

DATE: 5 July 2023
MY REF: Audit and Corporate Governance Committee
YOUR REF:
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To Members of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee

Cllr. Mark Jackson (Chairman)

Cllr. Mike Shirley (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. Lee Breckon JP

Cllr. Alex DeWinter

Cllr. Richard Holdridge

Cllr. Dillan Shikotra

Cllr. Roger Stead

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Narborough on **THURSDAY, 13 JULY 2023** at **6.30 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business and your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully



Louisa Horton
Monitoring Officer



AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Disclosures of Interest

To receive disclosures of interests from Members (i.e. the existence and the nature of those interests in respect of items on this agenda).

3. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2023 (enclosed).

4. Risk Management Strategy 2023-2026 (Pages 7 - 28)

To consider the report of the Finance Group Manager (enclosed).

5. Unaudited Statement of Accounts 2022/23 (Pages 29 - 190)

To consider the report of the Finance Group Manager (enclosed).

6. CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 - Update (Pages 191 - 212)

To consider the report of the Shared Service Audit Manager (enclosed).

7. Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23 (Pages 213 - 224)

To consider the report of the Shared Service Audit Manager (enclosed).

8. Internal Audit Progress Report 2023/24 Q1 (Pages 225 - 240)

To consider the report of the Shared Service Audit Manager (enclosed).

AUDIT AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

MONDAY, 17 APRIL 2023

Present:-

Cllr. Shane Blackwell (Chairman)

Cllr. Nick Chapman

Cllr. Mark Jackson

Officers present:-

Nick Brown	- Finance Group Manager
Caroline Harbour	- Environmental Health, Housing, Net Zero & Community Services Group Manager
Louisa Horton	- Corporate Services Group Manager & Monitoring Officer
Phil Fasham	- Environmental Health Manager
Kerry Beavis	- Senior Auditor
Isaac Thomas	- Democracy Support Officer
Nicole Cramp	- Democratic & Scrutiny Services Officer

Also in attendance :-

Cllr. Maggie Wright (Deputy Leader) – Finance, People & Performance Portfolio Holder

Apologies:-

Cllr. Stuart Coar, Cllr. Paul Hartshorn and Cllr. Kirsteen Thomson

246. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No disclosures were received.

247. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2023, as circulated, were approved as correct record.

248. CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA

The Chairman announced that Agenda Item 9 'Internal Audit Progress Report 2022/23 Q4' would be taken before Agenda item 4 'Accounting Policies 2022/23'.

249. ACCOUNTING POLICIES 2022/23

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

DECISION

That the accounting policies set out in Appendix A of the report be approved.

Reasons:

1. The council should select appropriate accounting policies to be applied in preparation and presentation of its annual Statement of accounts.
2. It is considered good practice for the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to review and comment upon the proposed accounting policies to be used in the preparation of the council's annual accounts.

250. RISK MANAGEMENT Q4 2022/23

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

The Finance Group Manager provided an update on the corporate risk register. A total of 12 high risks, 9 medium and 1 low risk creating a total of 22 risks.

The Finance Group Manager advised the committee that future Risk Management Reports may have a new appearance as the information will be collated from the new Pentana system.

DECISION

That the latest information in respect of the Council's major corporate risks be accepted.

Reason:

The overview of the Council's risk management processes is a key responsibility of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

251. LOCAL AUDIT DELAYS

Considered – Report of the Finance Group Manager.

DECISION

That the impact of local audit delays and expected outcomes of the Redmond Review be noted by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

Reason:

To ensure that the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee is appraised of the latest position regarding the audit of accounts and likely implications arising from the Redmond Review.

252. 2023-24 INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL AUDIT PLAN

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager.

DECISIONS

1. That the report be noted by the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee.
2. That the 2023/24 Internal Audit Annual Audit Plan be approved.

Reason:

To comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

253. CIPFA POSITION STATEMENT: AUDIT COMMITTEES IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE 2022

Considered – Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager.

DECISIONS

1. That the report be noted by the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee.
2. That the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee Agree to establish a cross party member working group, to be drawn from the audit and governance committee appointed at council on 23 May 2023, to work with the audit manager and the Strategic Director (S151 Officer) to undertake a self-assessment and training needs analysis and report back to the meeting of Audit and Corporate Governance Committee at the July meeting.
3. That the process for the recruitment of independent members to the committee be agreed.

