

Statement of Accounts

Forest of Dean District Council

2025/26



Forest of Dean
— DISTRICT COUNCIL —

www.fdean.gov.uk

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NARRATIVE REPORT

INTRODUCTION TO FOREST OF DEAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Forest of Dean district has a population of 87,000 (2021 Census) living in an area covering 526 square kilometres. Over 100 square kilometres of this is woodland managed by the Forestry Commission. The district has four main towns and many smaller, rural settlements where the majority (approximately 58%) of the population live. The Forest of Dean is a great place to live, learn, do business and enjoy.

Political Structure in the 2025/26 Municipal year

Local councillors are elected by the community to decide how the Council should carry out its various activities. They represent public interest as well as individuals living within the ward in which they have been elected to serve for their term of office. They have regular contact with the general public through council meetings; telephone calls and some councillors may hold surgeries. Surgeries provide an opportunity for any ward resident to visit and talk to their councillor face to face.

The Council has 38 elected members representing 21 wards within the Forest of Dean district. There are also 41 parish councils. Elections are held every four years, with the last elections held in May 2023. Elections may arise from time to time if a councillor or parish councillor leaves office. There were 2 District By-elections in May 2025 after resignations in March 2025.

The political make-up of the Council in the 2025/26 municipal year was:

Green Party	15 Councillors
Independent Group	6 Councillors
Conservative Party	6 Councillors
Progressive Independents	4 Councillors
Labour Party	4 Councillors
Reform UK	1 Councillor
Liberal Democrats	1 Councillor
Independent – No group	1 Councillor
Total	38 Councillors

There was no overall political majority in 2025/26.

The Council has adopted the Leader and Cabinet model as its political management structure arising from the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The Leader of the Council has responsibility for the appointment of members of the Cabinet, the allocation of portfolios and the delegation of Executive Functions. Cabinet Members are held to account by a system of scrutiny which is set out in the council constitution.

The Council is responsible for setting the budget and policy framework within which decisions are made. When major decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Cabinet and Council's Forward Plans as far as they can be anticipated. If these decisions are to be discussed with officers at a meeting of the Cabinet, this will generally be open for the public to attend, except where personal or confidential matters are being discussed.

The Cabinet for 2025/26 was made up as follows:

Cabinet Member	Portfolio
Adrian Birch (Green Party)	Leader and Cabinet Member for Overall Strategy and Built Environment.
Jackie Fraser (Green Party)	Cabinet Member for Environment.
Andy Moore (Green Party)	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Waste.
Johnathan Lane (Green Party)	Cabinet Member for Economy.
Chris McFarling (Green Party)	Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency.
Sid Phelps (Green Party)	Cabinet Member for Property and Projects
Jackie Dale (Green Party)	Cabinet Member for Thriving Communities

In April 2026, Cllr Sid Phelps (Green Party) resigned from the Cabinet and his Cabinet role was taken over by Cllr Dave Tradgett.

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman for the Council for 2025/26 were:

Chairman	Councillor Di Martin
Deputy Chairman	Councillor Simon Phelps

Full details of all the committees, including chairs and membership can be found on the Council's website on www.fdean.gov.uk.

Statutory Officers

The Council now employ 120 staff directly to deliver services following a period of significant outsourcing.

The Council's Executive Leadership Team supports the work of the councillors and was led by the Chief Executive Officer (Head of Paid Service), Mr. Nigel Brinn. He also acted as the Electoral Registration and Returning Officer. Mr Andrew Knott ACMA held the statutory position of Section 151 Officer, alongside his roles as Director of Finance and Resources and Deputy Chief Executive. The statutory role of Monitoring Officer (MO) was held by Mrs. Helen Clarke from the 19th May 2025. Mrs Julie Jones was interim Monitoring Officer up to the 19th May 2025.

Bankers

The Council's banking services are provided by Lloyds Bank, 130 High Street, Cheltenham, GL50 IEW.

External Auditor

The appointed external auditor for 2025/26 was Bishop Fleming, 10 Temple Back, Bristol BS1 6FL.

COUNCIL VISION AND PRIORITIES

The Council agreed its Council Plan for 2024-2028 at its meeting on 14th December 2023. The vision and priorities therein will drive budget decisions for the period. They state:

Fundamentally, this Council wants to support those in the district to enjoy an excellent quality of life. We want to improve the Forest of Dean over the coming years, while also looking to the future and planning for the needs of the Forest's future generations.

The Council Plan sets out the following three key priorities:

- **Thriving communities:** Our objective is to foster resilient and inclusive communities that are motivated and competent to adapt to the challenges and opportunities posed by the climate and nature emergencies.
- **Decarbonisation and Nature Recovery:** Our objective is to protect and enhance the natural environment of the Forest of Dean and to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- **Sustainable Economy:** Our objective is to foster economic prosperity while ensuring environmental sustainability and social well-being.

There are also four principles that underlay the plan:

- **Social Value:** Every decision and action we take will aim to improve the well-being of our residents.
- **Public Engagement:** We want to actively work with people who live in the Forest and encourage them to attend public meetings, take part in surveys, and run community forums. We will aim for all voices to be heard and form part of the council decision-making process.
- **Value for Money:** We will responsibly manage the councils' finances and make sure we use our resources as efficiently as possible. At the same time, we will aim for excellence, providing the best service we can.
- **Financial Sustainability:** We will make sure the council is financially stable by exploring innovative approaches to funding, grants, and partnerships without putting the councils' finances at risk.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management is a critical element of the Council's management processes. The Council is committed to a joined-up approach to performance management that involves members, Council and Publica employees working together. This ensures that the Council continues to deliver on the issues that matter most to local people and on improving the quality of services at all levels. Our performance management system helps the Council to identify what does and does not work and the factors that support or hinder economic, efficient, and effective service delivery.

Overall, the Council performed well during 2025/26. New Power BI performance management was introduced making data available in real time for certain KPI's and allowing Officers and Members to see this. The Council continues to get recognition for our good performance, sound financial management and value for money. The Council's non-financial and financial performance is regularly monitored and reported to Cabinet and the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. The range of indicators measured and reported includes waste collection, planning appeals, customer service, leisure performance, housing benefit claims and performance and customer complaints. Details of these reports for 2025/26 can be found on the Council's website, under 'Councillors & Meetings' in the quarterly performance reports reported to the Cabinet.

DEVELOPMENTS IN SERVICE DELIVERY

The Council is a multifunctional organisation, which works closely with other parts of the public service and the voluntary and community sector, making objective, transparent, evidence-based decisions about how services should be provided and by whom.

Publica Group (Support) Limited

The Council has entered several shared service and partnership arrangements with other organisations, to ensure the delivery of quality services in an efficient, cost-effective manner, including Publica Group (Support) Limited in 2017/18; providing front line services shared with Cotswold District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. The Council's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Procurement support is also shared with Cheltenham Borough Council, in addition to the above Councils, using a common platform 'Business World' Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, enabling service resilience within the Councils. Publica Group (Support) Limited is wholly owned by the four Councils.

A key principle of the partnership is that each Council has retained its own identity, with its own elected members and continues to make decisions taking account of the needs of its local community. Staff continue to work in each location. Some members of staff provide a service predominantly to one Council; others provide a service for more than one Council.

A review of Publica Group (Support) Limited was commissioned by the four partner Councils to review the effectiveness of Publica and whether certain services would be better placed back with the Councils. A decision was made by each Council to bring back services into the Council, and this programme began in early 2024. On the 1st November 2024, 68 employees were transferred from Publica Group (Support) Limited back to the Forest of Dean District Council. This included services that were delivered directly for individual Councils such as Democratic Services, Election Services, Planning, Building Control and some support services such as financial management. This included the transfer of the deputy Monitoring Officer and deputy S151 Officer back into direct employment by the Council.

A second phase was agreed by all Councils, and this concluded with the transfer of 6 staff back to the Council on 1st July 2025. The second phase was smaller and included services such as Property and Estates, Project management and HR Business Partners.

The Managing Director of Publica Group (Support) Limited is Mr Frank Wilson. Each partner Council has a Head of Paid Service who is responsible for commissioning the partner Councils' services along with their other statutory officers (Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer).

Ubico Limited

Ubico Limited was originally formed in 2012 by its shareholders, Cheltenham Borough Council and Cotswold District Council. The company is responsible for delivering the shareholders' Environmental services within their respective council boundaries. The Forest of Dean District Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and West Oxfordshire District Council joined the partnership on 1st April 2015. Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council joined in 2016. Gloucester City Council joined in November 2021 and each of the eight authorities are now equal shareholders. The Council made the decision during 2022/23 to move its waste collection service to Ubico Limited following the expiry of the Biffa Waste Services Ltd contract in July 2024. Ubico has successfully delivered waste collections for the Council since then.

South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)

The Council has a contract with South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) for the provision of its internal audit service. All partner Councils of Publica Group (Support) Limited use this company, ensuring a consistent independent approach to the audit and governance of our services. More details of SWAP are provided in the Related Parties note 33, page 73.

Affordable Housing Scheme Developments

2025/26 saw the Forest of Dean District Council enable the delivery of 104 new affordable homes across the district. Sizes of the homes ranged from one-bedroom flats through to a larger 5-bedroom house.

The new affordable homes all achieved an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of B. The national average for existing homes is EPC D. The benefits of having a property with a good EPC rating is that it will be more comfortable to live in and have lower energy bills, as well as producing less carbon dioxide when compared to an average energy performance rated property.

Levelling Up and other Major Projects

Announced in the UK Budget in March 2021, the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. Nationally, the £4.8 billion fund is intended to support regeneration and town centre investment, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets. Projects should be aligned to and support the Government's Net Zero goals demonstrating low or zero carbon best practice. The Levelling Up Fund is a competitive process open to all UK local authorities. Forest of Dean District is identified as a priority place in terms of the need for LUF capital infrastructure support.

In June 2021, the District Council submitted a multiple project bid containing three interrelated projects seeking to secure £20m capital grant support. Forest of Dean District Council worked in partnership with Hartpury University and Hartpury College and Cinderford Town Council to prepare the successful bid. In October 2021, it was confirmed that the Forest of Dean District had been successful in its bid to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

The bid aims to:

- Build connections across the Forest, helping to join our communities.
- Help our local entrepreneurs and home grown talent find a home in the Forest, growing our economy and providing jobs by developing new, suitable space for businesses.
- Enhance the availability and quality of leisure opportunities, helping people stay active and healthy through new leisure facilities and active travel options.
- Provide new further and higher education opportunities so our young people have more choice to get a good education.

From the outset, all three projects are being designed with carbon reduction, renewable energy and electric vehicle/bike charging points in mind to help to tackle the climate emergency.

There are three key elements to the bid:

Investment at Five Acres

The £9m proposal for the Five Acres site will create a new leisure and community hub bringing a derelict site back into use providing modern leisure, community and business facilities for the area and an artificial all weather sports pitch. The leisure and community hub will house a satellite site for Hartpury University and Hartpury College, bringing specialist education opportunities for young people to the Forest.

The wider site will be developed in partnership with West Dean Parish Council and will also include modern workspaces for local businesses and help promote active travel by connecting existing walking and cycling routes.

Demolition of the former College and Leisure Centre at Five Acres has taken place with only the building to be renovated still standing. A design and build contractor have been appointed through the Southern Construction Framework (SCF). Work has continued throughout 2025/2026 to ensure that an affordable scheme can be delivered, a new design has been agreed and new Planning permissions are in place. A construction contract has been agreed and signed on the 1st April 2026 and the contractor started on site on the 27th April 2026. Construction should be completed by June 2027.

University Learning Hub at Hartpury Campus

The Flagship University Learning Hub has invested the £10m to build on the current Hartpury University and Hartpury College site. It has supported growth in student numbers, providing new opportunities to over 16's in the Forest. The Centre will focus on encouraging and supporting local young people to stay in education or start their own business in the area.

It will also deliver a new Environmental Laboratory, aiming to support new companies focussed on environmental technology based in the Forest of Dean.

The university has utilised all the levelling up grant funding provided by the Council and the new building is now being utilised by students. It is to formally open in the Summer of 2026. Overall, the Council has claimed 100% of the Levelling Up funding for this element of the bid.

Regeneration in Cinderford Town Centre

In Cinderford town centre, the bid was to regenerate 3 key buildings and bringing them back into use and to provide modern co-working spaces for start-up businesses and new community facilities, arts and events space. These projects were completed during 2025/26.

The former HSBC bank, Rheola House and the Methodist Church, which is a Listed Building has been refurbished to provide great spaces for residents to meet, work and socialise, boosting town centre footfall. They also continue to generate more match funding in order to continue the great work that they have started.

Overall, the Council has claimed 99.6% of the total Levelling Up funding since the bid was approved in October 2021.

Cinderford Northern Quarter

The Authority continues to fulfil its obligations under the S106 agreement around ecological monitoring on the site whilst the development projects are on hold.

Forest Economic Partnership (FEP)

In October 2019, FEP was officially registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC). A new FEP Board was created to steer the objectives and actions of this new apolitical, non-for-profit organisation. As a CIC, FEP's legal entity is defined by Articles of Association.

The Board currently seats 7 directors, including Cllr Johnathan Lane, the Economy portfolio holder who holds the position of Vice Chair. The CIC Board has capacity to increase to 12 directors.

The Stakeholder Group remains an open forum and over the last year the closed sub-groups have been modified to streamline activity. Digital communications include a monthly e-bulletin and social media channels to promote FEP and stakeholder partner activity.

FEP project activity and meetings continued during 2025-26.

Council's Leisure Services

The management and operation of the Council's leisure centres have been contracted to Freedom Leisure since 2015/16 to secure leisure provision across the district. Freedom Leisure is a not-for-profit trust that has an excellent track record of delivering first class leisure services and facilities across the UK.

CHALLENGES

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and Devolution

Following the publishing of the English Devolution White Paper on the 16th December 2024, the Forest of Dean District Council has been working closely with all Gloucestershire Councils to achieve the best outcome for residents. In March 2025, the Council approved a basis for this work which included what the Council would like to see from these changes. A business case and options for LGR and devolution was submitted to the Government in November 2025. The Forest of Dean District Council did not support any of the proposals put forward but is committed to working with others to ensure a best possible outcome for residents. The outcome of this will determine the direction of the Council and is expected in the Summer of 2026. It is expected that the Forest of Dean District Council will cease to exist and will form a larger unitary council with other Councils across Gloucestershire in April 2028. The Council continues to work with all other Gloucestershire Councils on LGR on workstreams to ensure that the Council is in the best position both before the Government decision is made and after the decision is made and it is known what Unitary Councils will be formed.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The Council's Medium Term Financial Forecast is regularly reviewed, and as part of the February 2026 budget report to Council highlighted an anticipated shortfall of around £3.3m for the 5-year period of the MTFS starting in 2025/26. Work has started early to address this shortfall. However, the Council has a good degree of financial strength borne out by the £0.9m provision held in the future budget deficit reserve.

Local Government Finance Reforms

These reforms were announced in 2025/26 and a multi-year settlement was announced to begin in 2026/27 for 3 years. These reforms have impacted the finances of the Council and this is clearly covered in the updated MTFs published as part of the 2026/27 budget in February 2026.

Budget Strategy

There are several local challenges facing the Council including Local Government Reorganisation, Devolution, funding reforms, closing the funding gap, delivery of the Councils ambitious Council Plan and continuous service improvement. The Council is innovative and has put in place extensive plans to ensure that excellent services are delivered to its residents at an affordable cost. These plans have been enhanced by securing Levelling Up Capital funds for work on regeneration aspirations around the district.

Workforce

Due to the current uncertainty for Local Government with LGR, there are current issues across the sector with recruitment and retention. So far, the Forest of Dean District Council have not seen this impact materialise however we are mindful of the potential to lose high quality, highly experienced staff.

The council has an agile working strategy and policy for council workers and Publica employees, which ensures that a mixture of home working and office working is possible if it works for both the Council and employee. This was introduced following the pandemic and the success of home working for both the Council and staff.

We have observed a continued increase in residents using online and telephone channels to access Council services, with no reduction in service levels. These channels were further enhanced throughout 2025/26, and this improvement work will continue into 2026/27 and beyond to ensure services remain accessible and convenient for all residents, at times that suit their needs. This approach is being developed across all Council areas to ensure we consistently deliver the highest quality services possible.

Major Risks

There is still uncertainty around future funding for the Council and how the gap in the MTFs will be filled which creates additional major risks. By ensuring these are managed effectively and proactively, they are partly ameliorated. The major risks are:

- Uncertainty on the future of Local Government
- Significant increase in expenditure from increased service demand and financial support requests from contractors and partners due to high costs of energy for all
- Business failures resulting in loss of business rates income
- Failure to deliver innovative transformational projects that deliver significant savings in the medium term
- Failure to deliver the Levelling Up projects in the district within the agreed time frames- such as Five Acres

Because of the actions taken it is expected the risks listed are mitigated but cannot be ruled out completely.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The purpose of this narrative report is to provide electors, local taxpayers, members of the Council and other interested parties with an easy to understand guide to the most significant matters reported in the accounts. It provides an explanation in overall terms of the Council's financial position and assists in the interpretation of the accounting statements. The statements should inform readers of the cost of services provided by the Council in the year 2025/26 and the Council's assets and liabilities at the year-end.

The Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2026 have been prepared and published in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025/26 (the Code), published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This incorporates International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), so that the accounts are compliant with these standards. The following statements are included:

Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts	Sets out the respective responsibilities of the Council and the Section 151 Officer for the accounts.
Statement of Accounting Policies	This explains the basis for recognition, measurement and disclosure of transactions and other events in the accounts. This includes changes in policy, the basis of charges to revenue and the calculation of items in the Balance Sheet.
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement shows the cost in the year of providing services, in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. The Expenditure and Funding Analysis (included in the note on segmental income) reconciles this to the amount chargeable to General Fund reserves in the year.
Balance Sheet	This summarises the overall financial position of the Council at the end of the financial year, showing its assets, liabilities and reserves.
Movement in Reserves Statement	This details the movement during the year in the Council's reserves, analysed into usable reserves (i.e., those that can be used to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and unusable reserves.
Cash Flow Statement	This summarises the inflows and outflows of cash arising from transactions with third parties for revenue and capital purposes.
Collection Fund	Reflects the statutory requirement to maintain a separate Collection Fund which shows the transactions in relation to non-domestic business rates and council tax, indicating how the amounts collected are distributed to the Government, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and Forest of Dean District Council.
Annual Governance Statement	This sets out how the Council is meeting its obligations and the improvements it intends to make to its systems of internal control and corporate governance arrangements.

These accounts are supported by notes to the accounts, which include a glossary of terms to provide readers with further information.

THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN THE YEAR AND ITS POSITION AT THE YEAR END

General Fund Revenue Budget

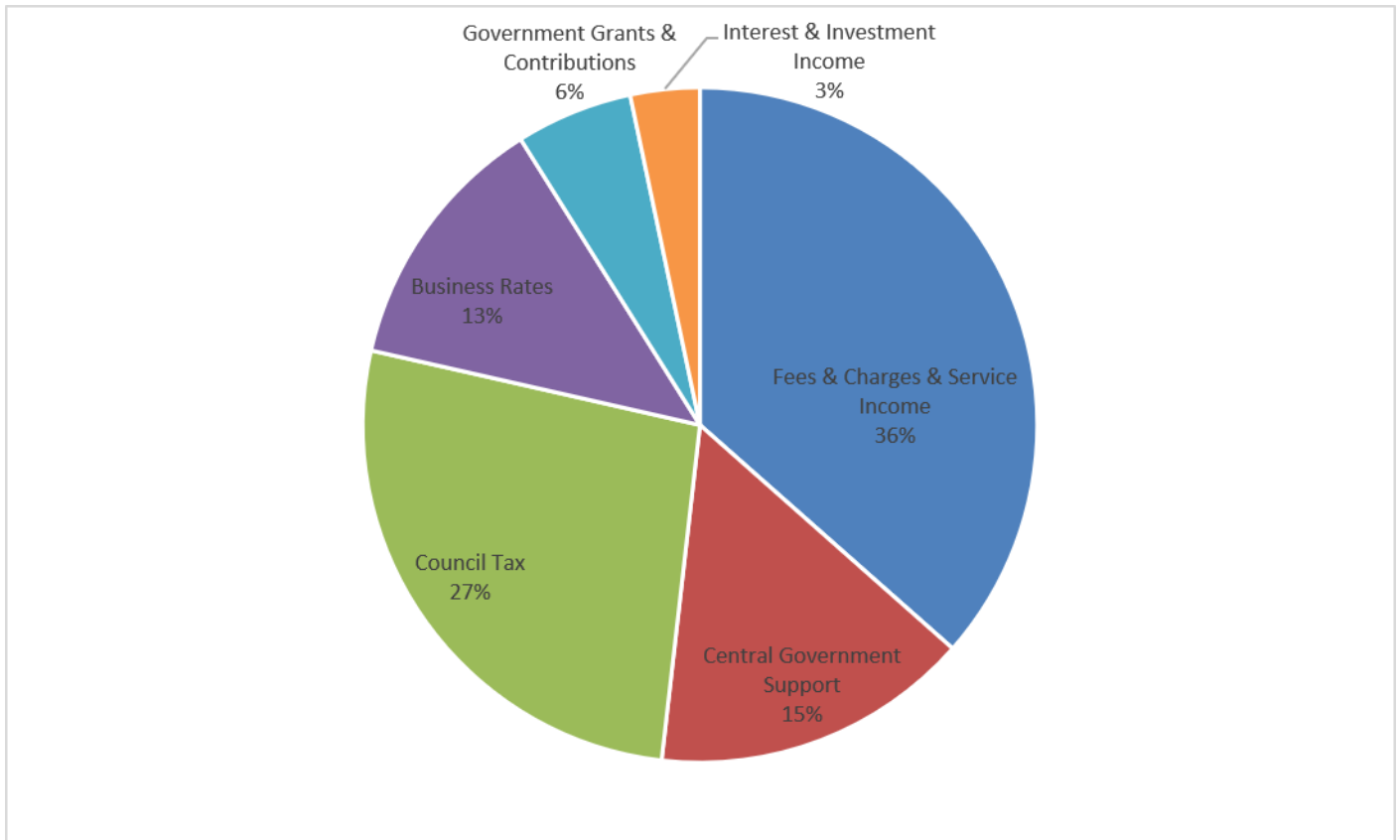
During 2025/26, the Council maintained formal budget monitoring and reported to Cabinet quarterly. This strengthened financial management by enabling early identification and resolution of budget issues. As a result, services were delivered within the revised budget, achieving an overall underspend of £482, which has been added to the Council's working balance.

