet, assets recognised under finance leases are accounted for in the same way as other Property, Plant and Equipment, subject to depreciation being charged over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life.

72. Rentals paid by the Council under operating leases are charged to the relevant directorate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on a straight-line basis over the lease period except where the contractual payment terms are considered to be a more systematic and appropriate basis.

73. Where the County Council leases an asset to others under a finance lease, the asset is written out of the Balance Sheet as a disposal. At the commencement of the lease, the carrying amount of the 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. A gain, representing the County Council's net investment in the lease, is credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal, matched by a long-term debtor in the Balance Sheet. Finance lease rentals receivable are apportioned between a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property – applied to write down the long-term debtor (together with any premiums received), and finance income credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

74. The gain credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on disposal is required under statute to be treated as a capital receipt. Where a premium has been received, this is posted out of the County Fund Balance to the Capital Receipts Unapplied reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the amount due in relation to the lease asset is to be settled by the payment of rentals in future years, this is posted out of the County Fund Balance to the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When the future rentals are received, the element for the capital receipt for the disposal of the asset is used to write down the long-term debtor and the deferred capital receipts are transferred to the Capital Receipts Unapplied reserve. The written-off carrying amount of the asset on disposal is appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no impact on Council Tax.

75. Where the County Council leases an asset to others under an operating lease, the asset is retained on the Balance Sheet. Rental income is credited to the relevant directorate in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on a straight-line basis over the lease period (including any premiums received at the commencement of the lease).

Cash and Cash Equivalents

76. Cash is represented by cash in hand and bank deposits repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. The County Council treats the following as cash equivalents:
    - Instant Access Call Accounts
    - Instant Access Short Term Funds
    - Deposits with one working day to maturity from date of deposit

Financial Assets

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

78. Financial assets are classified into three types:
    - Amortised costs
    - Financial assets at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income
    - Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss

79. Financial Assets at Amortised costs are initially measured at fair value and carried in the Balance Sheet at their amortised cost. Credits to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for external interest receivable are based on the carrying amount of the asset, multiplied by the effective interest rate for the instrument. For the majority of the County Council's investments, the effective interest rate is the same as the actual interest receivable in accordance with the loan agreement. Short duration receivables with no stated interest rates (e.g. debtors) are measured at original invoice amount.

80. The Council recognises expected credit losses on all of its financial assets held at amortised cost.

81. 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.

82. Where risk has not increased significantly or remains low, losses are assessed on the basis of 12-month expected losses.

83. The expected credit loss model also applies to lease receivables. Lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the Council.

84. The County Council has made a number of loans to clients and other organisations at less than market interest rates or zero rate (referred to in the Code as soft loans). For the County Council there are no material differences between the fair value and the nominal value of such loans and no adjustments are made on initial recognition of these loans.

85. Where assets are identified as impaired because of a likelihood arising from a past event that payments due under the contract will not be made, the carrying value of the asset is reduced through the use of an allowance account and a charge made to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

86. Any gains and losses arising on the derecognition of assets are credited/debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

87. Financial assets at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income are initially measured and carried in the Balance Sheet at fair value. Where the asset has fixed or determinable payments, credits to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for interest receivable are based on the amortised cost of the asset multiplied by the effective interest rate for the instrument. Where there are no fixed or determinable payments, income is credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when it becomes receivable.

88. Assets are maintained in the Balance Sheet at fair value. Values are based on:
- Instruments with quoted market prices – the market price
- Other instruments with fixed and determinable payments – discounted cash flow analysis

89. The inputs to the measurement techniques are categorised in accordance with the following three levels:
- Level 1 inputs - quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets that the County Council can access at the measurement date
- Level 2 inputs – inputs other than quoted prices included within Level 1 that are observable for the asset, either directly or indirectly
- Level 3 inputs – unobservable inputs for the asset

90. Changes in fair value are balanced by an entry in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve and the gain/loss recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure (except for impairment losses).

91. Where assets are identified as impaired because of a likelihood arising from a past event that payments due under the contract will not be made, the asset is written down through the use of an allowance account and a charge made to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

92. Any gains and losses arising on the derecognition of assets are credited/debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, along with any accumulated gains/losses recognised in the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve.

93. Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss are initially measured and carried in the Balance Sheet at fair value. Movements in fair value are balanced by posting gains and losses to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as they arise. Any residual gains and losses arising on derecognition are also credited/debited to the Comprehensive Income and

Expenditure Statement. The basis of fair value and the inputs to the measurement techniques is the same as for Financial assets at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income.

94. The carrying amounts of individual financial assets are separated into their current (short-term) and non-current (long-term) elements for presentation within the Balance Sheet.

Financial Liabilities

95. Financial liabilities are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument. Financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value and are carried at their amortised cost.