Reason:

To ensure compliance with recommended good practice.

254. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT 2022/23 Q4

Considered - Report of the Shared Service Audit Manager.

DECISION

That the Internal Audit Progress report 2022/23 Q4 be noted.

Reason:

To keep the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee informed of progress and recent Internal Audit findings and recommendations, in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards requirements.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6.30 P.M.

Blaby District Council

Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting 13 July 2023
Title of Report Risk Management Strategy 2023 - 2026
Report Author Finance Group Manager

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The report provides the Committee with an updated Risk Management Strategy, covering the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2026.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Audit and Corporate Governance Committee considers and comments upon the Risk Management Strategy.
- 2.2 That Audit and Corporate Governance Committee recommends the Risk Management Strategy to Cabinet Executive for adoption.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 The existing Risk Management Strategy expired on 31st March 2023, and it is appropriate to review the Council's risk appetite and procedures.
- 3.2 Audit and Corporate Governance Committee are responsible for ensuring that risk management arrangements are effective and for advising Cabinet Executive on risk.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Council's previous Risk Management Strategy expired on 31st March 2023, and as part of the procurement of the new Performance Management System, Pentana, a separate Risk module has been acquired.

Before the acquisition of Pentana, the Council's risk registers were maintained on spreadsheets. This has proven to be sufficient as an interim measure, but the new risk module within Pentana aligns well with the new performance management framework and brings benefits such as automatic workflow emails to remind officers to update their risks.

The existing Corporate Risk Register and Service Risk Register have been migrated to Pentana and have been in use since late March.

The Corporate Risk Group continues to monitor the higher profile, corporate risks every quarter and, whilst no update has been presented at this meeting, in future quarterly updates will be brought to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

Service Risks are monitored by Service Managers, with Group Managers performing an oversight role, and are still required to be updated quarterly, as a minimum, although they will only be presented to Committee on an exception basis.

4.2 Proposal(s)

Audit and Corporate Governance Committee is asked to consider and comment upon the updated Risk Management Strategy which is attached at Appendix A. Other than the presentational change referred to above, in terms of the monitoring of risks and the Risk Register, the Strategy is broadly unchanged.

The Committee is also asked to recommend the Risk Management Strategy to Cabinet Executive, after considering any agreed amendments.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

Corporate Risk Group.

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

5.1 Not applicable.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1

Current Risk	Actions to reduce the risks
If the Risk Management Strategy does not reflect the current procedures, then risks may not be managed appropriately.	The Risk Management Strategy has been updated to reflect changes to the procedures for monitoring and reporting service risks.

7. Other options considered

7.1 None, since the previous strategy has expired.

8. Other significant issues

- 8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix A – Risk Management Strategy 2023 - 2026

10. Background paper(s)

None.

11. Report author's contact details

Nick Brown	Finance Group Manager
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RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2023 - 2026

Risk Management Policy Statement

- Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated, and controlled. It is recognised as everyone's job and an integral part of good management practice. It is a key element of the framework of corporate governance.
- Blaby District Council will adopt the principles of risk management to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and the people it serves, to protect its property, assets, and other resources, to enhance the delivery of services and to maintain its reputation and good standing in the wider community. The Council will apply best practice in identifying, evaluating and cost effectively controlling risks at all levels and across all activities.
- In considering its appetite towards risk in achieving our corporate priorities, the Council recognises that it is impossible to deliver services and achieve our objectives without taking risks. It is the identification and management of risks taken in a controlled manner at a level that is acceptable to the Council which will enable these objectives to be delivered successfully. It is for the Council to decide whether the benefits of taking a course of action outweigh the risks.
- To be most effective, risk management should become part of the Council's culture. Therefore, the aim of the Council's strategy is to integrate risk management into the existing management processes for planning, decision making and control at all levels and across all activities.
- The Council needs to have the framework and processes in place to manage risk in a consistent and proactive way. The risk management strategy document identifies the framework, processes in place, roles and responsibilities and identifies further critical actions for achieving this.
- The Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team and Council Members are fully committed to promoting and implementing the risk management strategy throughout the authority.

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1. Introduction

Our risk management strategy sets out roles and responsibilities for managing risk and defines how risk should be consistently managed, recorded, and assessed throughout the Council.