REVENUE OUTTURN 2025/26	Original Budget 2025/26 £	Current Budget 2025/26 £	Outturn 2025/26 £	(Under) / Overspend 2025/26 £
DIRECTORATES				
Strategy	4,788,500	4,578,370	4,627,275	48,905
Built Environment	791,600	805,170	1,050,177	245,007
Finance	6,307,980	6,589,010	6,449,663	(139,347)
Nature Emergency	337,430	316,090	321,983	5,893
Sustainable Economy	411,510	345,140	344,281	(859)
Climate Emergency	721,120	586,480	534,953	(51,527)
Local Plan	854,840	950,020	898,990	(51,030)
Thriving Communities	1,056,730	1,260,000	1,196,442	(63,558)
NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	15,269,710	15,430,280	15,423,764	(6,516)
Capital Charges	(308,900)	(513,240)	(314,918)	198,322
Interest and Investment Income and Expenditure	(1,370,900)	(1,425,900)	(1,458,710)	(32,810)
Transfers to / (from) earmarked reserves	(531,320)	(236,970)	(140,977)	95,993
NET EXPENDITURE TO BE FINANCED	13,058,590	13,254,170	13,509,159	254,989
FINANCED BY:				
Revenue Support Grant	(209,960)	(209,960)	(209,958)	2
New Homes Bonus	(443,180)	(443,180)	(443,186)	(6)
Section 31 National Non-Domestic Rates Grant	(2,774,830)	(2,774,830)	(2,790,819)	(15,989)
Share of Non-Domestic Rates	(2,269,350)	(2,464,930)	(2,704,406)	(239,476)
Council Tax Collection Fund Contribution	(189,800)	(189,800)	(189,800)	-
Council Tax less levies	(6,677,660)	(6,677,660)	(6,677,662)	(2)
Other Specific Government Grants	(493,810)	(493,810)	(493,810)	-
Total Funding	(13,058,590)	(13,254,170)	(13,509,641)	(255,471)
Surplus transferred to Working Balance	-	-	(482)	(482)

The transfer to the general fund balance is shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement on page 19. The Expenditure and Funding Analysis on page 42 links the increase in the general fund balance, together with the increase in earmarked reserves, with the surplus shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. It also outlines the adjustments made to ensure the statement complies with generally accepted accounting practice.

Where the money came from

The following chart provides an analysis of our main sources of income this year. The Government provides income in the form of general and specific grants and determines the amount of business rates the Council receives through pooling arrangements. Since the new local government resource regime announced as part of the 2013/14 Local Government Finance settlement, more emphasis is now put on raising income from business rates and council tax locally, as the amount of central government revenue support grant received is phased out.



How the money was spent

The Council provides a wide range of services for the district both directly and indirectly through partnership working. The activities vary widely and include provision for the collection of refuse and recycling, delivery of leisure services, car parking, cemeteries, environmental health and many other services. These are summarised at service level in the table below. Further details will be reported to Cabinet as part of the Financial Outturn 2025/26 report on 9th July 2026 and will be available to view on the Council's website <https://www.fdean.gov.uk>.

Service	Net (Income)/Expenditure £
Cemeteries	131,003
Climate Change	285,665
Communities	785,916
Corporate	3,285,444
Council Tax and NNDR Collection	104,489
Election Services	240,362
Environmental Services	624,121
Housing Services	987,385
Land Charges	(40,561)
Members	576,980
Offices and Land	809,835
Planning and Regeneration	1,185,297
Support Services	4,057,268
Waste and Recycling Services	2,390,560
Total Service Expenditure	15,423,764

Capital Expenditure

In 2025/26, the Council spent £3.715 million on capital projects and grants, across the general fund capital programme. Key expenditure on capital schemes include:

	£000
- Levelling Up including Five Acres	961
- Disabled Facility Grants	895
- Social Housing Schemes	524
- Carbon Reduction Project	290
- Council Offices Improvements	272
- New Waste Vehicles	200
- Community Alarm Digitalisation	200
- Infrastructure Enhancements	110
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund	90
- ICT	82
- S106 Schemes	53
- Replacement Operational Vehicles	38
Total Capital Expenditure	3,715

The Council plans to continue to fund capital from a range of sources including revenue reserves, developer and government contributions and capital receipts. The main spend in 2025/26 was on Levelling Up projects, Disabled facility Grants and Social Housing. The Council has also invested in electric car charging points in its car parks to help reduce carbon emissions. The Council will make use of prudential borrowing to support the Council's major capital schemes where it is both prudent and affordable.

Treasury Management (Investments and Borrowing)

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services governs treasury management in Local Government. This Council has adopted the Code and complies with its requirements, one of which is the receipt by the Council of an annual review at the financial year-end. The Council manages the cash flow arising from the provision of all Council services, using the money market to invest daily cash surpluses and borrow to fund cash shortfalls.

The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reduced the Base Rate 3 times over 2025/26 to 3.75% in December where it has remained. The PWLB certainty rate for 10-year maturity loans was 5.42% at the beginning of the period and 5.73% at the end. This has not affected this Council in 2025/26 but may do in future if there is a need to borrow for capital programmes to be delivered. Markets are pricing in an expected interest rate hike in the Autumn of 2026 responding to a possible increase in inflation caused by the US war with the Middle East creating uncertainty and volatility in the markets. An interest rate hike will have a positive effect on the Council's investment income.

During the year, the Council earned £797,626 investment income, £8,626 more than the revised budget.

Pension Liability

The Council is required to account for retirement benefits when they are committed, even if the payment is many years in the future, in accordance with International Accounting Standard 19 (IAS 19). The pension liability or asset shown in the accounts represents the Council's pension commitment to increase contributions to make up any shortfall in attributable net assets, or its ability to benefit (via reduced future employer contributions) from a surplus in the pension scheme.

The Council's net asset according to the actuarial assessment at 31st March 2026 was £24.069m, an increase of £1.951m over the asset figure for 31st March 2025 of £22.118m. Therefore, the Council requested an Asset Ceiling Calculation to be completed which showed that an additional £36.243m liability was due. The Council is showing an overall pension liability of £12.174m. Following the 2025 valuation results the Council has decided to prepay the secondary contributions for the period 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2029, a payment of £2,459,000 will be made on the 1st April 2026.

The majority of staff transferred to Publica Group (Support) Limited on 1st November 2017 however 68 members transferred back to the Council on the 1st November 2024 with an additional 6 members transferred back in July 2025. Full details of the accounting treatment and impact on the Council's pension liability are included in the Pensions note 36, page 78.

Reserves, Balances and Provisions

At the year-end usable reserves stood at £20.353m, a decrease of £0.263m during the year. This is due to changes in working balance, capital receipts and capital grants received, and general movements in earmarked reserves. Of the usable reserves at the year-end, non-earmarked General Reserves or 'Balances' were £1.015m.

At the year-end, provisions (other than those held to cover possible bad or doubtful debts) were £0.191m, a decrease of £0.210m during the year.

Changes in accounting policies and estimates

The Council has reviewed its accounting policies during the year and revised them in accordance with the 2025/26 Code of Practice in Local Authority Accounting. The policies are detailed in note 1 to the accounts on pages 22 to 38 and the changes in accounting policies are detailed in note 2 on page 38.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information about the accounts is available from Financial Services, Forest of Dean District Council, High Street, Coleford. This is part of the Council's policy of providing full information about the Council's affairs. In addition, interested members of the public have a statutory right to inspect the accounts during a 'period for the exercise of public rights' before the audit is completed. The accounts are available for inspection by appointment between 1st July 2026 and 11th August 2026 at the Council Offices, and local government electors for the area may exercise their rights to question the auditor about or make objections to, the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2026, in writing, during this period.

**Andrew Knott ACMA,
Director of Finance & Resources
(Deputy CEO & S151 Officer)**

30th June 2026

DRAFT

THE STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Council is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this Council, that officer is the Chief Finance Officer, who also undertakes the role of the Section 151 Officer.
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets.
- approve the Statement of Accounts.

THE CHIEF FINANCE (SECTION 151) OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer is responsible for the preparation of the Council's Statement of Accounts in accordance with proper practices as set out in the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code).

In preparing the Statement of Accounts, the Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and then applied them consistently
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent
- complied with the local authority Code

The Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer has also:

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

CERTIFICATE OF CHIEF FINANCE (SECTION 151) OFFICER

I certify that the Statement of Accounts on pages 17 to 20 gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2026.

ANDREW KNOTT ACMA,
Director of Finance & Resources
(Deputy CEO & S151 Officer)

DATE: 30th June 2026

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

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

Gross Expenditure £000	2024/25			Gross Expenditure £000	2025/26	
	Gross Income £000	Net Expenditure £000			Gross Income £000	Net Expenditure £000
			Continuing Operations			
4,316	(925)	3,391	Strategy	4,492	(483)	4,009
17,522	(16,513)	1,009	Built Environment	16,049	(14,690)	1,359
10,080	(3,162)	6,918	Finance	10,666	(4,438)	6,228
540	(283)	257	Nature Emergency	508	(282)	226
1,877	(572)	1,305	Sustainable Economy	654	(173)	481
712	(477)	235	Climate Emergency	689	(277)	412
2,022	(1,194)	828	Local Plan	1,759	(1,103)	656
2,371	(1,544)	827	Thriving Communities	2,460	(581)	1,879
39,440	(24,670)	14,770	Cost of Services	37,277	(22,027)	15,250
3,386	(406)	2,980	Other operating expenditure (note 10)	3,662	(644)	3,018
1,127	(2,474)	(1,347)	Financing and Investment (income) and expenditure (note 11)	437	(2,984)	(2,547)
4,729	(23,574)	(18,845)	Taxation and non-specific grant (income) and expenditure (note 12)	4,207	(24,192)	(19,985)
48,682	(51,124)	(2,442)	(Surplus) or Deficit on the provision of services	45,583	(49,847)	(4,264)
		(503)	Surplus on revaluation of non-current assets (note 23)			(1,864)
		31	Deficit on revaluation of non-current assets (note 23)			42
		585	Deficit on revaluation of equity instruments designated at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income (note 23)			40
		(15,739)	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability /(asset) (note 36)			12,299
		(15,626)	Other Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure			10,517
		(18,068)	Total Comprehensive (Income) and Expenditure			6,253

BALANCE SHEET

This statement shows the value as at the balance sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category is usable reserves i.e., those reserves that the Council may use to provide services, these being subject to the need to maintain a prudent level and constrained by statutory limitations on their use (for example the Capital Receipts Reserve may only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt).

The second category of reserves comprises those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. This includes those that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts only become available to provide services if the assets are sold, and those that hold timing differences which are shown in the Movements in Reserves Statement Line 'Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under the regulations'.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH

31 March 2025		Note	31 March 2026
£000			£000
13,174	Property, Plant & Equipment	14	16,412
581	Right of Use Assets	35	419
11,070	Investment Property	15	10,909
4	Intangible Assets	16	2
6,652	Long Term Investments	17	6,566
1,533	Long Term Debtors	19	1,497
33,014	Long Term Assets		35,805
3,072	Short Term Investments	17	2,139
91	Inventories	18	152
6,944	Short term Debtors	19	9,543
6,112	Cash and Cash Equivalents	20	5,480
16,219	Current Assets		17,314
(4,665)	Short Term Creditors	21	(4,941)
(275)	Grants Receipts in Advance - Capital	32	(113)
(401)	Provisions	22	(191)
(5,341)	Current Liabilities		(5,245)
(2,199)	Other Long Term Liabilities		(12,434)
(2,199)	Long Term Liabilities		(12,434)
41,693	Net Assets		35,440
20,616	Usable Reserves		20,186
21,077	Unusable Reserves	23	15,254
41,693	Total Reserves		35,440

Signed:

Andrew Knott ACMA,
Director of Finance & Resources
(Deputy CEO & S151 Officer)

Councillor Clive Elsmore,
Chairman of Audit Committee

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT

This statement shows the movement in the year of the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into usable reserves (i.e., those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and unusable reserves.

The statement shows how the movements, in year, of the Council's reserves are broken down between gains and losses incurred in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and the statutory adjustments required to return the amounts chargeable to council tax for the year. The net increase or decrease line shows the statutory general fund balance movement in the year following those adjustments.

	General Fund Balance £000	Earmarked General Fund Reserves £000	Total General Fund £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000	Total Usable Reserves £000	Unusable Reserves £000	Total Reserves £000
Balance at 31 March 2024	1,014	13,076	14,090	3,982	3,565	21,637	1,988	23,625
Movement in Reserves during 2024/25								
Total Comprehensive Income and (Expenditure)	2,442	-	2,442	-	-	2,442	15,626	18,068
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 8)	(3,023)	-	(3,023)	(826)	386	(3,463)	3,463	-
Transfers to/from earmarked reserves (Note 9)	582	(582)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Increase / (decrease) in 2024/25	1	(582)	(581)	(826)	386	(1,021)	19,089	18,068
Balance at 31 March 2025	1,015	12,494	13,509	3,156	3,951	20,616	21,077	41,693
Movement in Reserves during 2025/26								
Total Comprehensive Income and (Expenditure)	4,264	-	4,264	-	-	4,264	(10,517)	(6,253)
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 8)	(4,404)	-	(4,404)	210	(500)	(4,694)	4,694	-
Transfers to/from earmarked reserves (Note 9)	140	(140)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Increase / (decrease) in 2025/26	-	(140)	(140)	210	(500)	(430)	(5,823)	(6,253)
Balance at 31 March 2026	1,015	12,354	13,369	3,366	3,451	20,186	15,254	35,440

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

The cash flow statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Council generates and uses cash by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of the extent to which operations of the Council are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of services provided by the Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash flows have been made for resources, which are intended to contribute to the Council's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital (i.e. borrowing) to the Council.

2024/25 £000		2025/26 £000
(2,442)	Net (surplus) or deficit on the provision of services	(4,264)
1,963	Adjust net surplus or deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements (note 24)	4,637
371	Adjust for items in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities (note 24)	644
(108)	Cash (inflows) generated from operating activities	1,017
1,539	Investing activities (note 25)	706
(1,033)	Financing activities (note 26)	(1,091)
398	Net (increase) / decrease in cash and cash equivalents	632
(6,510)	Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year	(6,112)
(6,112)	Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year (note 20)	(5,480)

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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.1 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the financial year and its position at the end of the financial year. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2015, which require the accounts to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the CIPFA/LASAAC *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2025/26* (the Code), supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs), and statutory guidance.

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

The accounting policies of the Council have as far as possible been developed to ensure that the accounts are understandable, relevant, free from material error or misstatement, reliable and comparable.

1.2 ACCOUNTING CONCEPTS

Except where specified in the Code, or in specific legislative requirements, it is the Council's responsibility to select and regularly review its accounting policies, as appropriate.

These accounts are prepared in accordance with a number of fundamental accounting principles:

- Relevance
- Reliability
- Comparability
- Materiality

Additionally, three further concepts play a pervasive role in the selection and application of accounting policies:

Accruals of Income and Expenditure

The financial statements, other than the cash flow statement, are prepared on an accrual's basis, i.e., transactions are reflected in the accounts in the year in which the activity to which they relate takes place, not simply when cash payments are made or received. In particular:

- Revenue from contracts with service recipients, whether for services or the provision of goods, is recognised when (or as) the goods or services are transferred to the service recipient in accordance with the performance obligations in the contract.
- Supplies are recorded as expenditure when they are consumed – where there is a gap between the date supplies are received and their consumption; they are carried as Inventories on the Balance Sheet.
- Expenses in relation to services received (including services provided by employees) are recorded as expenditure when the services are received rather than when payments are made.
- Interest receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue in financing and investment income and expenditure for the income that might not be collected.

Going Concern

The accounts are prepared on the assumption that the Council will continue its operations for the foreseeable future. This means in particular that the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet assume no intention to significantly curtail the scale of operations.

Primacy of Legislative Requirements

The Council derives its powers from statute, and its financial and accounting framework is closely controlled by primary and secondary legislation. Where legislative requirements and accounting principles conflict, legislative requirements take precedence.

1.3 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Benefits Payable during Employment

Short-term employee benefits are those due to be settled within twelve months of the year-end. They include such benefits as salaries and wages, paid annual leave and paid sick leave for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the Council. 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 salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement to the accumulated absence account so that holiday benefits are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination Benefits

Termination benefits are amounts payable as a result of a decision by the Council to terminate an officer's employment before the normal retirement date, or an officer's decision to accept voluntary redundancy. They are charged on an accruals basis to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the Council can no longer withdraw any offer of benefits.

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 charges and credits for pension enhancement termination benefits and replace them with the cash paid to the pension fund and pensioners and any such amounts payable but unpaid at the year end.

Post-Employment Benefits

Employees of the Council and Publica Group (Support) Limited are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Gloucestershire County Council. The Council's liabilities under the Local Government Pension Scheme cover all staff that were members of the scheme at the date of transfer to Publica (1st November 2017), as well as the staff employed by the Council.

The scheme provides defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees working for the Council and Publica, and is accounted for as a defined benefits scheme.

- The liabilities of the Gloucestershire pension scheme attributable to the Council are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates etc., and projections of 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 the adoption of the AA-rated corporate bond basis.

- The assets of the Gloucestershire pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the balance sheet at their fair value:
 - Quoted securities – current bid value
 - Unquoted securities – professional estimate
 - Unitised securities – current bid price
 - Property – market value.

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

- Service cost comprising
 - Current service cost: the increase in liabilities as a result of the additional years of service earned this year - allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked.
 - Past service cost: the increase in liabilities arising from current year decisions whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years - charged to the Surplus or Deficit in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non-Distributed Costs.
- Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), i.e. net interest expense for the Council – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the financing and investment income and expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. This is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.
- Remeasurements comprising
 - The return on plan assets, excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure
 - Measurement of the net defined benefit liability: changes in the net pension 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 Gloucestershire pension fund: cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund, in settlement of liabilities.

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

The negative balance that arises on the Pensions Reserve thereby measures the beneficial impact to the General Fund of being required to account for retirement benefits on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Discretionary Benefits

The Council has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award to any member of staff are accrued in the year of the decision to make the award and accounted for using the same policies as are applied to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

1.4 GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Grants and contributions received from the government and other organisations are not credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement until any conditions attached to the grant or contribution have been satisfied. For example, conditions may be stipulated that specify that the grants or contributions are required to be consumed by the recipient as specified, or they must be returned to the transferor.

Amounts received as grants and contributions for which conditions have not been satisfied are carried on the Balance Sheet as Revenue or Capital Grants Received in Advance. When the conditions are satisfied, the grant or contribution is credited to the relevant service line (if ring-fenced) or Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income (non-ring-fenced revenue grants and all capital grants) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where capital grants are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement, so that they are available to fund capital expenditure. Where the grant has yet to be used to finance capital expenditure, it is credited to the Capital Grants Unapplied reserve. Where it has been applied, it is credited 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.

Principal or Agent for Grants and Contributions

Section 2.6 of the Code describes how the accounting treatment for transactions within a Council's financial statements shall have regard to the general principle of whether the Council is acting as the principal or agent, in line with IFRS 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers. The Code stipulates that a Council is acting as an agent in situations or circumstances "where the Council is acting as an intermediary." It is acting as a principal in situations or circumstances "where the Council is acting on its own behalf". The guidance specifies that an entity is acting as a principal, i.e., providing the specified goods or services itself, if it controls the goods or services before they transfer to the customer. It is acknowledged for many such arrangements the Council might be acting as both agent and principal with the principal portion being the element of grant that the Council will be awarded themselves as a part of a joint arrangement and which it will recognise in its financial statements.

If the Council is administering the distribution of the grant and is fully reimbursed for delivering that funding (and the Council is not liable for any overpayments), the amount of the award is predetermined based on business rate relief or rateable value, then these factors indicate that the Council is acting as an intermediary and does not have 'control'. Therefore, accounting as an agent would be appropriate. The grant would not then be reported as income and expenditure, and balances relate only to sums due to or from the Council.

If a Council has discretion over whether to support the businesses and the amount of the award, these factors would indicate that the Council is not acting as an agent but has control and is acting as principal. In this instance presentation in the CIES will depend on the Council's judgement as to whether the grant relates to specific service objectives or is non-specific grant income.

1.5 OVERHEADS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

The Council operates and manages its corporate and support services separately and expenditure relating to these activities is reported to key decision makers as separate activities. These overheads are not therefore apportioned to services.

1.6 COUNCIL TAX RECOGNITION

Council Tax receivable for the financial year is recognised in the Collection Fund, a separate statutory account maintained by billing authorities. The Fund is charged with the council tax requirements ('precepts and demands') set by the major preceptors and billing authority before the start of the year, leaving (after providing for uncollectable debts) a surplus or deficit, which is then distributed to the same authorities in future years in proportion to their precepts or demands.

The council tax income included in the Council's Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement for the year represents its 'demand' plus its share of the collection fund surplus or deficit due for the year, before any distribution. Because the amount of surplus or deficit that can be credited or charged to the Council's general fund is governed by statute, and is limited to that declared at the start of the year, adjustments are made in the Movement in Reserves Statement to the collection fund adjustment account to reflect the difference between the surplus or deficit due for the year and that which can be released according to statute.