96. Interest is charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, based on the carrying amount of the liabilities, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instruments. This means that:

97. The amount included in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable, plus accrued interest; and

98. Interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

99. Financial liabilities are de-recognised when the obligation is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Debt Redemption

100. The County Council complies with legislation to charge a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to the County Fund revenue account for the repayment of debt by making a straight-line charge of the outstanding pre-2008 capital expenditure as at 1 April 2017 calculated over a 50-year period and making provision for repayment of prudential borrowing in equal instalments over the estimated life of the asset for which the borrowing is undertaken. In addition, the provision for repayment of debt includes an amount equal to the amount that is taken to the Balance Sheet to reduce the liabilities in respect of PFI and similar contracts and for the prepayment of lifecycle costs relating to these contracts, and an amount equal to the amount that is taken to the Balance Sheet to reduce liabilities in respect of finance leases.

Provisions

101. Provisions are made where the County Council has a present obligation (legal or constructive) as a result of a past event that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. Provisions are reviewed annually and are adjusted to reflect the current best estimate against the appropriate directorate in the Comprehensive Income

and Expenditure Statement. When payments are eventually made they are charged directly to the provision.

Insurance

102. The County Council has a policy of self-insurance of claims across its main insurance categories. In accordance with the Code the insurance provision is set aside to cover insurance claims actually received and awaiting resolution that have been advised to the County Council and which it has been decided to be insured internally rather than externally. Subject to identified contingent liabilities there are no significant unfunded risks.

Contingent liabilities

103. The County Council discloses contingent liabilities in the notes to the accounts. Contingent liabilities are possible obligations arising from past events and whose existence will be confirmed by one or more uncertain events occurring in the future and are not wholly under the County Council's control. Contingent liabilities also arise in circumstances where a provision would otherwise be made but either it is not probable that there will be a transfer of economic benefits or where the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

104. Financial guarantee contracts come under the definition of financial instruments and are initially recognised in the accounts at fair value. This only applies to guarantees entered into after 1 April 2006. Any entered into before that date continue to be recognised as contingent liabilities. If payment under the guarantee becomes probable the liability would be determined in accordance with the requirement for provisions.

Reserves

105. A reserve, whether capital or revenue, results from events that have allowed monies to be set aside, surpluses, or decisions causing anticipated expenditure to have been postponed or cancelled. These can be spent or earmarked at the discretion of the County Council. Earmarked revenue reserves can be used to set aside available monies for major anticipated capital schemes, for projects or service arrangements that the County Council may wish to carry out, business unit surpluses, service efficiency savings and contingent liabilities where a provision is not required.

106. Reserves are established and used for different reasons. These include:

107. Usable reserves - reserves that can be used at the County Council's discretion to fund either revenue or capital spend

108. Unusable reserves - reserves relating to unrealised gains, such as the Revaluation Reserve, that are not "cash backed" and cannot be used to fund future capital or revenue spending and reserves relating to differences between accounting policy and statutory requirements, such as the Capital Adjustment Account.

109. Earmarked reserves are created by appropriating amounts from the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When

expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred it is charged to the appropriate directorate. The reserve is then appropriated back into the County Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement so that there is no net charge against Council Tax for the expenditure.

Group Accounts

110. The County Council is required to prepare group accounts where it has interests in subsidiaries, associates and/or joint ventures, subject to consideration of materiality. For 2023/24 the County Council did not have any such interests that are considered material and therefore prepared these accounts only as a single entity rather than as group accounts.

111. The County Council participates in a number of joint operations (e.g. pooled budget arrangements with the health sector and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, OxLEP). The County Council accounts directly (in its single entity accounts) for its part of the assets, liabilities, income, expenditure and cash flows held within or arising from such an arrangement.

112. There are a number of circumstances where the County Council exercises limited influence and these are disclosed as related parties. Under these circumstances, transactions with these bodies are charged against the appropriate service in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, and balances owed by them or to them are included in debtors and creditors.

Schools

113. Under the Code, local authority-maintained schools are considered to be separate entities with the balance of control lying with the Council. The Code requires that the income, expenditure, assets and liabilities of maintained schools be accounted for in the single entity accounts of the Council rather than requiring consolidation in the Group Accounts.

114. In accordance with the Education Reform Act 1988, the scheme of Local Management of Schools provides for the carry forward of individual school surpluses and deficits. These are held as usable earmarked reserves and are committed to be spent on schools.

Taxation

115. The County Council is exempt from income tax, corporation tax and from capital gains tax.

116. Value Added Tax is excluded from both revenue and capital in terms of both income and expenditure except where the County Council is not able to recover VAT on expenditure.

117. The County Council incurs landfill tax, which is charged on a tonnage basis to the County Council by its waste disposal contractors.