It aims to:

- Ensure appropriate Risk Management arrangements are in place at Blaby District Council.
- Increase awareness of risk management as part of our daily activities.
- Clarify who is responsible for managing risks and ensure that risk is considered at all levels.

An Action Plan will ensure that risk management is fully embedded within the Council.

2. What is meant by Risk Management?

All organisations face risks to people, property, and continued operations. Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the ability of an organisation to achieve its objectives and to successfully implement its strategies. Given the increasing challenges faced by local government, e.g., the cost of living, potential reductions in government funding, commercialisation etc., the management of risk is more important than ever.

Effective risk management will enable us to:

- Identify risks and take steps to ensure that they are constrained to acceptable levels,
- Improve our ability to deliver our strategic priorities,
- Make informed decisions on new initiatives and opportunities,
- Find the right balance between risk and reward,
- Improve partnership working arrangements and corporate governance.

Risk management can be defined as a planned, systematic approach to the identification and assessment of risks, then responding to those risks.

The Risk Management Strategy is part of the Council's governance framework arrangements.

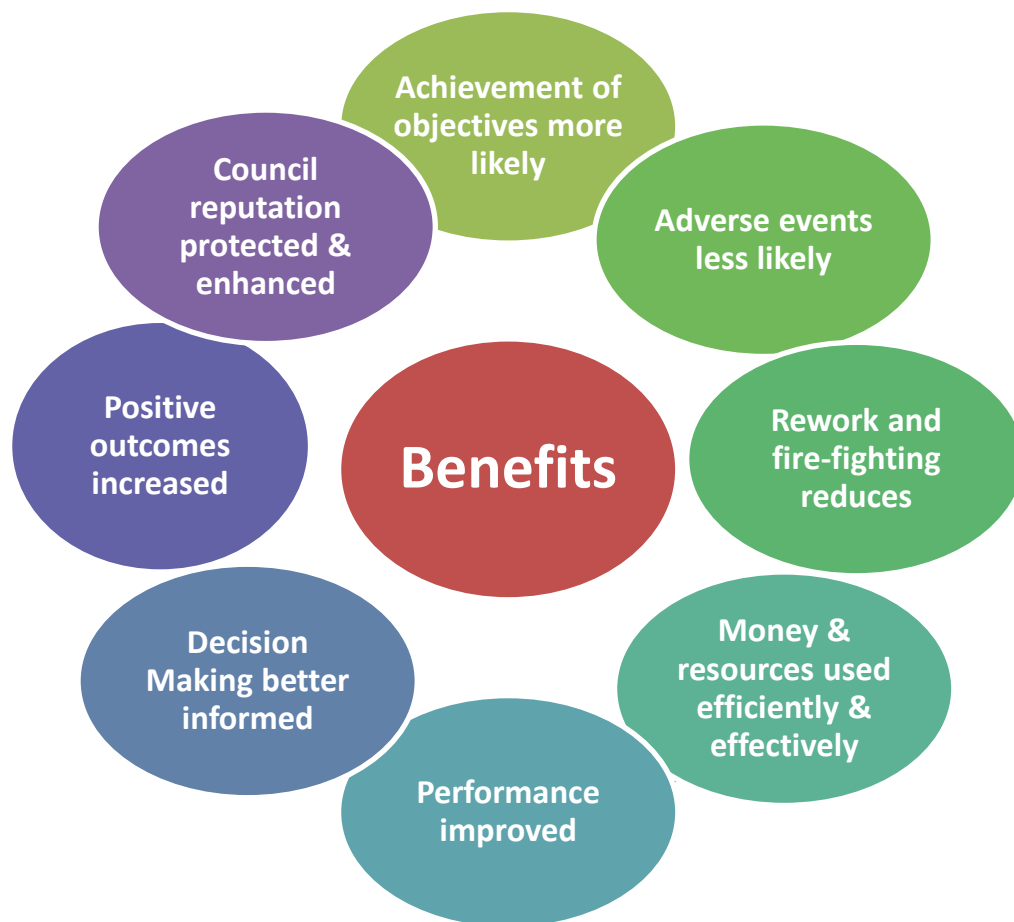
3. Corporate Governance

Risk management is also an essential part of the CIPFA Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government that has been adopted by Local Authorities. The Framework requires the Council to establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework, and process for managing risk.