There is no statutory requirement for a separate collection fund balance sheet. Instead, the fund balances (arrears, over/pre-payments, bad debts provision and accumulated surpluses or deficits) are distributed across the balance sheets of the billing authority and the major preceptors, in proportion to their precepts and demands. The Council, as a billing authority, therefore accounts for council tax balances on an Agency basis, showing only its share of the fund balances on its balance sheet.

1.7 NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES (NNDR) INCOME RECOGNITION

NNDR income is recognised in the same way as council tax described above, with the exception that the net income and surplus/deficit credited or charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is shared between the billing authority, the County Council and central government in statutory proportions. NNDR balances are also distributed across their balance sheets in the same proportions.

1.8 VAT

Income and expenditure exclude any amounts related to VAT, as all VAT collected is payable to HM Revenue and Customs and all VAT paid is recoverable from them.

1.9 NON-CURRENT ASSETS - RECOGNITION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

The Council recognises non-current assets when expenditure is incurred on assets:

- Held for use in the production or supply of goods or services, rental to others, or for administrative purposes.
- Expected to be used for more than one financial period.
- Where it is expected that the future economic benefits associated with the asset will flow to the Council.
- Where the cost can be measured reliably.

The initial cost of an asset is recognised to be:

- Purchase price, construction cost, minimum lease payments or equivalent including import duties and non-refundable purchase taxes, after deducting trade discounts and rebates.
- Costs associated with bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner required by management.
- Any costs of dismantling and removing an existing asset and restoring the site on which it is located.

The cost of an asset acquired other than by purchase or construction is deemed to be its fair value, except where an asset is acquired via an exchange it is deemed to be the carrying amount of the asset given up by the Council.

Donated assets are measured initially at fair value. The difference between their fair values and any consideration paid is credited to the Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, unless the donation has been made conditionally. Until conditions are satisfied, the gain is held in a Donated Assets Reserve account. Where gains are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund Balance to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Subsequent 'enhancement' expenditure is treated as capital expenditure when it is considered it will increase the value of the asset or its useful life or increase the extent to which the Council can use the asset.

De Minimis policy - expenditure on vehicles below £5,000 (excluding VAT) or on other assets below £10,000 (excluding VAT) is not treated as capital expenditure except where the sum of identical assets purchased exceeds this figure, as is the case with waste collection bins and caddies. Capital assets are held on the Balance Sheet as Non-Current Assets.

1.10 NON-CURRENT ASSETS - PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (PPE)

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 year and are classified as Property, Plant and Equipment.

Infrastructure assets are inalienable assets, expenditure on which is only recoverable by continued use of the asset and there is no prospect for sale or alternative use. Examples include footpaths, cycle tracks and drainage systems.

Community Assets are assets that the Council intends to hold in perpetuity, have no determinable useful lives and which may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples include cemeteries land and open spaces used for recreation.

Surplus Assets are assets which are not being used to deliver services or for administrative purposes but which do not meet the definition of Investment properties or Assets Held for Sale.

Recognition

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 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.

Measurement

PPE assets are initially measured at cost, comprising all expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset into working condition for its intended use. The Council does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred whilst assets are under construction.

The assets are then carried on the Balance Sheet using the following measurement bases:

- Other Land and Buildings – Current value, using the basis of existing use value (EUV) where an active market exists or Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC), where there is no active market for the asset or it is specialised.
- Infrastructure – depreciated historic cost.
- Community assets – historic cost (where known). The Code offers the option for authorities to measure community assets at valuation. The Council has so far not adopted to change its accounting policy in this way as it does not currently have the management information to make reasonable valuation estimates of community assets.
- Assets under construction – historic cost.
- Surplus Assets – Current value, using the fair value basis (see paragraph 1.18 *Fair Value Measurement*).
- In the case of assets that have short useful lives or low values (or both) i.e., Vehicles, Plant and Equipment, depreciated historic cost is used as a proxy for current value.

From 1st April 2025, the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* (the Code) requirements changed in respect of revaluations of property, plant and equipment. Where authorities do not have a rolling programme of revaluations in place and/or the assets are not non-property assets subject to indexation, authorities revalue their assets every five years, with annual indexation applied to assets during the four intervening years. Where authorities cannot obtain indices without undue cost or effort, authorities revalue those assets using a quinquennial revaluation, with a desktop revaluation in year three.

Where there is an upward revaluation, the carrying value is increased and the gain credited to the Revaluation Reserve. This is reflected in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as a revaluation gain, included in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. Exceptionally, gains are credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services (and not the Revaluation Reserve) where a revaluation loss or impairment in respect of that asset was previously charged to a service revenue account (adjusted for the depreciation that would have been charged had the revaluation or impairment losses not occurred).

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 service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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

Impairment

Assets are assessed at the end of each year for evidence of impairment. Where evidence exists and the effect is considered 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 difference.

Where there are revaluation gains for the asset in the Revaluation Reserve, the impairment loss is written down against that balance (up to the amount of the accumulated gains).

Where there are no gains in the Revaluation Reserve or an insufficient balance to meet the impairment loss, the remaining loss is written down against the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided for on all Property, Plant and Equipment assets with a determinable finite useful life, by writing down the carrying value of the asset in the Balance Sheet over the remaining periods expected to benefit from their use. Assets not depreciated are those without a determinable finite useful life (land and community assets), assets that are not yet available for use (assets under construction) and assets reclassified as Held for Sale. For asset additions, no depreciation is provided for during the financial year of acquisition. However, a full year's depreciation is provided for in the financial year of disposal.

Depreciation is calculated on the following basis:

- Buildings, Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment, Infrastructure, Surplus assets – straight-line allocation over the asset's estimated useful life. Newly acquired assets are depreciated from the year following that in which they were acquired.
- Assets under construction are not depreciated until they are brought into use.

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

Assets disposed of during the year are depreciated in the year of disposal or in the case of assets reclassified as Held for Sale, in the year they were reclassified.

Componentisation

Where an item of Property Plant and Equipment has components, whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of that item they are identified as separate assets and depreciated separately. The Council's current Componentisation Policy defines a separate component:

- For new assets and enhancements (excluding land), as an item of expenditure with a value greater than £50,000 or 20% of the cost of the asset, whichever is the higher.
- For buildings revalued after 1st April 2010, as an item with a current net book value in excess of £250,000 or 20% of the cost, whichever is the higher.

1.11 NON-CURRENT ASSETS - INVESTMENT PROPERTY

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

The definition is not met if the property is used in any way to facilitate the delivery of services or production of goods or is held for sale.

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, based on the amount at which the asset, in its highest and best use, could be exchanged between market participants at the reporting date. Properties are not depreciated but are revalued annually as necessary dependent on changes in market conditions in the year. Gains and losses on revaluation are posted to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The same treatment is applied to gains and losses on disposal. Such gains and losses, however, are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund Balance and are therefore reversed out in the Movement in Reserves Statement and credited to the Capital Adjustment Account and the Capital Receipts Reserve.

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the Financing and Investment Income line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, revaluation and disposal gains and losses are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the capital adjustment account and the capital receipts reserve.

1.12 NON-CURRENT ASSETS - INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Expenditure on assets that do not have physical substance, and which are controlled by the entity through custody or legal rights (e.g., software licences), is capitalised when it will bring benefits to the Council for more than one financial year. Internally generated assets are capitalised where it can be demonstrated that the project is technically feasible, is intended to be completed (with adequate resources being available), where the Council will be able to generate future economic benefits or deliver service potential by being able to sell or use the asset, and where the expenditure during the development phase can be reliably measured.

Intangible assets are measured at cost, which is amortised over the estimated useful life of the asset to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, to reflect the

pattern of consumption of benefits. Estimated remaining useful lives are reviewed annually and an asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset might be impaired – any losses recognised are charged to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or cessation of use of an intangible asset is credited or charged to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Amortisation, impairment losses and disposal gains and losses are not permitted to have an impact on the General Fund Balance, so are reversed out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and charged or credited to the Capital Adjustment Account with any sale proceeds credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve.

1.13 NON-CURRENT ASSETS – DISPOSALS AND ASSETS HELD FOR SALE

When it becomes probable that the carrying amount of an asset will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through its continuing use, it is reclassified as an Asset Held for Sale. Assets are classified as held for sale where the asset is available for immediate sale in its present condition and where the sale is highly probable i.e., the asset has been advertised for sale and a buyer sought and the completion of the sale is expected within twelve months of the balance sheet date.

Except when carried at (depreciated) historic cost, an asset is revalued immediately before its reclassification as Held for Sale, using its existing category's measurement basis. Following reclassification assets are measured at the lower of their carrying values and fair values less costs to sell. Any subsequent gains in value are first used to reverse any losses previously charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and thereafter recognised in the Revaluation Reserve. Losses in value are charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services (even when there is a balance held for that asset in the Revaluation Reserve).

Depreciation is not charged on Assets Held for Sale, except in the year in which they were classified as held for sale.

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

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

Amounts received from a disposal are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts is required to be credited to the Usable 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 appropriated to the Reserve from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

1.14 REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE (REFCUS)

Expenditure incurred during the year that may be capitalised under statutory provisions but does not result in the creation of non-current assets is charged to the relevant service revenue account in the year. To the extent the Council has determined to meet the cost of this expenditure from capital resources (borrowing, capital receipts or grants) a transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account via the Movement in Reserves Statement reverses out the amounts charged to the General Fund Balance so there is no impact on the level of council tax.

1.15 CHARGES TO REVENUE FOR NON-CURRENT ASSETS

Service revenue accounts, support services and trading accounts are charged with the following amounts to record the real cost of holding assets during the year:

- Depreciation of property, plant and equipment used by the relevant service.
- Amortisation of intangible assets used by the service.
- Revaluation and impairment losses, where there are no accumulated gains in the Revaluation Reserve against which the losses can be charged.

The Council cannot raise council tax to cover depreciation, amortisation or revaluation and impairment losses. It is, however, required to make an annual provision (known as Minimum Revenue Provision or MRP) from revenue towards reducing its overall borrowing requirement, equal to an amount calculated on a prudent basis by the Council in accordance with statutory guidance. The above charges are therefore reversed out of the General Fund Balance and replaced by a MRP contribution to the Capital Adjustment Account in the Movement of Reserves Statement.

1.16 LEASES

The Council as lessee

The Council classifies contracts as leases based on their substance. Contracts and parts of contracts, including those described as contracts for services, are analysed to determine whether they convey the right to control the use of an identified asset, through rights both to obtain substantially all the economic benefits or service potential from that asset and to direct its use. The Code expands the scope of IFRS 16 Leases to include arrangements with nil consideration, peppercorn or nominal payments.

Initial measurement

Leases are recognised as right-of-use assets with a corresponding liability at the date from which the leased asset is available for use (or the IFRS 16 transition date, if later). The leases are typically for fixed periods in excess of one year but may have extension options.

The Council initially recognises lease liabilities measured at the present value of lease payments, discounting by applying the Council's incremental borrowing rate wherever the interest rate implicit in the lease cannot be determined. Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability include:

- fixed payments, including in-substance fixed payments
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the prevailing index or rate as at the adoption date
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee
- the exercise price under a purchase option that the Council is reasonably certain to exercise
- lease payments in an optional renewal period if the Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option
- penalties for early termination of a lease, unless the Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early

The right-of-use asset is measured at the amount of the lease liability, adjusted for any prepayments made, plus any direct costs incurred to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or restore the underlying asset on the site on which it is located, less any lease incentives received. However, for peppercorn, nominal payments or nil consideration leases, the asset is measured at fair value.

Subsequent measurement

The right-of-use asset is subsequently measured using the fair value model. The Council considers the cost model to be a reasonable proxy except for:

- assets held under non-commercial leases
- leases where rent reviews do not necessarily reflect market conditions
- leases with terms of more than five years that do not have any provision for rent reviews
- leases where rent reviews will be at periods of more than five years

For these leases, the asset is carried at a revalued amount. In these financial statements, right-of-use assets held under index-linked leases have been adjusted for changes in the relevant index, while assets held under peppercorn or nil consideration leases have been valued using market prices or rentals for equivalent land and properties.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated straight-line over the shorter period of remaining lease term and useful life of the underlying asset as at the date of adoption.

The lease liability is subsequently measured at amortised cost, using the effective interest method. The liability is remeasured when:

- there is a change in future lease payments arising from a change in index or rate
- there is a change in the group's estimate of the amount expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee
- the Council changes its assessment of whether it will exercise a purchase, extension or termination option
- there is a revised in-substance fixed lease payment

When such a remeasurement occurs, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, with any further adjustment required from remeasurement being recorded in the income statement.

Low value and short lease exemption

As permitted by the Code, the Council excludes leases:

- for low-value items that cost less than £5,000 when new, provided they are not highly dependent on or integrated with other items, and
- with a term shorter than 12 months (comprising the non-cancellable period plus any extension options that the Council is reasonably certain to exercise and any termination options that the Council is reasonably certain not to exercise)

Lease expenditure

Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement includes interest, straight-line depreciation, any asset impairments and changes in variable lease payments not included in the measurement of the liability during the period in which the triggering event occurred. Lease payments are debited against the liability. Rentals for leases of low-value items or shorter than 12 months are expensed.

Depreciation and impairments are not charges against council tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are therefore appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The Council as lessor

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.

Finance leases

Where the Council grants a finance lease over a property or an item of plant or equipment, the relevant asset is written out of the Balance Sheet as a disposal. At the commencement of the lease, the carrying amount of the asset in the Balance Sheet (whether property, plant and equipment or assets held for sale) is written off to the other operating expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of the gain or loss on disposal. A gain, representing the Council's net investment in the lease, is 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), matched by a lease (long-term debtor) asset in the Balance Sheet.

Lease rentals receivable are apportioned between:

- a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property – applied to write down the lease 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).

The gain credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on disposal is not permitted by statute to increase the General Fund balance and is required to be treated as a capital receipt. Where a premium has been received, this is posted out of the General Fund balance to the capital receipts 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 financial years, this is posted out of the General Fund balance to the deferred capital receipts reserve. When the future rentals are received, the element for the capital receipt for the disposal of the asset is used to write down the lease debtor. At this point, the deferred capital receipts are transferred to the capital receipts reserve.

The written-off value of disposals is not a charge against council tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are therefore appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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 or where this is initiated by a service to the individual service, 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.

1.17 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Financial assets and liabilities are recognised in the Balance Sheet when the Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. In the case of a financial asset this is when the Council becomes committed to its purchase, except in the case of trade receivables, which are recognised when the goods or services have been supplied. Financial liabilities are recognised when the cash or goods or services have been received.

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are initially measured at fair value and then carried at amortised cost. Where interest is payable this 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 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.

Normally this means, for the Council's borrowings, the amount recognised in the Balance Sheet represents the outstanding principal repayable plus any accrued interest, and interest charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount payable for the year stated in the loan agreement. For current payables with no stated interest rate the amount recognised is the outstanding invoiced amount.

Financial Assets

Under IFRS 9 applicable from 2018/19, the Council's financial assets are classified into three types:

- Financial assets at amortised cost – where payments consist solely of principal and interest and the reason for holding is to collect cash flows.
- Fair value through Other Comprehensive Income (OCI) – where payments consist solely of principal and interest and the reason for holding is to collect cash flows and sell *and* where payments do not consist solely of principal and interest, but where the Council has designated the instrument as Fair value through OCI.
- Fair value through Profit and Loss (P&L) - where payments do not consist solely of principal and interest.

Under IAS39, which applied up until 2018/19, financial assets were classified as:

- Loans and receivables – assets that had fixed or determinable payments and were not quoted in an active market. These were initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost.
- Available-for-sale assets – those that had a quoted market price and/or did not have fixed or determinable payments. These were initially measured and carried at fair value, except in the case of equity instruments that did not have a quoted price in an active market and for which a reliable fair value could not be established; these were permitted to be carried at cost.

Financial Assets measured at amortised cost

These are initially measured at fair value and carried at amortised cost. Where interest is receivable, this is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, based on the carrying amount of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. Normally this means, for the Council's loans and investments, the amount recognised in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable plus any accrued interest, and interest credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is the amount receivable for the year stated in the loan agreement.

Deposits, bonds and loans are assessed on recognition for impairment due to the likelihood that payments due under the contract will not be made and, if material, a provision for twelve month expected credit losses set aside from the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. If the risk of default increases significantly after initial recognition and for trade and lease receivables a provision is set aside based on expected lifetime credit losses, if deemed significant or material.

For current receivables with no stated interest rate the amount recognised is the outstanding invoiced amount, less any allowance for impairment (provision for bad or doubtful debts).

Any gains and losses that arise on the disposal or de-recognition of the asset are credited or charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Financial assets measured at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income

These are initially measured at cost (equivalent to fair value) and carried at fair value. For instruments quoted in an active market, fair values are based on their market prices at the reporting date, except where the instruments will mature within twelve months of that date, in which case they are assumed not materially different to (and therefore equal to) their carrying values.

Interest receivable is credited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, based on the amortised cost of the asset multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. Dividends from equity instruments designated by the Council as Fair value through OCI are credited to the same line when they become receivable by the Council.

Changes in fair value are balanced by an entry to the Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve (FIRR) (formerly the Available-for-Sale Reserve), with the gain or loss being recognised in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Any gains or losses held in the FIRR on de-recognition of the asset are credited or charged to the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Financial assets measured at fair value through Profit & Loss

These are initially measured at cost and carried at fair value. For instruments quoted in an active market, fair values are based on their market prices at the reporting date, except where the instruments will mature within twelve months of that date, in which case they are assumed not materially different to (and therefore equal to) their carrying values.

Dividends are credited to the Financing and Investment Income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) when they become receivable by the Council. Changes in fair value and any gains or losses on de-recognition are charged or credited to the same line in the CIES and, in the case of pooled investment funds reversed to the Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account via the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS). Sale proceeds on de-recognition are credited to usable capital receipts via the MIRS.

1.18 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENT

The Council measures certain non-financial assets (Surplus Assets, Investment Property and Assets Held for Sale) and its Available-for-sale financial assets at fair value at the balance sheet date.

Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset or transfer the liability takes place either:

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

The fair value of an asset or liability is measured using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, assuming that market participants act in their best economic interest. In the case of a non-financial asset, the Council takes into account the market participants' ability to use the asset in its 'highest and best use' or by selling it to another market participant that would use the asset in its 'highest and best use'.

Inputs to the valuation techniques used in measuring fair value are categorised within the fair value hierarchy as follows:

- Level 1 - unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities
- Level 2 - directly or indirectly observable inputs other than quoted prices
- Level 3 - unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

1.19 INVENTORIES

Inventories held in stores are included in the Balance Sheet at the latest price paid. This is a departure from the requirements of the Code, which require inventories to be shown at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The effect of the different treatment is not considered material.

1.20 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty, on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature in no more than three months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

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.

1.21 PROVISIONS

Provisions are made where an event has taken place that gives the Council an obligation that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits, but where the timing or amount of the transfer is uncertain. 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 when the Council becomes aware of the event, based on its best estimate of the likely settlement. When payments are eventually made, they are charged to the provision carried on the Balance Sheet. Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year. Where it becomes more likely than not that a transfer of economic benefits will not be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be met by another party (e.g., from an insurance claim), this is only recognised as income in the relevant service revenue account if it is virtually certain that reimbursement will be received if the obligation is settled.

1.22 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, where material, disclosed in a note to the accounts.

1.23 RESERVES

The Council sets aside specific amounts as usable reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts from 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 revenue account in that year to form part of the Surplus or Deficit 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 in that year.

Certain reserves are kept to manage the accounting processes for non-current assets, financial instruments, retirement and employee benefits, and they do not represent usable resources for the Council – these reserves are known as unusable reserves.

1.24 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, where material, disclosed in a note to the accounts where it is probable that there will be an inflow of economic benefits or service potential.

1.25 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 made has a material effect, 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.

1.26 EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

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

- Those that provide evidence of conditions that arose after the reporting period – the Statement of Accounts is adjusted to reflect such events.

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

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

1.27 ESTIMATION TECHNIQUES

Estimation techniques are the methods adopted to assess the values of assets, liabilities, gains and losses and changes in reserves in situations where there is uncertainty as to their precise value. Unless specified in the Code or in legislative requirements, the method of estimation will generally be the one that most closely reflects the economic reality of the transaction.

1.28 JOINTLY CONTROLLED OPERATIONS

Jointly controlled operations are activities undertaken by the Council, together with other organisations, involving the shared use of assets and resources of the organisations rather than the establishment of a separate entity. The Council recognises on its Balance Sheet the assets that it controls and the liabilities that it incurs and charges or credits the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement with the expenditure it incurs and the share of income it earns from the activity of the operation.

Such operations and assets, not being separate entities, are accounted for in the Council only accounts and are not separate entities for Group account purposes.

1.29 GROUP ACCOUNTS

Ubico Limited

At 31st March 2025 the Council had a 12.5% shareholding in Ubico Limited, a local authority owned company which has eight members, providing environmental services to the shareholder Councils. Since the Council has no control or joint control or significant influence over the company, there is no requirement to produce consolidated group accounts.

Publica Group (Support) Limited

While the Council has an interest in the Company the Council's share of profit for the year and net assets at the balance sheet date have not been consolidated into the Council's single entity accounts. The figures involved are not material to the accuracy of the accounts, and the Council has not prepared Group Accounts on this basis.

2. CHANGES IN ACCOUNTING POLICY AND ACCOUNTING STANDARDS

The Code requires changes in accounting policy to be applied retrospectively unless alternative transitional arrangements are specified in the Code. There is also the requirement for an authority to disclose information relating to the impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted.

In compiling the 2025/26 accounts there are no material effects in relation to these standards.

3. MATERIALITY JUDGEMENTS USED IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

In applying the accounting policies set out on pages 22 to 38 the Council has had to make certain judgements about balances and transactions which may be uncertain depending on future events.