118. In addition, the County Council incurs stamp duty land tax on the acquisition of property freeholds and leaseholds, climate change levy on its energy bills and insurance premium tax on its insurance costs. Also, the County Council incurs employer’s national insurance contributions based on a percentage of staff salaries.

119. Where the County Council incurs tax, this cost is charged to directorates in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Rounding

120. In preparing the Statement of Accounts all numbers, including totals, have been rounded independently to avoid unacceptable rounding errors. This may mean that some tables do not cross cast.

Critical judgements in applying accounting policies

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

123. The County Council has made an assessment of the balance sheet treatment of schools' non-current assets in accordance with IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment and IAS 17 Leases. Where assets are owned by the Council and used by maintained schools, the economic benefits and service potential of the asset is considered to be within the control of the Council and therefore the assets are recognised on the Council's balance sheet. Where they are owned by trustees and used by maintained schools (in most cases Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools) the Council has assessed that the trustees permit the assets to be used for voluntary education and have not reassigned rights to the assets to the school or governing body. Therefore, the assets are not recognised on the Council's balance sheet. In some cases school sites are part owned by the Council and part by trustees. These assets are treated in line with the above. In accordance with the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998, ownership of playing fields rests with the Council and these are therefore recognised on the Council's balance sheet (subject to de-minimis valuations). The property valuers (an MRICS qualified County Council employee and Sanderson Weatherall) are informed of changes to the ownership of County Council assets by the County Council's Legal Services department, and any adjustments to the value of assets as a consequence are reflected in the County Council's balance sheet.

124. School land and buildings that have transferred to academy trusts under 125 year leases (or where the freehold has transferred) have been written out of the County Council's Balance Sheet based on an assessment in accordance with IAS 17 Leases and IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment. Newly constructed School land and buildings that are the subject of short-term lease/license agreements with academy trusts but are expected to transfer under 125 year leases have also been written out of the County Council's Balance Sheet based on this assessment.

125. An assessment under IFRIC 12 Service Concession Arrangements concluded that the County Council controls the residential care services provided under the agreement with Oxfordshire Care Partnership (OCP) and the residual value of all but one of the homes at the end of the agreement. This includes Chilterns Court Care Centre which came into operation during 2016/17. Except for the home where the residual value at the end of the contract rests with OCP, the accounting policies for PFI and similar contracts have been applied to the arrangement and the homes are recognised as Property, Plant and Equipment on the Balance Sheet, see note 22. A finance liability has been recognised on the Balance Sheet for the amounts due to be paid under the contract for the new homes built by OCP.

126. The County Council is the Accountable Body for the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP). OxLEP became a company Limited by Guarantee (Not for Profit) in April 2015 (Company Registration Number

09519056). It is a business led organisation that works for all of its stakeholders in business, academia and local authorities. The Board has 19 members from across the private and public sector and is led by a private sector Chairman. It is supported by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership; a Joint Committee which brings together local authority partners who are also members of the OxLEP Board in a collective decision-making structure. The Leader of the County Council is a member of the OxLEP Board. The Business representation comes from across all sectors and all sizes of business. It exists to drive the economic growth of Oxfordshire and the creation of jobs for our communities.

127. In accounting for OxLEP it has been assessed that the County Council is acting as the principal in accordance with IAS 18 Revenue and therefore transactions have been included in the County Council's accounts. OxLEP's expenditure is largely funded by government grants for which the County Council is the accountable body, and the Council remains exposed to risks such as the repayment of grants in the event of non-compliance.

128. Based on an assessment in accordance with IFRS 10 Consolidated Financial Statements and IFRS 11 Joint Arrangements, and taking into account materiality, the County Council has concluded that it does not have control, joint control or significant influence of any other entities. Therefore, the County Council has no subsidiaries, joint ventures or associates and there is no requirement to prepare group accounts for 2023/24.

129. The County Council has two pooled budgets with the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and one with Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust. These pooled budgets operate to deliver better outcomes for people supported by Adult Social Care. Based on an assessment in accordance with IFRS 11 Joint Arrangements and FRS 15 Revenue (in relation to principal and agent transactions), the Pooled Budgets are considered to be joint operations. This means that only expenditure and income attributable to the County Council (and equal to the authority's contribution as set out in Note 8) is included in the Council's accounts.

130. The BOB ICB is the Accountable Body for Oxfordshire's allocation of the Better Care Fund and will be held to account by NHS England for the appropriate use of the resources locally. The Better Care Fund allocation received by BOB ICB forms part of its contribution to the Better Care Fund Pooled Budget and as such is reported within their accounts.