An Annual Governance Statement is produced alongside the Annual Statement of Accounts confirming that the Council has ensured that there is a sound system of internal control in place which facilitates the effective

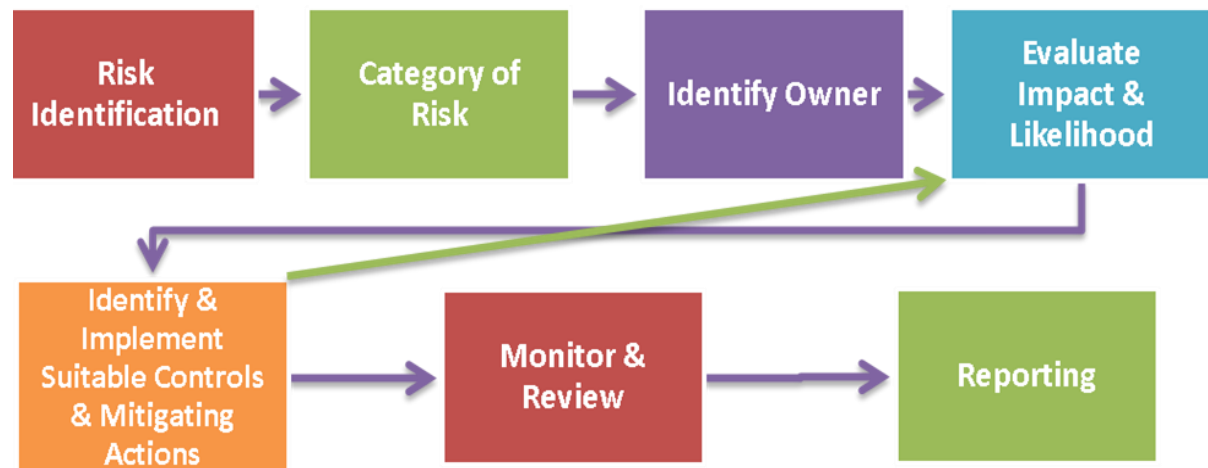
exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk. These arrangements include the reviewing and updating of standing orders, standing financial instructions, a scheme of delegation and supporting procedures notes/manuals, which clearly define how decisions are taken and the processes and controls required to manage risks.

4. The Benefits of Risk Management



5. The Risk Management process

The roles and responsibilities of individual officers and committees in the risk management process can be found in Appendix 1.