PPE Revaluations

The Council Property Assets have been valued by the valuers employed by Publica Group (Support) Limited.

Our valuation report quotes the following:

“Following a period of general uncertainty following the end of the global pandemic, the property market has settled. Transactions have returned to pre pandemic levels and comparable evidence is again readily available.

There remains a degree of nervousness in the market due to political global uncertainty.

This will also apply to any investments that include PPE valuations such as the Gloucestershire Pension Fund’s property assets.”

Publica Group (Support) Limited

The Council jointly owns (with West Oxfordshire District Council, Cotswold District Council and Cheltenham Borough Council) Publica Group (Support) Limited, a wholly owned company, limited by guarantee, operating with Mutual Trading Status to deliver services on behalf of the Council and services to other member Councils under contract. While the Council has an interest in the Company, the Council’s share of profit for the year and net assets at the balance sheet date have not been consolidated into the Council’s single entity accounts. The figures involved are not material to the accuracy of the accounts, and the Council has not prepared Group Accounts on this basis.

In addition, the company is considered to be an employment vehicle, employing and paying staff and then recharging these costs back to the Councils. It does not trade and does not make a profit, with any surpluses generated being redistributed back to the Councils. Each Council has retained its governance arrangements and member control over decisions. Publica are unable to make financial decisions that will have an impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Councils, without proper approval having been given by each Council in accordance with the Council’s constitution and financial and contract rules.

Pension Liability

No allowance has been made in the Councils’ accounts for any transfer out of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) of the pension liability to Publica Group (Support) Limited. The service contract and tripartite agreement between the Council, Gloucestershire Pension Fund and Publica Group (Support) Limited mean that the pension liability and risk relating to the pension fund remains with the Council, following the TUPE transfer of the majority of the Council’s staff to Publica on 1st November 2017. Therefore, the Council is reporting the pension liability for both staff transferred to Publica, and the Council’s retained staff, in the accounts.

Although Publica, as the employer of many of the current staff may be initially responsible for paying any exit contributions (for example), for any of its staff that are members of the LGPS, such cost will be reimbursed by the relevant Council. The accounts have been prepared on the basis that the full pension fund liability for the LGPS sits in the Council’s accounts. There are no separate disclosures for Publica as they are not responsible for any LGPS liability.

There have been no significant changes in the current economic climate, or movements in interest rates, this has resulted in a small change to the discount rate applied by the Authority’s actuary in valuing pension fund liabilities and assets. This has not resulted in a material movement in the overall pension position, which remains broadly consistent with the prior year, moving from a net surplus of £23,735k in 2024/25 to a net surplus position of £25,590k in 2025/26 (prior to the application of the asset ceiling).

Under IFRIC 14 a defined benefit liability is calculated as the net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation minus the fair value at the end of the reporting date of the plan assets. If the fair value of the plan assets exceeds the calculated obligations (an asset), IAS 19 contains a restriction over the amount of the asset that can be recognised.

In effect it requires a calculation of the 'Asset Ceiling' this being based on the future current and past service costs less expected contributions.

The Council commissioned the actuary to undertake this assessment, resulting in an adjustment of £36,243k to the accounts. This ensures compliance with accounting requirements by removing the recognition of a net pension asset and instead reporting a net pension liability of £10,653k. This treatment is disclosed in Note 36 to the accounts.

Business Rate Appeals Provision

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced a business rates retention scheme that enables local authorities to retain a proportion of the business rates generated in their area. The current arrangements for the retention of business rates came into effect on 1st April 2013. From this date, district councils such as Forest of Dean assume a share of the liability for refunding ratepayers who have successfully appealed against the rateable value of their properties on the rating list. A successful appeal may mean the Council having to refund rates paid in previous years. The Council has therefore set aside a provision to cover its share of the repayments it estimates will be made and made a judgement as to the timescale over which they are likely to be repaid.

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

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

The items in the Council's Balance Sheet at 31st March 2026 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Item	Uncertainties	Effect if actual results differ from assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to assets.	<p>If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of assets falls.</p> <p>It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for buildings would increase by approximately £12,895 for every year that useful lives had to be reduced.</p>

Pensions Liability/Asset	<p>Estimation of the net liability/asset to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries is engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied.</p>	<p>The effects on the net pensions' liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For example, a 0.1% decrease in the discount rate assumption would result in an increase in the pension obligation of approximately 1% (£871,000) and a one-year increase in member life expectancy would increase the pension obligation by approximately 3% to 5%. A sensitivity analysis is included in Note 36 - Pensions.</p> <p>The impact of the continuing uncertainties on the carrying value of these assets cannot be assessed at this stage as it depends on the extent and their effect on the wider economy in the long term, and there is currently insufficient evidence available to assess this.</p> <p>The current high rates of interest impact on the pension fund figures significantly and have led to a requirement to identify an asset in the accounts. We have carried out a calculation in perpetuity under IFRIC 14 for the current year based on a discount rate of 6.2%, a salary increase rate of 3.5%, projected current service costs per annum of £787,000 and projected primary contributions of £1,830,000.</p>
Non-domestic rates (NDR) appeals provision	<p>The council has made provision in relation to National Non Domestic Rate Appeals. This provision is based on an estimation of any future liability and the likelihood these costs will be incurred.</p>	<p>If the estimates used in the calculation of the provision prove to be inaccurate, then there will be further income or expenditure incurred by the General Fund via the Collection Fund.</p>

5. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Section 151 Officer on 30th June 2026. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31st March 2026, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted to reflect the impact of this information, where material.

6. PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT

There are no prior year adjustments within the 2025/2026 statement of accounts.

7a. NOTE TO THE EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

The objective of the Expenditure and Funding Analysis is to demonstrate to council tax and rent payers how the funding available to the Council (government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) for the year has been used in providing services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. The Expenditure and Funding analysis also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's services. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2024/25			EXPENDITURE & FUNDING ANALYSIS			2025/26				
Net expenditure chargeable to General Fund balances £000	Adjustments between the funding and accounting basis £000	Net expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000		Net expenditure chargeable to General Fund balances £000	Adjustments between the funding and accounting basis £000	Net expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000		Net expenditure chargeable to General Fund balances £000	Adjustments between the funding and accounting basis £000	Net expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement £000
3,968	(577)	3,391	Strategy	4,627	(618)	4,009				
1,010	(1)	1,009	Built Environment	1,050	309	1,359				
7,086	(167)	6,919	Finance	6,450	(222)	6,228				
355	(99)	256	Nature Emergency	322	(96)	226				
336	969	1,305	Sustainable Economy	344	137	481				
359	(124)	235	Climate Emergency	535	(123)	412				
958	(130)	828	Local Plan	899	(243)	656				
1,073	(246)	827	Thriving Communities	1,196	683	1,879				
15,145	(375)	14,770	Net Cost of Services	15,423	(173)	15,250				
(14,563)	(2,649)	(17,212)	Other income and expenditure	(15,283)	(4,231)	(19,514)				
582	(3,024)	(2,442)	(Surplus) or Deficit	140	(4,404)	(4,264)				
(14,091)			Opening General Fund Balance including earmarked reserves at 1st April	(13,509)						
582			Add (Surplus) or deficit in year	140						
(13,509)			Closing General Fund Balance including earmarked reserves at 31st March (i)	(13,369)						

(i) For a split between the General Fund Balance and Earmarked Reserves see the Movement in Reserves Statement.

EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

2024/25					2025/26			
Adjustments for capital purposes (note 1 below)	Net changes for the Pension Adjustments (note 2)	Other Differences (note 3)	Total Adjustments	Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for capital purposes (note 1 below)	Net changes for the Pension Adjustments (note 2)	Other Differences (note 3)	Total Adjustments
£000	£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000	£000
-	(585)	8	(577)	Strategy	-	(623)	5	(618)
188	(189)	-	(1)	Built Environment	527	(221)	3	309
-	(172)	5	(167)	Finance	56	(288)	10	(222)
-	(99)	-	(99)	Nature Emergency	-	(96)	-	(96)
1,032	(66)	3	969	Sustainable Economy	194	(61)	4	137
-	(129)	5	(124)	Climate Emergency	-	(124)	1	(123)
143	(295)	22	(130)	Local Plan	53	(295)	(1)	(243)
(18)	(235)	7	(246)	Thriving Communities	896	(214)	1	683
1,345	(1,770)	50	(375)	Net Cost of Services	1,726	(1,922)	23	(173)
(3,127)	798	(320)	(2,649)	Other Income and Expenditure from the Funding Analysis	(2,591)	(1,296)	(344)	(4,231)
(1,782)	(972)	(270)	(3,024)	Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement surplus or deficit	(865)	(3,218)	(321)	(4,404)

Notes

(1) Adjustments for capital purposes

This column adds in revaluation gains/losses on Property, Plant and Equipment and Revenue Expenditure funded from capital under statute (REFCUS) in the service lines and for:

- Other operating expenditure – adds gains/losses on disposals of Property, Plant and Equipment
- Financing and investment income and expenditure – the statutory charges for capital financing (Minimum Revenue Provision) and revenue financing of capital expenditure are deducted as these are not chargeable under generally accepted practices, and changes in the fair value of Investment Properties are added.
- Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure – this line is credited with capital grants receivable in the year which have no conditions or for which conditions were satisfied in the year.

Depreciation and amortisation charges are included in the service lines in the Net Expenditure chargeable to the General Fund balances column of the Expenditure and Funding analysis (as they are included in reports to management), but then reversed out in Other Income and Expenditure so they have no impact on council tax. The reversal is removed in the Other Income and expenditure line in the Adjustments for capital purposes column above to ensure such charges are included in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

(2) Net change for the Pensions Adjustments

- for services - the removal of employer pension contributions and their replacement with current and past service costs
- for Financing and investment income and expenditure – the addition of net interest on the pensions defined benefit liability.

(3) Other Differences

- For Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure – adjustments to the general fund for changes in the fair value of pooled investment funds.
- For Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure – timing differences between the income for council tax and non-domestic rates (NDR) credited under statutory regulations and that recognised under generally accepted accounting practice.
- For services – the addition of the accumulated absences accrual representing annual and other leave due to staff at 31st March 2026

7b. SEGMENTAL INCOME

The net expenditure chargeable to the general fund balance in the Expenditure and Funding Analysis includes the following items on a segmental basis:

	2025/26		2024/25	
	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment £000	Revenues from external customers £000	Depreciation, amortisation and impairment £000	Revenues from external customers £000
Strategy	76	(432)	46	(873)
Built Environment	87	(1,833)	87	(1,489)
Finance	281	(4,438)	182	(3,161)
Nature Emergency	-	(184)	-	(204)
Sustainable Economy	-	(44)	-	(31)
Climate Emergency	9	(211)	9	(454)
Local Plan	40	(1,043)	30	(856)
Thriving Communities	41	(450)	11	(682)
Total included in cost of services	534	(8,635)	365	(7,750)
Financing & Investment income & Expenditure		(79)		(42)
Taxation and other Non-Specific Grant Income				(62)
Total included in Fees, Charges & other service income, plus Publica Contract Note 13		(8,714)		(7,854)

8. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER THE REGULATIONS

This note details the adjustments that have been made to Comprehensive Income and Expenditure so that it equals the amount available, under statutory provisions, to meet future capital and revenue expenditure.

The following describes the major reserves and the adjustments made:

General Fund Balance

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

Capital Receipts Reserve

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

Capital Grants Unapplied

The Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the Council has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies, but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure.

2024/25 Usable Reserves				2025/26 Usable Reserves		
General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000		General Fund Balance £000	Capital Receipts Reserve £000	Capital Grants Unapplied £000
			Adjustments to Revenue Resources <i>Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements</i>			
			Reversal of entries included in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in relation to capital expenditure (charged or credited to the Capital Adjustment Account)			
(365)	-	-	Charges for depreciation, amortisation and impairment of non-current assets	(535)	-	-
-	-	-	Revaluation losses on Property, Plant and Equipment	(60)	-	-
62	-	-	Donated Lease Asset	-	-	-
-	-	-	Non-current assets written off on disposal	(2)	-	-
405	-	-	Movements in the fair value of Investment properties	(161)	-	-
(2,225)	-	-	Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute	(1,666)	-	-
			Reversal of other entries			
972	-	-	Pension costs transferred from the Pensions Reserve	3,218	-	-
(4)	-	-	Fair value gains and losses of pooled Investment Funds	(46)	-	-
324	-	-	Council tax and NNDR net deficit transferred to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account	390	-	-
(51)	-	-	Holiday Pay transferred from the Accumulated Absences Account	(23)	-	-
(882)	-	-	Total adjustments to Revenue Resources	1,115	-	-
			Adjustments between Revenue and Capital resources			
371	(371)	-	Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to capital receipts	641	(641)	-
35	(35)	-	Transfer of capital receipts from revenue to capital receipts	2	(2)	-
3,053	-	(921)	Transfer of capital grants and contributions to capital grants unapplied	2,427	-	(135)
56	-	-	Statutory provision for the repayment of debt	99	-	-
372	-	-	Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances transferred to the Capital Adjustment Account	120	-	-
3,887	(406)	(921)	Total adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	3,289	(643)	(135)
			Adjustments to Capital resources			
-	1,413	-	Use of capital receipts to finance capital expenditure	-	668	-
-	-	535	Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure	-	-	635
-	(163)	-	Transfer from Deferred Capital Receipts upon receipt of cash	-	(235)	-
18	(18)	-	Capital Grants and loans repaid	-	-	-
18	1,232	535	Total adjustments to Capital Resources	-	433	635
3,023	826	(386)	Total adjustments between Accounting and Funding basis under the regulations	4,404	(210)	500

9. MOVEMENTS IN EARMARKED RESERVES

Movements in the Council's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement on page 19. Movements in the earmarked reserves shown on the statement are detailed below:

	Balance at 31 March 2024 £000	Transfers out 2024/25 £000	Transfers in 2024/25 £000	Balance at 31 March 2025 £000	Transfers out 2025/26 £000	Transfers in 2025/26 £000	Balance at 31 March 2026 £000
Earmarked Reserves							
Capital Reserves	816	-	55	871	(29)	80	922
Equalisation Reserves	3,321	(499)	370	3,192	(537)	369	3,024
Repairs & Renewals Reserves	1,641	(275)	373	1,739	(178)	696	2,257
Other Earmarked Reserves	4,617	(1,285)	957	4,289	(1,977)	1,849	4,161
Covid 19 Timing Reserves	16	(16)	-	-	-	-	-
Third Party Reserves	2,665	(625)	363	2,403	(475)	62	1,990
Total	13,076	(2,700)	2,118	12,494	(3,196)	3,056	12,354

Purpose of reserves

Capital Reserves – to finance the general fund capital programme and new initiatives.

Equalisation Reserves – to smooth out fluctuations in expenditure or income as a result of cyclical events, for example local elections. Also, to cushion the impact of fluctuating activity levels (for example housing benefit payments) or movements in investment recovery, interest or exchange rates.

Repairs and Renewals Reserves – to meet the cost of planned and reactive repairs to buildings and infrastructure and to fund the renewals programme for computer equipment.

Other Earmarked Reserves – sums built up to cover the future costs of planned expenditure, for example organisational restructures and council initiatives.

Covid-19 Timing Reserves – created to manage government funding relating to ongoing Covid-19 costs.

Third Party Reserves – This is monies held by the Council on behalf of other parties in order to deliver priorities of the Council.

10. OTHER OPERATING (INCOME) AND EXPENDITURE

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Parish Council precepts	3,599	3,330
Levies	60	56
Gains/losses on the disposal of non-current assets (including Right to Buy Income)	(641)	(406)
Net Other Operating Expenditure	3,018	2,980

Income from Right to Buy sales is due to the Council following the transfer of its housing stock to a housing association in 2003.

11. FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Interest payable and similar charges	2	2
Net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset)	(1,296)	798
Interest receivable and similar income	(834)	(1,021)
Income and expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value (surplus) / deficit	(465)	(1,130)
Fair value changes in financial assets (increase)/decrease	46	4
Net Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	(2,547)	(1,347)

12. TAXATION AND NON-SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Council Tax	(10,479)	(9,919)
Non-Domestic Rates (income) and expenditure:		
- Billing authority share	(6,943)	(6,598)
- Collection Fund (surplus) / deficit	(55)	415
- Tariff payable to central government	3,917	3,896
- Levy payable to central government less Pool (surplus)/deficit	344	419
- NDR renewable energy contribution	(404)	(439)
	(3,141)	(2,307)
Non-ring-fenced government grants	(3,938)	(4,366)
Capital grants and contributions	(2,427)	(2,190)
Right of Use of Assets	-	(63)
Net Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income	(19,985)	(18,845)

13. EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ANALYSED BY NATURE

The Council's expenditure and income is analysed as follows:

	2025/26	2024/25
	£000	£000
Expenditure		
Employee benefit expenses	1,824	3,452
Publica Contract	3,976	6,361
Other service expenses	31,000	29,417
Depreciation, amortisation, impairment	534	365
Revaluation losses on Property, Plant & Equipment	59	-
Investment Properties Changes in Fair Value (loss)	193	43
Loss on disposal of non-current assets (see note 10)	2	-
Changes in Fair Value of Investments (loss)	107	107
Interest payments	21	822
Precepts and levies	7,866	8,115
Total Expenditure	45,582	48,682
Income		
Fees, charges and other service income	(8,432)	(7,331)
Publica Contract	(282)	(523)
Right to Buy Income (see note 10)	(641)	(371)
Gain on disposal of non-current assets (see note 10)	(2)	(35)
Investment Properties Changes in Fair Value (gain)	(32)	(449)
Changes in Fair Value of Investments (gain)	(61)	(102)
Interest and investment income	(1,515)	(1,881)
Interest and investment income - Pensions	(1,296)	-
Income from council tax and non-domestic rates	(17,827)	(16,956)
Government grants and contributions	(19,758)	(23,476)
Total Income	(49,846)	(51,124)
(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(4,264)	(2,442)

14. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

2024/25							2025/26							
Other Land and buildings £000	Vehicles, Plant and equipment £000	Infra-structure assets £000	Community assets £000	Surplus assets £000	Assets under construction £000	Total £000		Other Land and buildings £000	Vehicles, Plant and equipment £000	Infra-structure assets £000	Community assets £000	Surplus assets £000	Assets under construction £000	Total £000
7,998	1,085	577	170	1,785	1,686	13,301	Cost or valuation							
							At 1st April	8,199	1,342	577	170	2,073	1,945	14,306
395	1,572	-	-	-	259	2,226	Additions	252	809	110	-	-	878	2,049
6	-	-	-	288	-	294	Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	1,269	-	-	-	161	-	1,430
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Revaluation increases / (decreases) recognised in the surplus / deficit on the provision of services	(1)	-	-	-	-	-	(1)
(200)	(1,315)	-	-	-	-	(1,515)	Derecognition - disposals	-	(297)	-	-	-	-	(297)
8,199	1,342	577	170	2,073	1,945	14,306	At 31st March	9,719	1,854	687	170	2,234	2,823	17,487
							Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment							
(108)	(619)	(222)	-	-	-	(949)	At 1st April	(156)	(712)	(264)	-	-	-	(1,132)
(226)	(93)	(42)	-	-	-	(361)	Depreciation charge	(236)	(157)	(37)	-	-	-	(430)
178	-	-	-	-	-	178	Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	392	-	-	-	-	-	392
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Derecognition - disposals	-	95	-	-	-	-	95
(156)	(712)	(264)	-	-	-	(1,132)	At 31st March	-	(774)	(301)	-	-	-	(1,075)
8,043	630	313	170	2,073	1,945	13,174	Net Book Value at 31st March	9,719	1,080	386	170	2,234	2,823	16,412

Depreciation

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

- Buildings – between 10 and 50 years, depending in the estimated useful life of the asset.
- Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment – between 1 and 10 years, depending on the estimated useful life of the asset
- Infrastructure – between 10 and 40 years.

Revaluation of Non-Current Assets

The Council undertakes a formal revaluation of its land and buildings on a rolling programme, ensuring that all assets are revalued at least once every five years. Valuations are performed in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation prescribed by the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

The basis of valuation is set out in the Statement of Accounting Policies. Valuations were undertaken by the then internal valuer, Richard Webb MRICS, in January 2026. These valuations were subsequently reviewed by Kurt Wyman Surveyors to reflect any material movements in values as at 31st March 2026.

From 2025/26, the Council has introduced the application of indexation between full revaluations, where appropriate, to ensure that asset carrying values remain materially up to date at the balance sheet date. This approach is applied in line with CIPFA Code requirements and relevant RICS guidance and is based on suitable indices reflective of asset classes. A professional assessment is undertaken to determine whether the use of indexation results in a materially accurate reflection of fair value.

Valued at	Land and Buildings £000	Vehicles Plant and Equipment £000	Infra- structure £000	Community Assets £000	Surplus Assets £000	Assets Under Construction £000	Total Property Assets £000
Historic Cost	-	1,837	687	170	-	2,822	5,516
Current Cost in:							
2019/20	-	17	-	-	-	-	17
2020/21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2021/22	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2022/23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2023/24	2,133	-	-	-	-	-	2,133
2024/25	951	-	-	-	-	-	951
2025/26	6,635	-	-	-	2,235	-	8,870
Total	9,719	1,854	687	170	2,235	2,822	17,487

Non-current assets owned by the Council include the following:

	Number of assets held at 31 March	
	2026	2025
Other Land and Buildings:		
Off Street Car Parks	18	18
Lorry Parks	1	1
Office Buildings	1	1
Public Conveniences	11	11
Cemetery Buildings	2	2
Swimming Pools	1	1
Vehicles, Plant and Equipment	34	32
Surplus Assets	16	16

Componentisation

Under the Code the Council is required to account separately for expenditure on major building components incurred from 1st April 2010, so that they can be depreciated over their respective useful lives. No components were identified in 2025/26.