131. In accordance with IAS 32 Financial Instruments: Presentation, the County Council determines the short term/long term categorisation of borrowing by reference to the earliest date on which the lender can require payment. The right to increase the interest rate payable without limit, as in a 'Lender Option, Borrower Option' (LOBO) loan, is treated as a right to require repayment. Consequently, LOBOs are classified as short-term where option dates are due within 12 months of the balance sheet date.

Assumptions made about the future and other major sources of estimation uncertainty

132. The Statement of Accounts contains estimated figures that are based on assumptions made by the County Council about the future or that are otherwise

uncertain. Estimates are made taking into account historical experience, current trends and other relevant factors. However, because balances cannot be determined with certainty, actual results could be materially different from the assumptions and estimates made.

133. The items in the County Council's Balance Sheet at 31 March 2023 for which there is significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming year are as follows:

Property, Plant and Equipment

134. The County Council's Property, Plant and Equipment assets have been valued on one of the following three bases under IFRS: Fair Value (Existing Use Value (EUV)) – method used to value operational property assets other than specialised property assets. Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC) - method used to value operational property assets of a specialised nature. Fair Value (Market Value) – method used to value property assets held as investments, surplus or for sale. Buildings are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance of those buildings. Reductions in the budget for repairs and maintenance spending brings into doubt the useful lives assigned to buildings. If the useful life of buildings is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the building falls.

Pensions Liability

135. Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries and pensions are projected to increase and mortality rates. The assumptions used are set out in the Retirement Benefits Note. The County Council uses a firm of actuaries, Hymans Robertson LLP, to provide expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. The discount rate used is based on corporate bond yields that reflect the duration of the employer's liabilities.

136. The effects on the net pension liability of changes in the discount rate or mortality rates are provided in the sensitivity analysis table in the Retirement Benefits Note.

137. The IAS 19 balance sheet is based on financial market values and future market expectation indicators as at 31 March 2024 to comply with the accounting standard.

138. When the LGPS benefit structure was reformed in 2014, transitional protections were applied to certain older members close to normal retirement age. The benefits accrued from 1 April 2014 by these members are subject to an 'underpin' which means that they cannot be lower than what they would have received under the previous benefit structure. The underpin ensures that these members do not lose out from the introduction of the new scheme, by effectively giving them the better of the benefits from the old and new schemes.

139. In December 2018 the Court of Appeal upheld a ruling ("McCloud/Sargeant") that similar transitional protections in the Judges' and Firefighters' Pension Schemes were unlawful on the grounds of age discrimination. The implications of the ruling are expected to apply to the LGPS (and other public service schemes) as well. The UK Government requested leave to appeal to the Supreme Court, but this was denied at the end of June 2019. The outcome of the two tribunals have been deemed to provide evidence that a legal obligation has been created relating to age-discrimination

legislation, resulting in a liability. Furthermore, the 15 July 2019 written statement by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury that the McCloud and Sargeant judgements would apply to all public service pension schemes has also been deemed to provide evidence that there is a legal obligation. LGPS benefits accrued from 2014 may therefore need to be enhanced so that all members, regardless of age, will benefit from the underpin. Alternatively, restitution may be achieved in a different way, for example by paying compensation. In either case, the clear expectation is that many more members would see an enhanced benefit rather than just those currently subject to these protections.

140. As details of the remedy for the schemes has not been drafted this creates a lot of uncertainty about the basis for valuing the impact of the Judgements on the pension schemes.

141. At present, it is clear that all members of the schemes who fell outside the transitional arrangements for both the LGPS and Fire-Fighters Pension Scheme at the relevant transition date will need to have their benefits brought up to the level of members in their scheme who were protected under those arrangements. However, it is unclear about what else will be in scope of the revised schemes. Areas of uncertainty include:

- Transfers within and between schemes and funds
- Impact on survivor benefits which may have started since the transition date
- Impact on pension sharing on divorce liabilities since the transition date

142. The actuary made assumptions regarding the impact arising from these areas of uncertainty in the valuation for 2022/23 and this allowance continues to be included within the valuation of the County Council’s net liability.

143. There is also uncertainty regarding the impact of Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) requirements. This arises where a pension scheme was ‘contracted out’ of additional state pension arrangements. If the contracted out pensions benefits are less than the pensioner would have received if the contracting out had not applied the pension scheme would be required to increase the pension paid to reach the GMP.

144. The actuary allowed for the impact of full GMP indexation in the calculation of 31 March 2022 funding valuation results. The Employer’s valuation results position is used as the starting point for the accounting roll forward calculations and therefore an allowance for full GMP indexation was included within valuation for 2022/23and this allowance continues to be included within the valuation of the County Council’s net liability.

145. There are three further court cases which could potentially impact on the valuation of the net pension liability:

- Goodwin
- Walker
- O’Brien

146. In all three cases, the actuary does not consider the judgements are likely to have a significant impact on the Council’s pension obligation.