Fair Value Measurement of surplus Assets

The fair values of surplus assets valued at 31st March 2026 have been based on a market approach using current market conditions, recent sale prices and other relevant information for similar assets in the local area. The level of observable inputs is therefore significant, leading to the properties being categorised as Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy.

15. INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

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

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Rental income from investment property	739	876
Direct operating expenses arising from investment property	(113)	(151)
Net gain/(loss)	626	725

There are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on its right to the remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct, enhance or develop investment property, however some lease agreements require the Council to repair and maintain properties.

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

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at start of year	11,070	10,665
Net gains/(losses) from fair value adjustments	(161)	405
Balance at year-end	10,909	11,070

Fair Value measurement of Investment Properties

The fair values of Investment properties have been based on a market approach using current market conditions, recent sale prices and other relevant information for similar assets in the local area. Where existing rents have been capitalised, the yield has been obtained by using market knowledge and evidence. The level of observable inputs is therefore significant, leading to the properties being categorised at Level 2 in the fair value hierarchy. In estimating the fair values of the Investment properties, the highest and best use of the properties is their current use.

16. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at start of year:		
Gross carrying amounts	70	70
Accumulated amortisation	(66)	(62)
Net carrying amount at start of year	4	8
Amortisation for the period	(2)	(4)
Net carrying amount at end of year	2	4
Comprising:		
Gross carrying amounts	70	70
Accumulated amortisation	(68)	(66)
	2	4

17. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The following categories of financial instrument are carried on the Balance Sheet:

	Long Term		Current	
	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Investments				
Financial assets at amortised cost (note 1 below)	-	-	2,003	3,005
Fair value through P&L – Pooled Funds (note 2 below)	5,286	5,332	106	52
Quoted Equity Investment (note 3 below)	1,280	1,320	30	15
Total Investments	6,566	6,652	2,139	3,072
Cash & cash equivalents				
Financial assets at amortised cost	-	-	142	90
Fair value through P&L (note 4 below)	-	-	5,338	6,023
Total cash & cash equivalents	-	-	5,480	6,113
Debtors				
Financial assets at amortised cost	1,497	1,533	1,462	1,300
Total included in debtors (note 5 below)	1,497	1,533	1,462	1,300
Total Financial Assets	8,063	8,185	9,081	10,485
Financial Liabilities at amortised cost				
Creditors (note 6 below)	-	-	(1,924)	(2,654)
Total Financial Liabilities	-	-	(1,924)	(2,654)

- (1) These comprise deposits with banks and other local authorities and bank certificates of deposit.
- (2) These comprise units in the CCLA pooled property fund purchased during 2017/18 and units in the Schroders Income Maximising Fund and CCLA Diversified Income Fund, the carrying (fair) value of which has been assessed using Level 1 inputs in the fair value hierarchy (quoted prices for identical units) at 31st March 2026.
- (3) This comprises shares in Fundamentum Social Housing REIT (Real Estate Investment Trust) purchased during 2019/20
- (4) These comprise money market funds that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value.
- (5) Further details of current debtors are given in note 19, page 59. The figures shown above exclude payments in advance and non-exchange transactions, such as taxes and grants due, which are not classified as financial instruments.
- (6) Further details of current creditors are given in note 21, page 60. The figures shown above exclude receipts in advance, which are not classified as financial instruments.

Income, Expense, gains and losses

	2025/26				2024/25			
	Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost	Financial Assets Loans and receivables	Financial Assets Available -for-sale	Total	Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost	Financial Assets Loans and receivables	Financial Assets Available -for-sale	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Interest expense	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	2
Total expense in Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	2
Interest Income	-	(555)	(243)	(798)	-	(755)	(250)	(1,005)
Total Income in Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	-	(555)	(243)	(798)	-	(755)	(250)	(1,005)
(Net gain)/loss for the year	2	(555)	(243)	(796)	2	(755)	(250)	(1,003)

Fair Values of Assets and Liabilities

Financial liabilities and financial assets (represented by loans and receivables) are carried on the balance sheet at amortised cost. Their fair values can be assessed by calculating the present value of the cash flows that will take place over the remaining term of the instruments. As the majority of the assets and liabilities are instruments that will mature in the coming twelve months, the carrying amounts are deemed to approximate to fair value. The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount.

Financial assets (represented by Available-for-Sale assets) are carried on the balance sheet at fair value. Where an instrument will mature in the next twelve months the fair value is assumed to be equal to its cost, equal to its fair value on the purchase date. The valuation basis therefore uses Level 1 inputs in the fair value hierarchy (i.e., quoted prices in an active market).

NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Key Risks

The Council's activities expose it to a variety of financial risks. The key risks are:

- Credit risk – the possibility that other parties might fail to pay amounts due to the Council.
- Liquidity risk – the possibility that the Council might not have funds available to meet its commitment to make payments.
- Re-financing risk – the possibility that the Council might be requiring to renew a financial instrument on maturity at disadvantageous rates or terms.

- Market risk – the possibility that financial loss might arise for the Council as a result of changes in such measures as interest rates.

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

Credit risk

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposure to the Council's customers. This risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria in accordance with Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's ratings services. The Annual Investment Strategy also considers maximum amounts and time limits in respect of each financial institution. Deposits are not made with banks and financial institutions unless they meet the minimum requirements of the investment criteria outlined above. The full Investment Strategy for 2025/26 was approved by Council on 20th February 2025 and is available on the Council's website.

The Council used the creditworthiness services of Arlingclose Limited during 2025/26. The maximum investment that could be made with an approved UK counterparty was £3 million, and with an approved non-UK counterparty £2 million. No breaches of the Council's counterparty criteria occurred during the reporting period and the Council does not expect any losses from non-performance by any of its counterparties.

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments of £14.349m cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of default applies to all of the Council's investments but there was no evidence at 31st March 2026 that this was likely to crystallise.

The following analysis summarises the Council's potential maximum exposure to credit risk (using investments outstanding and arranged at 31st March 2026), based on experience of default assessed by the ratings agencies and the Council's experience of its customer collection levels over the last five financial years and adjusted to reflect current market conditions.

	Amount at 31 March 2026 £000 (a)	Historical experience of default % (b)	Adjustment for Market conditions At 31 March 2026 % (c)	Estimated maximum exposure to Default £000 (a*c)
Deposits with banks and financial institutions				
A rated counterparties	5,644	4.20	1.10	62
Local Authorities (UKLA)	2,003	-	-	-
Credit risk not applicable*	6,702	-	-	-
	14,349			62

*credit risk is not applicable to pooled funds where the Council has no contractual right to receive any particular sum of money

Loss allowances on treasury investments have been calculated by reference to historic default data published by credit rating agencies, multiplied by 110% (2025: 52%) to adjust for current and forecast economic conditions.

The Council also uses non-credit rated institutions, such as smaller building societies or bank subsidiaries where the parent has a satisfactory rating. In these circumstances, these investments are classified as Other Counterparties.

No breaches of the Council's counterparty criteria occurred during the reporting period and the Council does not expect any losses from non-performance by any of its counterparties in relation to deposits and bonds.

The Council does not generally allow credit for its trade debtors as payment is due immediately. This means that all of the £912,650 trade debtor balance is technically past its due date for payment. The past due amount can be analysed by age as follows:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Less than 3 months	832	490
3 to 6 months	4	4
6 months to 1 Year	28	43
Over 1 year	49	55
	913	592

Liquidity risk

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. If needed, the Council has ready access to borrowings from the money markets and the Public Works Loan Board. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise the finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments. The Council has no long-term borrowings, and all trade and other payables are due to be paid in less than one year.

Interest rate risk

The Council has limited exposure to interest rate movements on its investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the Council depending on how variable and fixed interest rates move across differing financial instrument periods. For instance, a rise in variable and fixed interest rates will have the following impacts:

- Investments held at variable rates, higher interest income will be credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- Investments held at fixed rates will experience a fall in their fair values.

The Council has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. The Annual Treasury Management Strategy draws together the Council's prudential indicators and its expected treasury operations and includes an expectation of interest rate movements. From this strategy, a prudential indicator is set which provides maximum and minimum limits for fixed and variable interest rate exposure. The Treasury team monitors market and forecast interest rates within the year to adjust exposures appropriately.

If all interest rates had been 1% higher during 2025/26, with all other variables held constant, the financial effect would be:

	£
Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	121,907
Impact on Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	121,907

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

Price risk

The Council, excluding the pension fund, does not generally invest in instruments with this type of risk.

Foreign exchange risk

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

18. INVENTORIES

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Waste wheeled bins	40	53
Other Inventories	112	38
Total Inventories	152	91

19. DEBTORS

LONG TERM DEBTORS

	31 March 2025 £000	During 2025/26		31 March 2026 £000
		Additions £000	Repayments/ Write Offs £000	
Refuse/Recycling Vehicles	49	-	(49)	-
Finance Lease - principle outstanding	1,187	200	(234)	1,153
Long Term Loans	297	59	(12)	344
	1,533	259	(295)	1,497

SHORT TERM DEBTORS

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Debtors falling due within one year:		
Central Government bodies	2,754	2,051
Other Local Authorities	2,996	1,486
NHS bodies	10	24
Other entities and individuals	4,380	4,030
Prepayments	539	665
Total Debtors and Prepayments	10,679	8,256
Less Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts:		
Other entities and individuals	(782)	(948)
Collection Fund	(354)	(364)
Total Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts	(1,136)	(1,312)
Net Debtors and Prepayments	9,543	6,944

20. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Short term Deposits	306	318
Money Market Funds	5,338	6,022
Bank Current Accounts	(164)	(228)
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,480	6,112

21. SHORT TERM CREDITORS

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Creditors falling due within one year:		
Central Government bodies	313	118
Local Authorities	1,550	818
Other entities and individuals	2,997	3,670
Untaken Leave Accruals	81	59
Total Short Term Creditors	4,941	4,665

22. PROVISIONS

	General Insurance £000	Buisness Rates £000	Legal Planning £000	Total £000
Balance as at 1st April	(1)	(400)	-	(401)
Additional Provisions made in year	-	-	(90)	(90)
Amounts used in Year	-	97	-	97
Unused Amount Reversed	-	203	-	203
Balance as at 31st March	(1)	(100)	(90)	(191)

General Insurance

The Insurance Provision was established to fund the cost of insurance policy excesses arising from claims against the Council by third parties. The provision represents the value of an assessment of the Council's liability in respect of the current insurance claims outstanding with the Council's insurers. Transfers between the Insurance Provision and the Insurance Reserve are made in order to provide adequate funding for the outstanding claims liability notified by the insurance company.

The insurance reserve is used to fund losses for which the Council does not carry insurance cover, fluctuations in insurance premiums and corporate risk management strategy implementation.

Business Rates Retention

The Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced a business rates retention scheme that enables local authorities to retain a proportion of the business rates generated in their area. The new arrangements for the retention of business rates came into effect on 1st April 2013.

The provision for Business Rates appeals reflects the estimate of the future cost of reductions in rateable values arising from outstanding and potential appeals submitted under the Valuation Office Agency's Check, Challenge, Appeal (CCA) process. Since the introduction of CCA, the volume of appeals has reduced compared with previous rating lists due to the more structured evidential requirements and staged approach to challenging assessments.

Given the complexity of the appeals process and the potential for backdated adjustments, the final liability may differ from the amount provided. The provision will continue to be reviewed annually to reflect emerging information and developments in outstanding cases.

Legal Planning Appeals

The legal planning appeal provision was established to fund the costs arising from planning appeals against the Council by third parties.

23. UNUSABLE RESERVES

The Council keeps a number of reserves on the Balance Sheet which do not represent usable resources for the Council as they are required to be held for statutory reasons, or to comply with proper accounting.

Reserve	31 st March 2026 £000	31 st March 2025 £000	Purpose of Reserve
Revaluation Reserve	7,251	5,558	Store of gains on revaluation of non-current assets not yet realised through sales.
Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve	(896)	(856)	Store of gains and losses arising from changes in the fair value of Available-for-Sale financial assets not yet realised through sales.
Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account	(539)	(492)	Store of gains and losses arising from changes in the fair value of pooled investment funds since 1 st April 2018
Capital Adjustment Account	20,128	18,809	Store of capital resources set aside to meet past expenditure.
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	212	(177)	Balancing account to allow for differences in statutory requirements and proper accounting practices for council tax surpluses/deficits.
Pensions Reserve	(12,174)	(3,093)	Balancing account to allow inclusion of Pension Liability in the Balance Sheet.
Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	1,353	1,387	Holds the gains recognised on the disposal of non-current assets but for which cash settlement has yet to take place.
Accumulated Absences Account	(81)	(59)	Balancing account to allow for differences in statutory requirements and proper accounting practices for staff leave and additional hours not taken at the year end.
Total Unusable Reserves	15,254	21,077	

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its property, plant and equipment. The balance is reduced when assets with accumulated gains are:

- re-valued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost.
- used in the provision of services and the gains are consumed through depreciation.
- disposed of and the gains are realised.

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

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	5,558	5,211
Upward revaluation of assets	1,864	503
Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on the Provision of Services	(42)	(31)
Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation written off to Capital Adjustment Account	(129)	(125)
Balance at 31st March	7,251	5,558

Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve

The Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve contains gains arising from increases in the value of investments that have quoted market prices or otherwise do not have fixed or determinable payments. The balance is reduced when investments with accumulated gains are revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost, or when the investments are disposed of and the gains realised.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	(856)	(270)
Downward revaluation of investments	(40)	(586)
Balance at 31st March	(896)	(856)

Pooled Investment Funds Adjustment Account

This reserve contains gains and losses on pooled funds arising from changes in their fair value from 1st April 2018. Such changes are initially charged to the surplus or deficit in the provision of services but reversed out to this reserve by a statutory override in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

	2025/26 £000	2024/245 £000
Balance at 1st April	(492)	(488)
Downwards revaluation of investments	(47)	(107)
Upward revaluation of investments	-	103
Balance at 31st March	(539)	(492)

Capital Adjustment Account

The Capital Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for the consumption of non-current assets and for financing the acquisition, construction or additions to those assets under statutory provisions. The account is debited with the cost of acquisition, construction or subsequent costs as depreciation, impairment losses and amortisations are charged to the CIES (with reconciling postings from the Revaluation Reserve to convert current and fair value figures to a historical cost basis). The account is credited with amounts set aside by the Council as finance for the costs of acquisition, construction and subsequent costs.

The account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties. The account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property Plant and Equipment before 1st April 2007, the date that the Revaluation Reserve was created to hold such gains. Note 8 provides details of the source of all the transactions posted to the account apart from those involving the Revaluation Reserve.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	18,809	17,814
Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to CIES:		
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current Assets	(533)	(361)
Revaluation losses on Property Plant & Equipment	(60)	-
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(2)	(4)
Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	(1,666)	(2,225)
Amounts of Non-current Assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to CIES	(202)	(1,515)
Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	129	125
Net written out amount of the cost of Non-current Assets consumed in year	(2,334)	(3,980)
Capital financing applied in the year:		
Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	668	1,413
Capital grants and contributions credited to CIES that have been applied to capital financing	2,292	2,131
Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	635	535
Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund	99	56
Donated Asset (Leased)	-	62
Capital expenditure charges against the General Fund	120	372
Movements in the market value of Investment Properties debited or credited to CIES	(161)	405
Rounding	-	1
Financing and movement in the market value of Investment properties in year	3,653	4,975
Balance at 31st March	20,128	18,809

Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of council tax income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Account (CIES) as it falls due from council taxpayers, compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	(177)	(502)
Amount by which council tax income credited to the CIES is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	389	325
Balance at 31st March	212	(177)

Pension Reserve

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

However, statutory arrangements require benefits earned to be financed as the Council makes employer's contributions to pension funds, or eventually pays any pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the benefits earned by past and current employees and the resources the Council has set aside to meet them. The statutory arrangements will ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid. Further information is shown within note 36 on page 78.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	(3,093)	(19,804)
Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability	(12,299)	15,739
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits charged or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	459	(1,689)
Employers' pension contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	2,759	2,661
Balance at 31st March	(12,174)	(3,093)

Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve

This comprises capital receipts receivable in future years, for example from finance leases and mortgage repayments, which are not usable until they are received.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	1,387	35
Transfer of deferred sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	200	1,515
Transfer to the Capital Receipts Reserve upon receipt of cash	(234)	(163)
Balance at 31st March	1,353	1,387

Accumulated Absences Account

This account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund balance from accruing for leave earned but not taken. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the general Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the account. During 2025/26 six members of staff transferred back to the Council from Publica Group (Support) Limited.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	(59)	(8)
Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	59	8
Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	(81)	(59)
Balance at 31st March	(81)	(59)

24. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – NON-CASH ITEMS INCLUDED IN SURPLUS OR DEFICIT ON THE PROVISION OF SERVICES

The cash flows from operating activities include the following items:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Interest received	(855)	(1,046)
Interest paid	21	25

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

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Depreciation	(533)	(361)
Impairment and downward valuations	(59)	-
Amortisation	(2)	(4)
Movement in bad debt provision	165	165
Increase (-) / decrease in creditors	(954)	(401)
Increase / decrease (-) in debtors	4,217	2,964
Increase / decrease (-) in inventories	61	15
Movement in pension liability	1,742	(656)
Carrying amount of non-current assets and assets held for sale sold or derecognised	(2)	-
Other non cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services	2	241
	4,637	1,963

The surplus on the provision of services has been adjusted for the following financing activities:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Proceeds from the sale of PPE, investment property and intangible assets	644	371

25. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – INVESTING ACTIVITIES

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	2,422	2,320
Purchase of Investments	134,765	82,080
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(878)	(534)
Proceeds from the sale of short and long term investments	(135,765)	(82,080)
Other receipts from Investing activities	162	(247)
Net cash (inflows) / outflows from investing activities	706	1,539

26. CASH FLOW STATEMENT – FINANCING ACTIVITIES

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Other (receipts) / payments for financing activities	1,091	1,033
Net cash flows from financing activities	1,091	1,033

27. TRADING OPERATIONS & AGENCY SERVICES

The Council has the following trading activity, the deficit of which is included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. An analysis of the trading activities is as follows:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Car Parking Expenditure	233	215
Car Parking Income	(215)	(208)
Net Deficit	18	7

The Council own a number of car parks within the district where a charge for parking is made. Car park trading operations are included within the Finance section on the face of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Agency Services

The Council did not act as an agent to the government during 2024/25 or 2025/26.

28. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

In 2025/26 the Council paid £363,626 (2024/25 £335,340) in allowances and expenses to 38 members. The expenditure reflects members' allowances approved by Council for 2025/26, the approved budget was for 38 members and there were no vacancies during the financial year. Full details of the Members Allowances scheme for 2025/26 can be found on the Councils website.

29. TERMINATION BENEFITS

The council terminated the contracts of 0 employees in 2025/26 (4 in 2024/25). Total costs incurred were £0 (£62,655 in 2024/25), of which £0 (£38,355 in 2024/25) related to early retirement costs and £0 (£24,300 in 2024/25) related to redundancy payments - see Note 30 for the total cost per band.

30. OFFICERS' REMUNERATION

Remuneration disclosures for Senior Officers whose salary is less than £150,000 but equal to or more than £50,000 per year:

Post Title	2025/26							Total Remuneration including pension contributions £
	Salary including Fees and Allowances	Expense Allowances	Compensation for loss of office	Benefits-in-kind	Total Remuneration excluding pension contributions	Pension contributions		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Chief Executive	126,382	1,826	-	-	128,208	24,393	152,601	d
Director of Finance & Resources	104,420	998	-	-	105,418	21,615	127,033	
Director of Communities & Place	101,076	302	-	-	101,378	18,933	120,311	f
Interim Head of Legal Services (April - May)	9,378	264	-	-	9,642	1,941	11,583	c
Head of Governance & Legal Services	74,451	284	-	-	74,735	15,380	90,115	g
Interim Monitoring Officer (April - June)	15,857	41	-	-	15,898	3,283	19,181	e
	431,564	3,715	-	-	435,279	85,545	520,824	
2024/25								
Chief Executive	116,696	2,075	-	-	118,772	22,408	141,179	
Director of Finance and Resources	99,916	574	-	-	100,489	19,529	120,018	
Monitoring Officer (April to June)	40,766	184	13,800	-	54,749	7,896	62,645	
Director of Communities and Place (November to March)	40,041	780	-	-	40,822	8,156	48,977	f
Interim Head of Legal Services	71,198	627	-	-	71,825	14,738	86,562	c
Interim Monitoring Officer (July to March)	26,890	-	-	-	26,890	5,566	32,456	e
	395,506	4,240	13,800	-	413,546	78,292	491,838	

Notes:

- For the purposes of this disclosure, 'Senior Officer' means Chief Executive, their direct reports and statutory officers whose annual salary is between £50,000 and £150,000.
- The Council does not operate a Performance Pay System and does not pay bonuses to any member of staff.
- The Interim Head of Legal Services is directly employed through FODDC and shared with Cotswold and West Oxfordshire District Councils from the 1st April 2025 to 18th May 2025.
- The Chief Executive was appointed as the Returning Officer for the District on the 24th October 2024. The 2025/26 figures include remuneration (£7,164) for this additional role. This has no impact on the primary statements including the Balance Sheet and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.
- Mrs. Julie Jones was appointed interim MO from 1st July 2024 at the Full Council meeting on held on 25th July 2024 until the 1st July 2025.
- New post of Director of Communities and Place from 1st November 2024.
- A new Head of Governance & Legal Services was appointed 19th May 2025.

The number of other employees whose remuneration, excluding employer's pension contributions was £50,000 or more in bands of £5,000 was:

Remuneration Band	No. of Employees	
	2025/26	2024/25
£50,000 - £54,999	7	7
£55,000 - £59,999	4	1
£60,000 - £64,999	1	3
£65,000 - £69,999	3	1
£70,000 - £74,999	1	-
£75,000 - £79,999	1	-
£80,000 - £84,999	-	2
£85,000 - £89,999	1	-
£90,000 - £94,999	-	-
£95,000 - £99,999	-	-
£100,000 - £104,999	-	-
£105,000 - £109,999	1	-
Total:	19	14

The 2025/26 figures recognise the transfer of staff to the Council from Publica Group (Support) Ltd.

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

Exit package cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band		Total cost of exit packages in each band £	
	2025/26	2024/25	2025/26	2024/25	2025/26	2024/25	2025/26	2024/25
£0 - £20,000	-	-	-	3.00	-	3.00	-	27,765.44
£20,001 - £40,000	-	-	-	1.00	-	1.00	-	34,889.12
Total	-	-	-	4.00	-	4.00	-	62,654.56

31. EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

The total audit fees payable to the Council's external auditor in 2025/26 were £208,362, (£249,180 in 2024/25), made up as follows:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Fees payable with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor as set by PSAA (Bishop Fleming LLP)	160	155
Audit Fee Variations 2023/24 (Bishop Fleming LLP)	-	16
Audit Fee Variations 2024/25 (Bishop Fleming LLP)	14	-
2022/23 Certification of grant claims carried out by KPMG.	-	16
2023/24 Certification of grant claims carried out by KPMG	(8)	16
2024/25 Certification of grant claims carried out by KPMG	(13)	-
Audit Fee Variation IAS19 carried out by KPMG	22	-
Fees payable for the certification of grant claims and returns. (KPMG)	33	46
	208	249

32. GRANT INCOME

The Council credited the following grants, contributions and donations to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Credited to Taxation and Non Specific Grant Income:		
Revenue Support Grant	210	191
New Homes Bonus	443	556
Transparency	-	8
S31 Grant	2,791	2,994
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-	170
NI Reimbursement Grant	97	-
Funding Guarantee	239	429
Recovery Grant	136	-
Services Grant	-	18
Levy Account Surplus Grant	22	-
	3,938	4,366
Credited to Services:		
Housing Benefit Grant	12,064	14,378
Disabled Facilities Grant	-	862
NNDR Administration	121	121
Council Tax Administration Subsidy	-	5
DWP Additional Grants	35	49
Discretionary Housing Grants	72	72
Shared Prosperity Funding	129	480
Other Government Grants	745	880
Capital Grants & Contributions	2,427	2,190
Contributions from County Council	227	73
Total	19,758	23,476

The council has received the following grants and contributions that have yet to be recognised as income, as they have conditions attached to them which have yet to be met. The balances at the year-end are as follows:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Grants Receipts in Advance (Capital Grants)		
Disabled Facilities Grant	28	28
Local Authorities Housing Fund – Tranch 1 Funding	10	97
Department for Transport Electric Charger Grant	75	150
Total Grants Receipts in Advance (Capital Grants)	113	275

33. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

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

Central Government

Central Government has significant influence over the general operations of the Council; it is responsible for providing the statutory framework within which the Council operates, providing the majority of its funding in the form of grants and prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (e.g., council tax bills, housing benefits). Grants received from government departments are shown in note 32.

Members

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2025/26 is shown in note 28. During 2025/26 works and services to the value of £137,670 were commissioned from organisations in which 14 members had an interest, grants totalling £400,226 were paid to voluntary organisations in which 13 members had an interest. In all instances, contracts were awarded in accordance with the Council's standing orders and grants were made with proper consideration of declarations of interest. The relevant members did not take part in any discussion or decision relating to the grants. Details of these transactions are recorded in the Register of Members' Interests, open to public inspection at the council offices during office hours.

Officers

During 25/26 works and services to the value of £6,285,586 were commissioned from organisations in which 3 members of staff had an interest. Grants totalling £13,300 were paid to voluntary organisations in which 1 member of staff had an interest.

Other public bodies (subject to common control by central government)

The Council collects precepts on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Town and Parish Councils within the district's area. Precepts for the County and Police and Crime Commissioner are shown in the notes to the Collection Fund.

6 members of the District Council have declared an interest in Gloucestershire County Council, 4 of whom are elected members. 13 members of the District Council are also members of Town or Parish Councils. 1 member is also the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner. Parish Precepts are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Council employees are eligible to be members of the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Gloucestershire County Council. The total employer's contributions paid into the Pension fund by the Council were £2,759,000 in respect of 2025/26 (£2,661,000 in 2024/25). Further detail can be found in note 36 on page 78.

South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)

Forest of Dean District Council is a Member of SWAP which is a company limited by guarantee and is wholly owned and controlled, as an in-house company, by the members and is a local authority controlled company for the purposes of Part V of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The liability of each member is limited to £1, being the amount that each member undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Company in the event of it being wound up while he is a member or within one year after he ceases to be a member.

Ubico Limited

Ubico Limited was set up on 1st April 2012, to deliver environmental services, and was jointly owned by Cheltenham Borough Council and Cotswold District Council. During 2015 and 2016, Forest of Dean District Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council joined the company as shareholders. During 2021/22 (November 2021) Gloucester City Council became an eighth shareholder within Ubico and all waste services were transferred. This Council now holds an equal 1/8th shareholding in the Company.

The company provides services to the shareholder Councils on a not-for-profit basis and therefore qualifies for the Teckal exemption (named after the EU case that established the principle). As a Teckal company, Ubico Limited must ensure that the percentage of work undertaken outside of the shareholder contracts is less than 20% of its total activity.

While the Council has a 1/8th shareholding in Ubico Limited, no Councillors of Forest of Dean District Council serve on the company's Board of Directors, the Council is not deemed to have significant influence over the company. The separate operating practices, management structure and majority-voting on the Ubico board do not constitute any means of joint-control over the company. The Council's interest is therefore classed as an investment in Ubico. On the 3rd August 2024, the Council transferred its waste collection contract previously fulfilled by Biffa Waste Services Ltd to Ubico. Staff employed by Biffa on the Forest of Dean contract transferred to Ubico on the same date.

Publica Group (Support) Limited

Publica Group (Support) Limited is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee with no share capital.

Forest of Dean District Council, along with West Oxfordshire District, Cotswold District and Cheltenham Borough Councils have jointly set up Publica Group (Support) Limited, a wholly owned company, limited by guarantee, operating with Mutual Trading Status to deliver services on behalf of the Council and services to other members Councils under contract.

Publica Group (Support) Limited is a Teckal company fulfilling the conditions set out in Regulation 12(4) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The Company is subject to management supervision by the Members. As such, the Company is a body governed by public law as defined in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. While Publica Group (Support) Limited works closely with the Council, the company has its own board of Directors, its own Management team, and operates independently from the Council.

During 2025/26 the Council purchased services from Publica Group (Support) Limited to the value of £4,023,705 (£6,045,043 in 24/25) and the company generated a surplus for the year of £92,979 (£211,617 for 2024/25). Whilst the Council is a partner, the Council's share of Publica's net assets of £141,334 have not been included or consolidated into Group accounts, as they are not deemed material to the accounts.

A review of Publica Group (Support) Limited was commissioned by the four partner Councils to review the effectiveness of Publica and whether certain services would be better placed back with the Councils. A decision was made by each Council to bring back services into the Council and this programme began in early 2024. On the 1st November 2024, 68 employees were transferred from Publica Group (Support) Limited back to the Council. This included services that were delivered directly for individual Councils such as Democratic Services, Election Services, Planning, Building Control and some support services such as financial management. The transfer also included the deputy Monitoring Officer and deputy S151 Officer back into direct employment by the Council. A 2nd phase was completed where a further 6 employees were transferred back to the Council on 1st July 2025. This included Property and Estates, Project management, Waste and Recycling and HR Business Partners.

34. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND CAPITAL FINANCING

The total amount of capital expenditure incurred in the year is shown in the table below (including the value of assets acquired under finance leases), together with the resources that have been used to finance it. Where capital expenditure is to be financed in future years by charges to revenue as the assets are used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed. The CFR is analysed in the final part of this note.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	525	-
<i>Capital Investment:</i>		
Property Plant and Equipment	2,049	2,226
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	1,666	2,225
Right of Use Assets	-	581
Capital Receipts	(668)	(1,413)
Government grants and other contributions	(2,927)	(2,666)
<i>Sums set aside from revenue:</i>		
Direct revenue contributions	(120)	(372)
Minimum Revenue Provision	(99)	(56)
Closing Capital Financing Requirement	426	525
<i>Explanation of movements in year:</i>		
Increase in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by government financial assistance)	-	-
Assets acquired under finance leases	426	525
Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	426	525

Commitments under capital contracts at 31st March 2026, the council was committed to completing the schemes within its capital programme for 2025/26. A total of £348,467 had not been spent but was contractually committed at 31st March 2026 (£303,847 at 31st March 2025).

35. ASSETS HELD UNDER LEASES

In 2024/25 the council applied IFRS16 Leases as required by the Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom. The main impact of the new requirement is that for arrangements previously accounted for as operating leases (i.e., without recognising the leased property as an asset and future rents as a liability) a right of use asset and a lease liability are to be brought onto the balance sheet as at 1st April 2024. Leases for items of low value and short-term leases are exempt from the new arrangements.

Council as Lessee

Right of Use Assets

	Other Land & Buildings £000
Balance at 1st April	581
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the surplus/ (deficit on the provision of services	(59)
Depreciation & Amortisation	(103)
Balance at 31st March	419

Transactions under leases

The authority incurred the following expenses and cash flows in relation to leases:

	2025/26 £000
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	
Interest expense on lease liabilities	21
Expense relating to short term leases	-
Expense relating to exempt leases of low value items	-
Cash Flow Statement	
Minimum lease payments	21

The future minimum lease payments for Right of Use assets in future years are:

	2025/26 £000
Property, Plant & Equipment	
Not later than 1 year	120
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	280
Later than 5 years	-
	400

Operating Leases

The Council has acquired a number of assets by entering into operating leases. In addition, the Council has entered into long-term agreements with a number of local schools to operate leisure facilities in premises owned by the schools, outside of the school opening hours. These agreements have been reviewed, and it has been determined these are effectively operating leases although no rental payments are made; instead the Council contributes to the running costs of the premises. For accounting purposes, it has been decided to disclose a notional payment of £1 per year per leisure centre.

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

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Property, Plant & Equipment		
Not later than 1 year	11	11
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	30	33
Later than 5 years	49	43
	90	87

The expenditure charged to all service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement during the year in relation to the Property, Plant & Equipment leases was £20,279 (£24,311 2024/25).

Council as Lessor

Finance Leases

The Council has leased a number of vehicles to Ubico Limited.

The Council has a gross investment in the lease, made up of the minimum lease payments expected to be received over the remaining term and the residual value anticipated for the property when the lease comes to an end. The minimum lease payments comprise settlement of the long-term debtor for the interest in the vehicles acquired by the lessee and finance income that will be earned by the Council in future years whilst the debtor remains outstanding. The gross investment is made up of the following amounts.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Finance lease debtor (net present value of minimum lease payments):		
Current – payments due within 1 year	215	201
Non-current – payments due after 1 year	938	896
Unearned finance income	157	160
Gross investment in the lease	1,310	1,257

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

	Gross Investment in the Lease		Minimum Lease Payments	
	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Not later than 1 year	265	248	215	201
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	921	793	820	689
Later than 5 years	124	216	118	207
	1,310	1,257	1,153	1,097

The Council has not set-aside an allowance for uncollectable debts in relation to its finance leases. Any outstanding debts would be accounted for within the Sundry Debtors bad debt.

Operating Leases

The Council owns a number of properties it leases to other organisations under operating leases. Most of the assets are held as Investment Properties. The future minimum lease payments receivable under non-cancellable leases in future years are:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Not later than 1 year	650	539
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	1,762	1,314
Later than 5 years	837	824
	3,249	2,677

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

36. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEMES

Participation in the pension scheme

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

The Council is a member of the Gloucestershire County Council Pension Fund, for which Gloucestershire County Council is the administering authority. It is contracted out of the State Second Pension. The scheme is a defined benefit statutory scheme that is administered in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended). This means that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pensions' liabilities with investment assets.

The principal risks to the authority of the pension scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e., large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund the amounts required by statute, as described in the accounting policies note 1.3 on page 23.

Publica Group (Support) Limited

During 2017/18 the Council transferred the majority of its staff under TUPE legislation to Publica Group (Support) Limited, a wholly owned local authority company, limited by guarantee, operating with Mutual Trading Status to deliver services on behalf of the Council. The pension fund disclosure notes on the following pages include the staff transferred to Publica. All staff are pooled as the Council continues to underwrite the pension liabilities on the whole scheme. On the 1st November 2024 68 Publica employees transferred back to the Council and have been enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme. In July 2025, a further 6 transferred back to the council and have enrolled into the scheme.

2023/24 to 2025/26 Up-Front Payment of Pension Scheme Deficit Contributions

In 2023/24 the Council made an up-front payment of the LGPS deficit contributions for the three years 2023/24 to 2025/26 totalling £4.895 million. The up-front payment took advantage of the independent actuary's calculation of the return these contributions could achieve once invested by the Pension Fund.

Actual payments made in 2025/26 were £2.759 million, which included the 2025/26 element of the £4.895 million up-front payment.

The discount calculated by the actuary for making the up-front payment rather than the normal method of monthly payments in arrears over the three-year period was £0.301 million, reducing total payments from £5.196 million to £4.895 million. The equivalent discounted annual Lump sums certified across the 3 years, are calculated to be, as follows:

- £1.791 million relating to 2023/24
- £1.628 million relating to 2024/25
- £1.476 million relating to 2025/26

The return was judged to be far greater than could have been achieved by investing the amounts as part of the Council's treasury management strategy, so the decision represented good value for money for the Council.

Transactions relating to post-employment benefits

The Council recognises the costs of retirement benefits in the Net Cost of Services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge required to be made against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of retirement benefits is reversed out of the General Fund in the Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS). The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) and the General Fund Balance via the MIRS during the year:

Pension Assets and Liabilities recognised in the Balance Sheet

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

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES):		
Services Cost comprising:		
Current service cost	(837)	(860)
Past service costs/gain	-	(31)
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure:		
Net interest expense	1,296	(798)
Total post-employment benefit charged to Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Service	459	(1,689)
Other post-employment benefit charged to CIES:		
Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:		
Changes in financial assumptions	1,799	10,448
Changes in demographic assumptions	991	130
Other experience	(6,249)	781
Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	3,668	(288)
Changes in the effect of the asset ceiling	(12,508)	4,668
Total remeasurements recognised in other Comprehensive Income	(12,299)	15,739
Total post-employment benefit charged to CIES	(11,840)	14,050
Movement in Reserves Statement:		
Reversal of net charges made to Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(459)	1,689
Actual amount charged against General Fund Balance for pensions in the year		
Employers' contributions payable to scheme	2,759	2,661

Defined benefit obligation before asset ceiling:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(65,756)	(63,011)
Fair value of plan assets	91,346	86,746
Present value of unfunded obligations	(1,521)	(1,617)
Net asset/(liability) arising from defined benefit obligation	24,069	22,118

Split by funding before asset ceiling:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Net Asset/(Liability) - Funded	25,590	23,735
Net Asset/(Liability) - Unfunded	(1,521)	(1,617)
Net asset/(liability) arising from defined benefit obligation	24,069	22,118

Accounting standards IAS19 and IFRIC 14 require that subject to certain conditions, 'the surplus should be recognised as an asset on the employer's Balance Sheet' but only to the extent that an employer can gain an economic benefit from it.

IFRIC 14 stipulates that a 'Minimum Funding Requirement' may limit the ability of the entity to reduce future contributions. In effect it requires employers to establish if they are subject to a minimum funding requirement and if so carry out a calculation to determine the 'cap' on the amount that can be recognised.

To calculate the 'Cap' an actuarial calculation has been carried out of 'the net present value of future service costs less net present value of future contributions, in perpetuity', based on the IAS19 Results Schedule as at 31 March 2026 for the Council.

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Net Asset/(Liability) - unadjusted	25,590	23,735
Effect of the asset ceiling	(36,243)	(23,735)
Net Asset/(Liability)	(10,653)	-

Split by funding after asset ceiling:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Net Asset/(Liability) - Funded	(10,653)	-
Net Asset/(Liability) - Unfunded	(1,521)	(1,617)
Net asset/(liability) arising from defined benefit obligation	(12,174)	(1,617)

Reconciliation of present value of the scheme liabilities (defined benefit obligations)

	Funded Liabilities Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Balance at 1st April	(64,628)	(74,966)
Current service cost	(837)	(860)
Past Service Costs	-	(31)
Interest cost	(3,676)	(3,536)
Contributions by scheme participants	(382)	(285)
Re-measurement gain/(loss):		
Arising from changes in financial assumptions	1,799	10,448
Arising from changes in demographic assumptions	991	130
Other experience	(4,292)	781
Benefits paid	3,591	3,533
Unfunded benefits paid	157	158
Balance 31st March	(67,277)	(64,628)
Present value of Funded liabilities	(65,756)	(63,011)
Present value of Unfunded liabilities	(1,521)	(1,617)
Balance 31st March	(67,277)	(64,628)

Reconciliation of movements in the fair value of the scheme (Plan) assets:

	Funded Assets Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Opening fair value of scheme assets	86,746	85,368
Interest income	4,972	4,039
Re-measurement gain/(loss):		
Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)	3,668	(288)
Other Experience	(1,957)	-
Cashflows		
Contribution by employees into the scheme	382	285
Contribution by employer	1,126	875
Contributions by employer in respect of unfunded benefits	157	158
Unfunded benefits paid	(157)	(158)
Benefits paid	(3,591)	(3,533)
Closing fair value of scheme assets as at 31st March	91,346	86,746

Basis for estimating assets and liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent upon assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc.

The Gloucestershire County Council pension fund liabilities have been assessed by Hymans Robertson LLP, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the fund being based on a new roll forward from the 2025 funding valuation. The significant assumptions made in their calculations have been:

	Local Government Pension Scheme	
	2025/26	2024/25
Mortality assumptions:		
Longevity at 65 for current pensioners		
Men	22.4 years	21.5 years
Women	24.8 years	24.0 years
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners*		
Men	23.1 years	22.4 years
Women	26.3 years	25.7 years
Rate of inflation/pension increase (CPI)	3.00%	2.80%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.50%	3.30%
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	6.20%	5.80%

* Figures assume members aged 45 as at the last formal valuation date.

Local Government Pension scheme assets at 31st March comprised:

Asset Category	Fair Value of Scheme Assets 2025/26			Fair Value of Scheme Assets 2024/25		
	Quoted prices in active markets	Quoted prices not in active markets	Total	Quoted prices in active markets	Quoted prices not in active markets	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Equity Securities:						
Consumer	-	-	-	-	-	-
Manufacturing	-	-	-	-	-	-
Energy & Utilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Financial institutions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health & Care	-	-	-	-	-	-
Information Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Securities:						
Corporate Bonds - investment grade	-	-	-	-	-	-
Corporate Bonds - non investment grade	-	-	-	-	-	-
UK Government	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Private equity:						
All	-	2,613.3	2,613.3	-	2,483.7	2,483.7
Real Estate:						
UK Property	1,238.5	4,524.3	5,762.8	2,884.6	2,366.4	5,251.0
Overseas property	-	1,475.1	1,475.1	-	1,615.0	1,615.0
Investment Funds and Unit Trusts:						
Equities	-	55,510.5	55,510.5	-	52,773.4	52,773.4
Bonds	6,396.3	8,986.4	15,382.7	6,244.3	8,765.5	15,009.8
Infrastructure	-	4,589.5	4,589.5	-	4,711.6	4,711.6
Other	-	3,605.8	3,605.8	-	3,696.4	3,696.4
Derivatives:						
Foreign Exchange	399.3	-	399.3	64.0	-	64.0
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cash & Cash equivalents:						
All	2,007.0	-	2,007.0	1,141.1	-	1,141.1
Totals	10,041.1	81,304.9	91,346.0	10,334.0	76,412.0	86,746.0

The Local Government Pension Scheme's assets consist of the following categories by proportion of the total assets held:

	2025/26 £000	2024/25 £000
Equity Investments	64	64
Bonds	17	17
Property	8	8
Cash	2	1
Other	9	10
	100	100

Commutation

An allowance is included for members of the pension fund retiring in the future retirements to elect to take 50% of the maximum additional tax-free cash up to HMRC limits.

Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP) Equalisation

The impact of full GMP indexation has been allowed for in the calculation of the latest funding valuation results. The funding valuation results are used as the starting point for the accounting roll forward calculations and therefore an allowance for full GMP indexation has already been included in the accounting disclosure.

McCloud/Sargeant treatment

An allowance has been made for the McCloud judgement.

Goodwin treatment

Work undertaken to assess the potential impact of this ruling indicates that any such impact would be very small for a typical fund. As such no allowance has been made.

Other court cases

We are also aware of the following court cases, which may also impact LGPS benefits in the future:

- Walker;
- O'Brien;

It is our understanding these are unlikely to be significant judgements in terms of impact on the pension obligations of a typical employer. As a result, and until further guidance is released from the relevant governing bodies in the LGPS, we have not made any allowance for the potential remedies to these judgements.

Local Government Devolution

In December 2024, the UK Government published the English Devolution White Paper, outlining significant proposals aimed at expanding the powers of regional mayors, reorganising local government structures, and providing financial incentives to support local economies.

No allowance has been made for the potential impact to the Employer of these proposals within this Results Schedule. Any implications will be assessed and incorporated in future valuations and financial statements as more details become available.

Sensitivity analysis

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actuarial assumptions set out in the tables above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonably possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the 31st March 2026, and assumes for each change that the assumption analysed changes whilst all other assumptions remain constant. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis did not change from those used in the previous financial year.

Change in assumptions at 31 March 2026:	Approximate % increase to Defined Benefit Obligation	Approximate monetary amount (£000)
0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate	1%	871
1 year increase in member life expectancy	4%	2,691
0.1% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	0%	44
Increase/Revaluation Rate (CPI)	1%	826

Impact on the Council's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employer's contributions at as constant a rate as possible. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis, with the most recent triennial valuation having taken place on 31st March 2025. The Council is anticipated to pay primary employers contributions of approximately £1,830k for the period 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027.

37. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

Two Rivers Housing

The Council transferred its housing stock to Two Rivers Housing on 31st March 2003. As part of the transfer arrangements the Council provided a warranty to Two Rivers Housing and its funders covering future liabilities or claims that may occur in respect of land transferred to them. The warranty covers potential liabilities such as contamination caused by previous land use which could give rise to a potential risk to the occupants of houses built on the land.

The Council decided to self-insure the liability instead of paying for insurance cover following an environmental study that concluded that the risk of contamination of the land is very low. These arrangements will be kept under review in 2026/27.

THE COLLECTION FUND - INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

This account reflects the statutory requirement for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. It shows the transactions in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax and how these have been distributed to the Government, major preceptors and the General Fund.

2024/25			Note	2025/26		
Council Tax	NDR	Total		Council Tax	NDR	Total
£000	£000	£000		£000	£000	£000
			<u>INCOME</u>			
70,441	-	70,441	Council Tax Receivable	75,135	-	75,135
-	15,089	15,089	Non-Domestic Rates Receivable	-	17,015	17,015
-	1,593	1,593	Transitional Protection Payments	-	570	570
-	1,863	1,863	Contribution towards previous year's deficit	-	956	956
70,441	18,545	88,986	Total Income	75,135	18,541	93,676
			<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
69,226	-	69,226	Precepts & Demands from major preceptors and the Authority - Council Tax	73,982	-	73,982
			Non-Domestic Rates			
-	8,248	8,248	Shares paid to county council and the billing authority	-	8,679	8,679
-	8,248	8,248	Payment of central share to government	-	8,679	8,679
-	6	6	Interest charged to the Collection Fund	-	19	19
-	121	121	Charge payable to General Fund for Costs of Collection	-	121	121
-	439	439	Other transfers to General Fund per the NDR regulations	-	404	404
(15)	-	(15)	Impairment of debts for Council Tax			
			Increase/(Reduction) in provision	142	55	197
-	657	657	Impairment of debts/appeals for non-domestic rates			
			Increase/(Reduction) in provision	-	(508)	-508
1,275	-	1,275	Contribution towards previous year's surplus	1,348	-	1,348
70,486	17,719	88,205	Total Expenditure	75,472	17,449	92,921
(45)	826	781	Surplus / (Deficit) for the Year	(337)	1,092	755
2,075	(2,044)	31	Balance of fund at 1st April	2,030	(1,218)	812
2,030	(1,218)	812	Balance of fund at 31st March	1,693	(126)	1,567

NOTES TO THE COLLECTION FUND

1. COUNCIL TAX

Council Tax is levied as an amount per property. Each property is allocated to a tax band depending on its assessed value, with Z being the lowest value and H being the highest. For the purposes of creating a tax base, each band is defined as a proportion of a band D property. For example, a band B property is defined as 7/9ths of a band D property.

The tax base is calculated in terms of band D equivalent properties and reflects a projected collection rate (98.75%) which anticipates changes during the year arising from successful appeals against valuation banding, new properties, demolition, disabled persons relief and exemptions. From 1st April 2025 a premium of up to 100% additional council tax on second homes was introduced so an allowance for this has been made when calculating the tax base.

The tax rate, expressed as an amount per band D property, is calculated by aggregating demands on the Collection Fund from Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner and the various Parish Councils throughout the district and dividing it by the tax base.

The tax base for 2025/26 was as follows:

Band	Number of chargeable dwellings	Proportion to Band D	Band D equivalent	Tax base
Z	12.86	5/9	7.15	7.06
A	4,410.30	6/9	2,940.20	2,903.45
B	8,230.79	7/9	6,401.73	6,321.71
C	7,938.39	8/9	7,056.35	6,968.14
D	5,555.30	1	5,555.30	5,485.86
E	4,330.47	11/9	5,292.80	5,226.63
F	2,060.47	13/9	2,976.24	2,939.04
G	986.82	15/9	1,644.71	1,624.15
H	73.07	2	146.14	144.31
Armed Forces Class O contribution in lieu of council tax			170.33	170.33
Council Tax base at 31st March 2026			32,190.94	31,790.68
Council tax collectable (excluding Parish Precepts)				£70,374,400
Parish Precepts collectable				£3,598,575
Total tax collectable				£73,972,975
Band D tax for 2025/26 (excluding Parish Precepts)				£2,213.68

2. PRECEPTS AND DEMANDS

Significant precepts on the fund for 2025/26 were as follows:

	Precept £000	Surplus £000	Total £000
Gloucestershire County Council	53,397	971	54,368
Gloucestershire Police & Crime Commissioner	10,239	187	10,426
Forest of Dean District Council and Parishes	10,337	190	10,527
Special Precepts	9	-	9
	73,982	1,348	75,330

3. BUSINESS RATES

Under the arrangements for uniform business rates, the Council collects non-domestic rates for its area based on local rateable values multiplied by a uniform rate set by the government. Certain reliefs are available, and the figure shown is net of these reliefs. Up until 2012/13 the total amount collectible for the year, less deductions for the cost of collection and bad and doubtful debts, was paid to a central pool (NNDR pool) managed by central government, which in turn paid back to authorities' general funds their share of the pool based on a standard amount per head.

From 1st April 2013 the Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced a business rates retention scheme that enables local authorities' general funds to retain a proportion of the business rates generated in their area, subject to their general funds paying a 'tariff' payment to the government if the amount exceeds a 'baseline funding' level or receiving of a 'top-up' if it is below the funding level.

District Councils such as Forest of Dean receive 40%, County Councils 10% and central government 50% of business rates collectible, with write offs, provision for impairment of debts and any surplus or deficit generated being shared in the same proportions. If growth exceeds a certain threshold, then the Council's general fund must pay a 'levy' to central government on the extra growth, or if the rates collectible fall below a certain amount the Council receives a 'safety net' payment from the government.

The Council is a member of the Gloucestershire Business Rates Pool, in which any levy payment or safety receipt is 'pooled' across several authorities. This enables each pool member to benefit from a lower levy rate payable should the growth in its business rates exceed its levy threshold, whilst receiving from the pool a safety net payment should its rates fall below its safety net threshold, contributed by the pool member.

In 2025/26 the authority benefited from a Pool distribution of £690,163 (£439,363 in 2024/25). In 2026/27 there is not going to be a Gloucestershire rates pool due to the Business Rates Reset.

The total non-domestic rateable value at 31st March 2026 was £51.68 million (£51.64 million at 31st March 2025) and the national non-domestic multipliers for 2025/26 were 55.5p (54.6p in 2024/25) (standard rate) and 49.9p (49.9p in 2024/25) (small business rate), resulting in income of £17.49 million in 2025/26 (£15.08 million in 2024/25).

4. FUND BALANCE

The fund balance for council tax is shared between the Council and its major precepting authorities (Gloucestershire County Council and the Gloucestershire Police & Crime Commissioner), in proportion to their precepts. The fund balance for non-domestic rates is shared between the Council, Gloucestershire County Council and central government, in the statutory proportions.

The respective authorities' share of the balance is as follows:

Council Tax

	FODDC share	County Council share	Police share	Central Government share	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 1st April	286	1,463	281	-	2,030
Increase (reduction) in the Year	(49)	(241)	(47)	-	(337)
Balance at 31st March	237	1,222	234	-	1,693

Business Rates

	FODDC share	County Council share	Police share	Central Government share	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Balance at 1st April	(487)	(122)	-	(609)	(1,218)
Increase (reduction) in the Year	437	109	-	546	1,092
Balance at 31st March	(50)	(13)	-	(63)	(126)

Collection Fund Total

Balance at 31st March	187	1,209	234	(63)	1,567
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GLOSSARY OF FINANCIAL TERMS

ACCOUNTING CODE OF PRACTICE

Although the preparation and control of accounting is regulated, there is no statutory basis for accounting entries. Instead, Local Authorities have to comply with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local authority accounting in the United Kingdom (The Code).

ACCOUNTING PERIOD

This is the length of time covered by the accounts. It is normally a period of 12 months commencing on 1 April. The end of the accounting period is the balance sheet date.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principles, bases, conventions, rules and practices applied by an organisation that specify how the effects of transactions and other events are to be reflected in its financial statements.

ACCOUNTS

A generic term for statements setting out details of income and expenditure or assets and liabilities or both, in a structured manner. Accounts may be categorised either by the type of transactions they record, e.g., revenue account, capital account or by the purpose they serve, e.g., management accounts, final accounts, balance sheets.

ACCRUAL

Sums included in the final accounts to cover income or expenditure attributable to the accounting period but for which payment has not been made/received at the balance sheet date.

ACTUAL

Actual, as opposed to budget, expenditure and income directly attributable to an accounting period.

ACTUARIAL BASIS

The estimation technique applied when estimating the liabilities to be recognised for defined benefit pension schemes in the financial statements of an organisation.

AMORTISATION

The depreciation of intangible assets.

AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

An audit is an examination by an independent expert of an organisation's financial affairs to check that the relevant legal obligations and codes of practice have been followed.

BALANCES

Working balances are reserves needed to finance expenditure in advance of income from debtors, precepts and grants. Any excess may be applied, at the discretion of the Council, to reduce future demands on the Collection Fund or to meet unexpected costs during the year. Balances on holding accounts and provisions are available to meet expenditure in future years without having adverse effect on revenue expenditure.

BILLING AUTHORITY

The authority that sets council tax and collects it from council taxpayers.

BUDGET

A financial plan that expresses an organisation's service delivery plans and capital programmes in monetary terms.

BUDGET STRATEGY

A document setting out how an organisation is going to meet its policies and priorities, taking into account the resources available to the organisation. This will include proposals for efficiency savings and possible service changes or reductions, which may free up resources for use on other policies or priorities.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

This is expenditure on items providing benefits to the organisation over more than one year, such as land, buildings or vehicles.

CAPITAL FINANCING

This describes the various sources of finance used to pay for capital expenditure. There are various options available and used by the Council: capital receipts, capital grants, capital contributions and revenue financing.

CAPITAL GRANTS

Grants received towards capital expenditure on a specific service or project.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME

This is a financial plan of the capital expenditure projects that the organisation intends to carry out over a specified time period.

CAPITAL RECEIPT

This is income resulting from the sale of assets such as land or property. The Government decides what proportion of each capital receipt can be used by the Council to finance new capital expenditure. Capital receipts cannot be used to fund revenue expenditure.

CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash in hand plus deposits in banks or building societies, repayable on demand or within 24 hours, and deposits maturing within 3 months of the date taken out.

CIPFA

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. This is the professional body for accountants working in local government and other public bodies. The Institute provides financial and statistical information services for local government and advises central Government and other bodies on local government and public finance matters.

COLLECTION FUND

This is a statutory fund kept separate from the main accounts of the Council. It records all income due from Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates and shows how that income was shared between central government, the County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner.

CONSISTENCY

One of the fundamental accounting concepts, it requires accountants to treat similar items of income and expenditure in the same way both within an accounting period and from one accounting period to the next.

CONTINGENT ASSET

An asset which exists at the balance sheet date where the outcome will be confirmed only on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events, for example a claim for compensation that a Council is pursuing through the due legal process, where the outcome will only be decided by the decision of the courts.

CONTINGENT LIABILITY

A liability which exists at the balance sheet date where the outcome will be confirmed only on the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events, for example, the default by a borrower on a loan from a third party for which the Council has given a guarantee.

COUNCIL TAX

A local tax levied on dwellings within the local authority area. The level of taxation is based on the capital value of the property, which is categorised into one of eight bands from A to H. There are a number of discounts available to households.

CREDITOR

Amounts owed by the Council for work done, goods received or services rendered within the accounting period, but for which payment was not made at the balance sheet date.

CURRENT ASSETS

Assets which can be expected to be consumed or realised during the next accounting period.

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Amounts which will become due or could be called upon during the next accounting period.

DEBTOR

An amount due to an organisation within the accounting period not received at the balance sheet date.

DEPRECIATION

A charge made to the revenue account each year that reflects the reduction in value of assets used to deliver services. This is the loss in value of an asset, owing to age, wear and tear, deterioration, or obsolescence.

EMPLOYEE COSTS

These include salaries, wages and employers' national insurance and pension contributions, together with training expenses and charges relating to the index-linking of pensions of former employees.

ESTIMATE

Original estimate: the estimate for the new year approved before the start of the financial year, usually at the previous November's price levels.

Revised estimate: the original estimate for the year updated by price changes since it was prepared and by supplementary estimates and virements.

FINAL ACCOUNTS

Accounts prepared for an accounting period, usually in a summarised form. They include a statement showing the net surplus (profit) or deficit (loss) on the provision of services and a balance sheet. They are produced as a record of stewardship for interested parties. Local authorities are required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to publish a Statement of Accounts at the end of each financial year.

FINANCE LEASE

A lease that transfers substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of a non-current asset to the lessee (the person or organisation leasing the asset).

GOVERNMENT GRANTS

Grants made by the Government towards either revenue or capital expenditure to help with the cost of providing services and capital projects. Some Government grants have restrictions on how they may be used, whilst others are general purpose.

IMPAIRMENT

Impairment of an asset is caused by a consumption of economic benefits (e.g., physical damage such as an office fire) or a deterioration in the quality of service provided by the asset (e.g., an industrial unit closing and becoming a storage facility), or by a general fall in prices of that particular asset or class of assets.

INDEXATION

Indexation adjusts the carrying amount of non-current assets to reflect changes in inflation or market conditions between professional valuations. It applies to fixed assets such as property, plant and equipment, not to current assets such as stock or receivables.

In practice, indexation ensures that public sector asset values in the UK remain aligned with current market and cost conditions within the balance sheet and financial statements.

INTEREST

An amount received or paid for the use of a sum of money when it is invested or borrowed.

INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL REPORTING STANDARDS

Provide the required accounting treatment and disclosure of transactions so that an organisation's financial statements present fairly the financial position of the organisation.

INVENTORIES

Items of raw materials and stores that the Council has bought to use on a continuing basis but has not yet used.

MATERIALITY

One of the main accounting concepts, it ensures that the statement of accounts includes all the transactions that, if omitted, would lead to a significant distortion of the financial position at the end of the accounting period.

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES

An NNDR rate (multiplier) is set annually by central government and is applied to the rateable value of a business to calculate the non-domestic rates collected by Billing Authorities. The rates collected are shared between central government, district and county councils in statutory proportions.

NON-CURRENT ASSET

Assets which can be expected to be of use or benefit to the Council for more than one accounting period.

OPERATING LEASE

A lease under which the ownership of the asset remains with the lessor (the person or organisation leasing the asset) and is equivalent to contract hiring.

PRECEPT

The levy made by a precepting authority (County Council, Police Authority, Parish Council) on the billing authority, requiring it to collect income from Council Taxpayers on their behalf.

PROVISION

A sum of money set aside in the accounts for liabilities or losses that are due but where the amount due or the timing of the payment is not known with certainty.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE

Expenditure on the day to day running costs of the Council such as wages and salaries, utility costs, repairs and maintenance.

REVENUE EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM CAPITAL UNDER STATUTE (REFCUS)

Expenditure which can by law be financed from capital resources (e.g., capital receipts) but which does not result in a non-current asset for the authority e.g., renovation grants.

REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT

A general grant paid by central Government to local authorities to provide the services that it is responsible for delivering.

TEMPORARY BORROWING

A sum of money borrowed for a period of less than one year.

VALUE FOR MONEY

An expression describing the benefit obtained (not just in financial terms) for a given input of money. The phrase is widely used within public bodies, but there are many difficulties in its use because value is a subjective measure and there are rarely supporting objective measures. The Council's external auditor is required to consider value for money with the three objectives of economy of input, efficiency of operation and effectiveness of output in service provision.

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025 – 2026

I. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Forest of Dean District Council is responsible for ensuring that:

- Its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards;
- Public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for;
- Public money is used economically, efficiently and effectively; and
- There is a sound system of governance, incorporating the system of internal control.

The Council has a Best Value duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

In discharging these responsibilities, the Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and including arrangements for the management of risk.

The Council has developed and approved a Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the core principles and sub-principles as set out in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)/Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)” (‘the Framework’). The Code of Corporate Governance was revised in 2026 to reflect the addendum to the Framework issued in May 2025.

In the addendum, CIPFA and Solace recommend that authorities adopt a local code of governance which sets out their governance arrangements, showing how governance principles are put into practice at their authority. The code should:

- clearly align to the principles in Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework,
- take account of the best value statutory guidance or other statutory requirements of the appropriate national government,
- be up-to-date and reviewed regularly to ensure it takes account of changes in the authority and its environment,
- identify what arrangements the authority has put in place to achieve each principle, so it is specific to the authority,
- include values and behaviours as well as processes, as these influence the authority’s culture,
- include how the code is reviewed and updated.
- In addition to this, CIPFA issued its “Statement on the Role of the Chief Finance Officer in Local Government (2015)”. The Annual Governance Statement (AGS) reflects compliance with this statement for reporting purposes.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, and culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled, including activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads its communities. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate, cost-effective services.

The system of internal control is a significant part of the governance framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to:

- Identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Council's policies, aims and objectives;
- Evaluate the likelihood of those risks occurring;
- Assess the impact should those risks occur; and
- Manage the risks efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework has been in place at Forest of Dean District Council for the year ended 31st March 2026 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Statement of Accounts.

The Annual Governance Statement illustrates how the Council's governance arrangements have continued to be adapted during 2025/2026.

During 2025-26, the residents of Forest of Dean have continued to face the challenges presented by the cost of living crisis. The Council has adapted the delivery of its services to meet the changing needs of the residents whilst coping with the financial challenges faced by all local authorities. In previous years, the Council has received single year settlements which restrict our ability to confidently plan for more than one year in advance. With Local Government Reorganisation planned for 1 April 2028, the Council has received a three-year funding (final) settlement on 9 February 2026, covering the financial years 2026/27 through to 2028/29. Year 1 and 2 of the settlement period apply to Forest of Dean District Council with Year 3 covering the new unitary council. This provides greater certainty on the budget position as we head towards LGR.

General and in particular wage inflation put additional pressure on the financial position of the council, however, the most significant challenge over the next two years will be to support the creation of new Unitary Council or Councils in Gloucestershire whilst ensuring we continue to deliver on our priorities for the residents of Forest of Dean.

3. THE GOVERNANCE ENVIRONMENT

The key elements of the Council's governance arrangements are outlined in the local Code of Corporate Governance. The governance framework includes arrangements for:

- Identifying and communicating the Council's vision of its purpose and intended outcomes for citizens and service users; through the publication of its updated Council Plan in December 2023.
- Reviewing the Council's vision and its implications for the Council's governance arrangements;
- Measuring the quality of services for users, ensuring that they are delivered in accordance with the Council's objectives and ensuring that they represent the best use of resources;
- Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of the executive (Cabinet), non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions, with clear delegation arrangements and protocols for effective communication;
- Developing, communicating and embedding codes of conduct, defining the standards of behaviour for members and staff;
- Reviewing and updating Financial Rules, Contract Rules, Constitution, Scheme of Delegation and supporting procedure notes / manuals, which clearly define how decisions are taken, and the processes and controls required to manage risks;
- Ensuring effective counter-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are developed and maintained;
- Ensuring the Council's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015);
- Undertaking the core functions of an Audit Committee, as identified in CIPFA's Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities;

- Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful;
- Arrangements for whistleblowing and for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Risk-based Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan
- Identifying the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by the appropriate training;
- Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation; and
- Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships, including shared services and other joint working and reflecting these in the Council’s overall governance arrangements.
- Reports from external bodies such as the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman, HM Revenue & Customs, Information Commissioner, Investigatory Powers Commissioner and Planning Inspectorate.
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee represents a public forum through which Councillors can monitor the implementation of the Council’s policies and the quality of its services; make recommendations on the discharge of the Council’s functions and/or matters effecting the district and hold the Executive to account for their decisions and actions.
- Ensure we comply with the addendum ‘Delivering good governance in local government: framework’ published by Solace including the May 2025 Addendum.

The main areas of the Council’s governance framework, and the key evidence of delivery, are set out below, under the headings of the core principles and sub-principles from the CIPFA/SOLACE ‘Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)and addendum (2025).

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

- Behaving with Integrity
- Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values
- Respecting the rule of the law

- The roles and responsibilities of Members, and all office holders are set out in the Council’s Constitution, which was recently updated following a constitutional review and formally approved by Full Council in March 2025.. The Constitution is supported and underpinned by a separate Code of Conduct for Members and a joint Member / Officer Protocol, which sets out guidelines as to behaviour and practical issues. This is further supported by the Council’s Staff Code of Conduct Policy And by Publica’s Business Conduct Rules.
- Declarations of Interest are made at meetings by Members and Officers, where appropriate, and are recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The Members’ Code of Conduct requires Members to make declarations of interest. When necessary, these are also recorded.
- Registers of interest are completed annually by Members and published on the Council’s website. A register of gifts and hospitality received by Members is maintained by the Monitoring Officer and is available for public inspection at the Council offices.
- An employee declaration is completed annually by all staff. A register of gifts and hospitality is maintained by the Corporate Responsibility team and reviewed by the Statutory Officer Group every quarter.
- There is a member development programme and member development group who meet regularly to review and plan member training on a wide variety of subjects. This is supported by the

Democratic Services team and the Monitoring Officer who is officer responsible for member development.

- Training is compulsory for regulatory committees, that is, Development Management Committee and Licensing.
- There are safeguards in the constitution for handling planning and licensing applications from members and officers.
- The Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer report directly to the Chief Executive and are members of the Executive Leadership Team. They also form part of the Statutory Officer Group which will meet on a quarterly basis together with key stakeholder lead officers from Counter Fraud (CFEU) and Internal Audit (SWAP).
- Internal audit reviews are designed to ensure services are complying with internal and external policies and procedures / statutory legislation. Where non-compliance is identified, this is reported to Management and to Members via the Council's Audit Committee.
- The Whistleblowing Policy was last updated in March 2025 and was ratified by Full Council in March 2025. A counter-fraud unit working across Gloucestershire and West Oxfordshire helps prevent and detect fraud and corrupt practices, including misuse of power. The service reports to the Audit Committee and the Publica Board's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee twice a year.
- Minutes of Council, Cabinet and Committee meetings are taken, with decisions and key actions recorded appropriately and published on the Council's website. The Council continues to publish a Cabinet Forward Plan, highlighting key decisions, in line with legislation.
- The Council has continued providing regular updates to Members and across the organisation, making use of video conferencing to increase accessibility, as well as using group emails. Members are also being encouraged to make better use of the Council's online portal (intranet).
- The Communications team ensures that communications through all our various channels supports the council's services through providing advice, information and messaging to both external and internal audiences.

B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

- Openness
 - Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders
 - Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively
-
- Annual accounts are published in a timely manner to help communicate the Council's financial position and performance.
 - The Council Plan 2024-2028, approved by Full Council on the 14 December 2023, is available to the public on the Council's website.
 - All Committee, Cabinet and Council reports clearly outline their purpose, so any resident reading the report can understand what is trying to be achieved. Reports also address financial, legal, equalities, and risk implications, along with those for the climate change, biodiversity and ecological emergencies, to aid understanding of the potential impact of their recommendations.
 - A visual impact assessment tool has been developed to support good decision making, clearly mapping out social, economic and environmental impacts and using a red, amber, green traffic light status. The roles and responsibilities of the executive (Cabinet), non-executive, scrutiny and officer functions are defined in the Council's Constitution.
 - A Scheme of Delegation of powers to officers is included within the Constitution.
 - Communication channels with staff include one-to-one and team meetings, a quarterly in person briefing from the Chief Executive, a weekly update emails from Publica Directors (Keeping you Connected) and an online portal. In addition, regular staff webinars are held covering a wide range of topics and allow for Q&A session.
 - An Executive Leadership Team, comprising the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Resources (the S151 Officer), Head of Governance (the Monitoring Officer) and Director of Communities

and Place, meets weekly to discuss and action a variety of management issues including projects, Cabinet forward plan, budget, strategic risk, health and safety, and corporate governance.

- A customer feedback form is available publicly for handling comments, complaints and compliments and the Council’s website includes different ways for customers to give feedback or access services. A customer satisfaction survey is carried out throughout the year on the telephone, email and web services provided, with the Council receiving very high satisfaction scores for telephone contact.
- There are clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders and ward members providing a local point of contact for the district’s residents.
- Members of the public are able to ask questions at Cabinet meetings, Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and meetings of the Full Council.
- Emergency powers contained within the Council’s Constitution provide the necessary authority to allow decisions to be made by the Chief Executive and/or the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Council Leader, with a report being made to the next available meeting.
- Quarterly reports to Cabinet outlining financial and service performance, along with progress in achieving the Council’s priorities and objectives. The performance report is scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny committee and published on the Council’s website.
- The Council publishes transparency data on its website which includes supplier payments, senior management structure charts and the Annual Pay Policy Statement. Where data is not available in the published data sets, instructions are available on how to make a Freedom of Information request and the procedure that will be followed to answer the request.
- The Council is accountable to the Information Commissioner’s Office.
- Council, Cabinet and committee meetings are webcast live and the recordings are available to view on the Council’s website.

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

- Defining outcomes
- Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

- The Council’s priorities, expressed in its Council Plan 2024 - 2028, set out what the Council hopes to achieve on its own or in partnership with others. These priorities are supported by the Code of Corporate Governance as good governance should underpin all the work of the Council.
- An annual business planning process is also conducted by our shared services provided through Publica and Ubico. Their plans are guided and informed by our Council Plan priorities, legislation and government guidance.
- All three Council Plan priorities and the way we work as a team are underpinned by the following principles:
 - Social value: to improve the well-being of our residents
 - Public engagement: to ensure all voices are heard and form part of the decision-making process
 - Value for money: to ensure our resources are used as responsibly and efficiently as possible.
 - Financial Sustainability: to support climate and nature emergency initiatives without compromising the Council’s fiscal health
- Detailed proposals arising from the Council’s priorities are individually assessed and are included within decision making reports.
- A Delivery Plan identifies key programmes and actions needed to deliver Council Plan priorities. This is revised annually and quarterly reports on progress are produced.
- Service plans are in place for all services delivered directly by Forest of Dean District Council and our service delivery partner, Publica.
- The financial implications of delivering against the Council’s priorities are included within the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy, revenue budgets and capital programme. These key financial documents are updated annually in advance of the forthcoming financial year.
- The Council recognises that several external factors have had a significant impact and will continue to have a long-term effect on the level of resources available to the Council. As part of its Medium-

Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) the Council will continue to assess its medium-term financial position and update its assumptions about the resources available to, and the investment needs of, the Council considering these challenges.

- An Ethical Investment Policy was approved by the Council in December 2023, which aims to give environmental, social and governance considerations an equal footing as security, liquidity and yield. It details exclusions for future investment, along with areas the Council will look to invest in, such as renewable energy, social and low carbon housing.
- The Executive Leadership Team and Officers are representing the Forest of Dean District Council on the LGR programme for Gloucestershire.
- A new Operational Forum has been introduced in 2025/26 to monitor and manage the performance and delivery of our partner, Publica.

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

- Determining interventions
- Planning interventions
- Optimising achievement of intended outcomes

- In 2017 the Council, along with three other councils, created a company, Publica Group (Support) Ltd, to deliver more efficient and improved shared services. A review of Publica was undertaken, and in response to this, a number of services have been transferred from Publica to direct council delivery. All other services continue to be delivered by Publica. Where appropriate, processes have been or are being aligned to ensure consistency across the partner councils, without compromising local priorities. In recognition that Publica is a significant contractor of the Council, the Council monitors its performance by:

Considering Publica's Annual Report at Council;

Considering Publica's draft Business Plan annually at Cabinet in February/March each year;

Requiring representatives from Publica to attend the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to support discussion on quarterly performance and other reports;

Inviting Publica senior Officers to attend Cabinet and Executive Leadership Team and Senior Management Team meetings as required to discuss progress against the Business Plan and Corporate Plan.

- Future phases of insourcing or indeed continued shared service provision will be designed to complement the requirements of Local Government Reorganisation.
- The Council continues to pursue and secure savings through improved use of its assets and investments.
- The Council has processes in place to identify and respond to external changes, for example: changes to legislation and regulation, emerging risks and opportunities. Corporate processes such as risk management, performance management processes, budget monitoring and other management processes are designed to capture and incorporate these external factors and to enable the Council to respond appropriately.

- The Council's strategic risk register is reviewed quarterly, as a minimum, by the Executive Leadership Team and reported to the Audit Committee.
- Projects and services retain their own risk registers and elevate any high/red risks to the Executive Leadership Team and Publica as appropriate for consideration. A Risk Group reviews risk registers each quarter, escalating any emerging risks to the strategic register.
- Key performance indicators are identified and reported quarterly. An enhanced performance management framework, using 'real time' data wherever possible is due to be reviewed in 26/27.
- Budgets are prepared annually in accordance with objectives, strategies and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, following consultation with customers, stakeholders and officers.
- The Medium-Term Financial Strategy is a live document and can be reviewed, updated and reported as necessary, to respond to the changing financial environment. This is due to uncertainty around the future funding of the Council and the necessity to ensure savings plans and targets are in place and continue to be deliverable without impacting the core services of the Council.
- Procurement processes are in place which include social value.
- As we move forward, we will assess how external factors such as the cost-of-living crisis has impacted our strategic priorities. We will need to understand and manage a variety of impacts, including financial, service delivery, and health and wellbeing.
- The Council will continue to work with residents and local businesses to review and respond to their changing needs and to help them protect themselves and others, as well as recover from the health and economic costs arising from the cost-of-living crisis.

E. Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

- Developing the entity's capacity
 - Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals
- A revised senior management structure has now been fully implemented as services transition back from Publica to the Council.
 - The Council produced a new People and Culture Strategy following the transfer of staff and regular meetings of a working group look at implementing this to support employees and put into practice the acknowledged values that staff collaboratively identified.
 - A review of the pay and grading scheme was carried out and consulted upon with the aim of transferring staff to a fairer, more transparent system that aligns with other local authorities ahead of LGR. As part of the consultation, trade union representatives were invited to address staff and be accessible via drop-in sessions.
 - There are regular face to face all-staff briefings from the Chief Executive, where staff are updated on a range of matters, including the progress toward LGR.
 - There is a Scheme of Delegation at Member level covering the Council, Cabinet, individual Cabinet Members and other committees. Similarly, there is a scheme of delegation for officer decisions at Executive, Non-Executive and Regulatory meetings. These are reviewed and revised as structures change.
 - Financial rules and contract procedures are in place and are reviewed and revised as required.
 - Induction programmes are available to new employees and Members. A Member Development Group meets regularly and receives feedback on gaps in councillor knowledge. The group seeks to fill those gaps with relevant training and learning sessions.

- Members on certain committees (e.g. Planning and Licensing) are required to undertake training before serving on these committees, and to attend further training to remain up to date and improve their knowledge. Training is also provided for officers on an on-going basis as appropriate and necessary. Development Pathways are now in place across the organisation. Including Leadership and People Skills, this is supported with accredited ILM Leadership and Management Training.
- All Senior Managers have received Carbon Literacy training with Silver accreditation being achieved and Gold being targeted for 26/27. Officers undertake regular 121 meetings with their line manager. As part of these 121 meetings, Officers discuss work plans/tasks and any training requirements associated with the successful delivery of the work plan. Officers are encouraged to complete Continuing Professional Development as relevant to their professional qualifications and service areas hold budgets to ensure that training can be undertaken to maintain skills and knowledge. Appraisals take place annually.
- The Chief Executive, Section 151 officer, Monitoring Officer and the Leader of the Council have clear responsibilities. Roles and responsibilities are contained within the Constitution along with the Member/Officer Protocol.

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

- Managing risk
 - Managing performance
 - Robust internal control
 - Managing data
 - Strong public financial management
-
- A Statutory Officer Group is in place to complete quarterly reviews of risk registers, escalating any emerging risks to a strategic level. The Strategic Risk Register is reported to the Audit Committee on a regular basis.
 - Risks are identified when undertaking Internal Audit reviews and reported when necessary.
 - Performance Management measures the quality of service for users to ensure services are delivered in accordance with the Council's objectives and represent best use of resources. An enhanced performance management framework has been put in place to provide a more complete picture of organisational performance and focuses on five areas – risk and opportunity management; business information and service assurance; project and programme management assurance; Council Plan delivery; and place-based measures.
 - Performance is measured on a regular basis and reported to Members and Cabinet. Wherever possible 'real time' data will be published.
 - Meeting minutes are published and highlight the challenge made by Members to Officers and Cabinet Members.
 - The Internal Audit service is provided by SWAP (South West Audit Partnership) Internal Audit Services and is run in partnership with other local authorities.
 - A risk-based Audit Plan is drafted annually following consultation with Officers, Members and the S151 Officer. The Audit Plan is approved at the Audit Committee prior to the financial year.
 - Audit reports, once completed, are discussed with the service manager. Executive summaries, including findings, and progress on the Annual Plan are reported to the Audit Committee, on a quarterly basis.

- Recommendations made in audit reports are followed up 6 months after the completion of the audit and priority 1 and 2 findings are reported to the Audit Committee, along with any findings not addressed in a timely manner.
- The Audit Committee's Terms of Reference are contained within the Constitution. Members have experience of a scrutiny role and training is provided when appropriate.
- Where investigations identify improvements to the internal control framework, the Counter Fraud Unit will liaise with the Internal Audit team to ensure the improvements are followed up and implemented by management.
- The Council has invested in its cyber security capability to increase its resilience against a cyber-attack, by implementing additional security solutions, recruiting additional staff and resourcing an ongoing training programme to maintain the impact of this investment.
- An ICT Audit and Compliance Manager has a Data Protection Officer with responsibility for Data Protection policies, Privacy Statements and ensuring that officers and members are informed and appropriately trained.
- The Council is part of the Gloucestershire Information Sharing Partnership. This enables data to be shared between councils and other key public bodies when necessary.
- Audit reviews ensure data is held securely whether electronically or hard copy.
- The MTFS is reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure the Section 151 Officer, Chief Executive and Members are aware of the financial standing of the Council.
- A new AI Policy has been put in place and is being supported with AI training being offered through our internal Learning and Development Team.

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

- Implementing good practice in transparency
 - Implementing good practices in reporting
 - Assurance and effective accountability
-
- Data in respect of transparency is published on the Council's website and was audited during 2023-24.
 - The Council's Statement of Accounts is produced and published annually in accordance with statutory legislation. Aligned with this is the production of the Annual Governance Statement which identifies how the Council has met its governance reporting obligations
 - External Audit recommendations are reported to Audit Committee, following the completion of their annual audit process, follow-ups of recommendations are also reported
 - Internal Audit processes ensure compliance with Public Sector Internal Auditing Standards. Internal Audit recommendations are followed up and reported to the Audit Committee, further follow-up is planned if recommendations have not been actioned in full.
 - The Council has a process for the receipt and processing of freedom of information requests made under the Freedom of Information Act and environmental information requests under Environmental Information Regulations. There is a presumption that all reports and the associated annexes to be considered in public meetings will be published. The Council's Monitoring officer is consulted in circumstances where reports or annexes contain information which is considered to be exempt from publication.

4. REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

The Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the senior managers, the annual opinion from the Internal Audit's Assistant Director, the Statutory Officer Group and comments made by the external auditors, other review agencies and inspectorates.

The Council's process for maintaining and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance framework has included the following:

- All officers are required to complete an Annual Assurance Statement at the end of the financial year. These governance declarations provide appropriate management assurance that key elements of the system of internal control are in place and are working effectively and help to identify areas for improvement. The Assurance Statement for 2025-26 confirmed that these elements are working effectively but identified a need to make the Code of Corporate Governance more widely available.
- The Statutory Officer Group reviews the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis and Service/Project Risk Registers are maintained by each service. In addition, project highlight and exception reports are reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team monthly.
- The Statutory Officer group meets quarterly to discuss and action matters such as staff declarations of interests, gifts and hospitality, audit recommendations, cyber security and GDPR updates/breaches register and counter fraud updates. Attendees include the CEO, S151 and Monitoring Officer, as well as relevant Officers such as the DPO, SWAP and Counter Fraud.
- The SWAP Assistant Director provides the Audit Committee, as the Committee charged with governance, with an Annual Opinion on the control environment of the Council, which includes its governance arrangements.
- Investigation of, and decisions on, allegations of failure to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct are considered and determined by the Monitoring Officer and/or an Independent Standards Panel.
- Induction processes are carried out for newly elected Members and appointed officers.
- The Section 151 Officer ensures training and awareness sessions are carried out for the Audit Committee periodically.
- The External Auditors (Bishop Fleming) present progress reports to the Audit Committee and the External Auditor's Annual Audit Letter and follow-up of management responses to issues raised in the Letter or other reports are overseen by the Audit Committee.
- Quarterly financial and performance reports are presented to the Cabinet, demonstrating performance management against agreed performance indicators and budgets.
- Members of the Audit Committee were invited to comment on the AGS prior to the Cabinet signing off the document.
- The Audit Committee reviews the Annual Statement of Accounts, including the final AGS, the Treasury Management Strategy and quarterly progress reports from both Internal Audit (SWAP) and External Audit

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- Full Council approves the annual budget and reviews and approves the Treasury Management Strategy, following recommendations from the Audit Committee.
- Internal Audit monitors the quality and effectiveness of systems of internal control. Audit reports include an opinion that provides management with an independent judgement on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls. Reports including recommendations for improvement are detailed in an action plan agreed with the relevant Business Manager or Assistant Director.
- The Annual Internal Audit Opinion for 2025/2026, in respect of the areas reviewed during the year, was High Reasonable.
- The Council's Financial Rules and Contract Rules are kept under review and revised periodically; the most recent update was approved by Council in March 2025.
- Other explicit review/assurance mechanisms, such as the Annual Report from the Local Government Ombudsman and reports from SWAP or Bishop Fleming are also reviewed by the Audit Committee.

REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN FOR 2025 – 2026

When preparing its 2025/2026 Statement, the Council identified several areas which required focus and attention. These have been actively monitored throughout the year and progress by the end of March 2026 is detailed in the table below:

	Key Area of Focus	Planned Actions	Update
1	Local Government Reorganisation / Devolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FoDDC staff will support the various LGR workstreams We will seek to ensure the protection of the interests of the FoDDC We will seek to ensure that our teckal and partner organisations are prepared / ready in advance of LGR We will place our staff in the best position possible, through training, development and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FODC represented on key workstreams including CEO, Comms FODDC have now considered the proposals for Gloucestershire at the Cabinet Meeting on 19/11/25. The three Glos proposals were submitted to government on 28 November 2025 The Government will be taking view on the proposals submitted and will make a decision on which best meets their criteria, with a government run consultation likely to be in the early part of 2026. Work is underway with Publica to consider potential options to ensure employees and services are protected. Training, development and support is being put in place for our employees and partner employees.
2	New service delivery models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To complete the phase 2 transition of services from Publica To ensure new services are embedded into the FODDC culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 2 transition was completed 1 July 2025. Where gaps in the structure existed on transfer, recruitment has either been completed or underway. Work is ongoing on our People and Culture strategy, with a working group established to review the values and behaviours and agree next steps. The proposal from the working group was presented at the next quarterly all staff briefing in Dec.
3	Council Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake an update to the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegation to reflect the new service delivery model following phase 2 transfer of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update has been completed following phase 2.
4	Business Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further develop business continuity plans to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose under the new service delivery model To test the business-critical Business Continuity Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A new Business Impact Assessment (BIA) Tool is currently tested to be rolled out across the council. Once approved, meetings will be setup with the various services, commencing with the higher-risk / critical services first. The BIA will then inform the BCP. This action will roll forward into next financial year. Good progress is being made on the new process, and whilst this is being implemented, existing BCPs continue to be reviewed.

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5	Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure officers are trained and competent in the new Procurement Act 2023 and revised Contract Procedure Rules To develop a toolkit for use by officers who undertake procurement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A toolkit has now been completed and is available on the portal. An update has been published on the internal employee portals including the launch of a new contract register information template e-form for contracts over £5k and updated support pages. Manager training has now taken place across FODDC and Publica
6	Service Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have service plans in place for all business areas, delivered directly by the council and its partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publica Service plans have been completed for 26/27. FODDC service plans were also progressed. A revised service plan template for 26/27 has now been approved and work is currently being undertaken to populate the service plans for 26/27.
7	MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the financial stability of the Council prior to LGR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Draft budget for 26/27 is currently being completed. A few items require finalising prior to publishing.
8	Council Plan Delivery plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver on the actions contained with the Council Plan and identified in the agreed Delivery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported on within the quarterly performance report Latest report (Q2) was presented to Cabinet in December 2025
9	Statutory Officer Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally establish and embed the work of the Statutory Officer Group in ensuring corporate governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group has now been established and successfully in operation since 09/06/25. The group now meets on a quarterly basis and continues to develop and mature. It has proven to be worthwhile
10	Key Project Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure resources are in place to put good governance around the Council's major projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manager transferred under phase 2 and processes being developed. On track for the end of the financial year. Assurance review being undertaken via the LGA on the Five Acres project.
11	Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all agreed actions are completed and that any issues identified are appropriately followed up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing All outstanding actions are reviewed at both Senior Officer Group and Audit Committee and are followed up as necessary.

6. GOVERNANCE ACTION PLAN FOR 2026 - 2027

In preparing this statement and reviewing the effectiveness of the governance arrangements several areas have been identified where the Council needs to focus attention and improve arrangements over the next financial year. These areas of work are planned to strengthen the control framework and are set out in the table below.

To be finalised following feedback from Cabinet, Audit Committee, ELT and the Statutory Officers Group

	Initial Suggested - Key Areas of Focus	Planned Actions
1	Local Government Reorganisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FoDDC staff will support the various LGR workstreams • We will seek to ensure the protection of the interests of the FoDDC • We will seek to ensure that our teckal and partner organisations are prepared / ready in advance of LGR • To place our staff in the best position possible, through training, development and support
2	New service delivery models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue implementation of the new People and Culture Strategy to embed services into the FODDC culture • Assess results of Manager’s Assurance Statement and identify any training needs disclosed by this • Make Code of Corporate Governance more accessible
3	Council Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through CWG, revise the Constitution to give effect to changes necessitated by: Audit Committee recommendations on the Member Code of Conduct, particularised delegations for the Senior Officer of ERS, Officer Employment Rules and delegated powers to determine planning applications (new national scheme of delegation).
4	Business Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop business continuity plans to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose under the new service delivery model • To test the business-critical Business Continuity Plans
5	Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure officers are kept up to date with the changes introduced by Procurement Act 2023 and revised Contract Procedure Rules • Introduce a procurement annual declaration for completion by all employees
6	Service Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have service plans in place for all business areas, delivered directly by the council and its partners

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	Initial Suggested - Key Areas of Focus	Planned Actions
7	MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the financial stability of the Council prior to LGR
8	Council Plan Delivery Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver on the actions contained with the Council Plan and identified in the agreed Delivery Plan
9	Statutory Officer Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to meet quarterly and implement any actions arising
10	Key project Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure resources are in place to put good governance around the Council's major projects
11	Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all agreed actions are completed and that any issues identified are appropriately followed up
12	Prevention of Fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a fraud risk toolkit

Independent Auditors Report