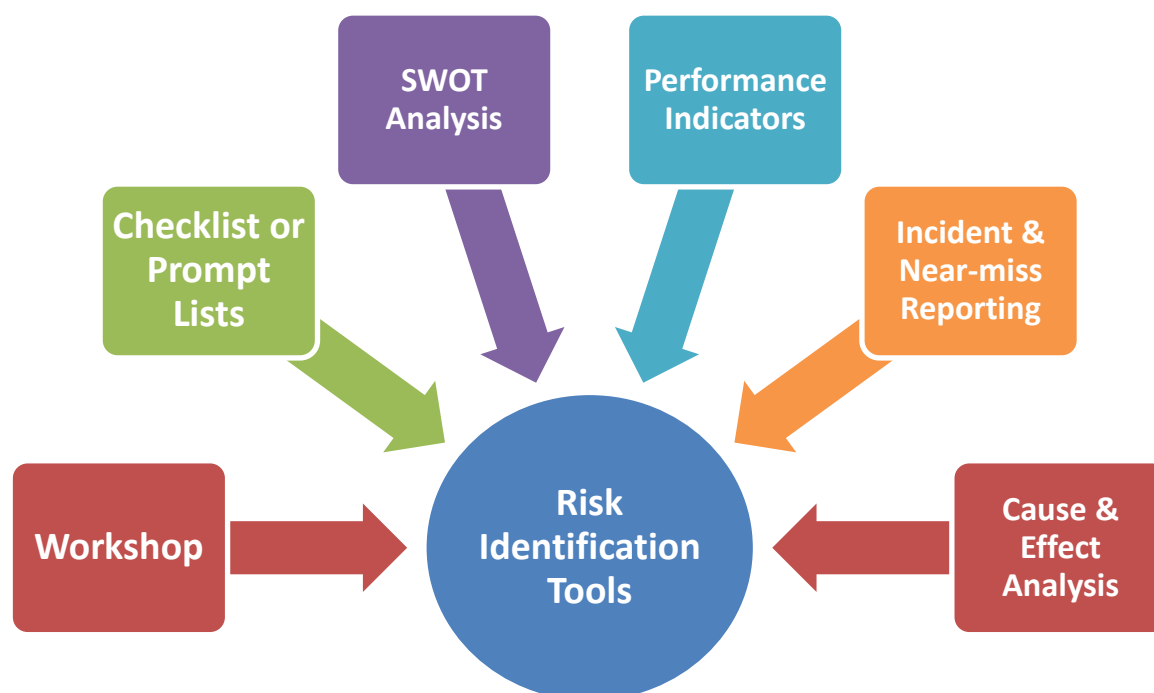


5.1 Risk Identification

Risk identification is about identifying the key risks to the Council and consideration of the following points:

- What could stop the Council achieving its objectives/what could go wrong?
- What type of risk could it be – e.g., financial, political, legal etc.?
- How would we describe the risk – what is the headline?

Corporate Risk Group or services will decide upon the appropriate approach to identifying its key risks. The following diagram illustrates methods which may be used.



When identifying risks, the following categories of risk should be used (see below). They will act as a prompt for those involved in the process. They will ensure that a holistic approach to risk identification is taken and that the risk process does not just concentrate on operational, financial, or legal risks. Risks can also cover more than one of these areas in some circumstances. Examples of risks from each category can be found in Appendix 2.

Contractual	Environmental
Financial	Fraud
Health & Safety	Legal
Partnership	Physical
Political	Professional
Reputational	Social
Technological	

Risks should all be owned by appropriately senior and experienced people. The owner will have responsibility for managing the risk, putting in place suitable controls and actions and re-evaluating the risk on a timely basis.

5.2 Risk analysis/evaluation

Once identified, risks should then be analysed to take account of:

- Impact in terms of consequences on achieving objectives; and
- likelihood of the risk arising.

The impact and likelihood of the risk should be assessed on a scale of 1-5 (see Appendix 3 for further explanation). It is recognised that some subjective judgements are involved in this process.

5.3 Establish tolerance, identify suitable control measures

This involves the implementation of measures that will reduce the likelihood of the risk event occurring or reducing the impact of the consequences should it occur. There are five key aspects of addressing risk methods:

- **Tolerate**
The exposure may be tolerable or acceptable without any further action being taken.
- **Treat**
The greatest number will be addressed this way. Risk control is taken to constrain the risk to a level at which the risk can be tolerated. This tolerance level may vary for different groups of risks.
- **Transfer**
For some risks the best response may be to transfer them. This may be done by insurance or paying a third party to take the risk in another way. Some risks are not fully transferable – for example, it is generally not possible to transfer reputational risk even if delivery of a service is contracted out.
- **Terminate**
Some risks will only be treatable or containable to acceptable levels, by terminating the activity.
- **Take the opportunity**
This is an option which should be considered when tolerating, treating, or transferring a risk. Are there potential opportunities or gains? For example, improvement in performance, change processes, efficiencies etc.

NB Insurance does not reduce the likelihood of events occurring and, on its own, can be the most expensive option.

5.4 Action planning and controls

Action plans to control a risk will identify the resources required to deliver the improvements, key dates, and deadlines.

5.5 Monitor, measure and review

Corporate risks are owned and monitored by the Corporate Risk Group, which consists of the Chief Executive, the Executive Directors, the Finance Group Manager, and the Council Tax Income and Debt Manager. The risks and associated control measures are maintained and monitored through Pentana and are subject to quarterly review by the Corporate Risk Group. Audit and Corporate Governance Committee receive quarterly reports in respect of the

Council's corporate risks, in which details of any new, changing, or deleted risks will be included.

Service risks are generally operational in nature and are owned and monitored by Service Managers. They are also maintained in Pentana alongside any associated control measures. Service risks are subject to quarterly monitoring by Service Managers, with additional oversight from Group Managers, to ensure that they remain up to date and have not become obsolete. Service risks will not be reported to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee other than in exceptional circumstances, e.g., in cases where it is considered appropriate to upgrade them to corporate risk status.

6. How Risk Management links with existing processes

6.1 Corporate and service planning

Senior Leadership Team and Members are responsible for setting and monitoring the Blaby District Plan. Risk management is an inherent part of that process and Senior Leadership Team will identify and manage the key risks facing the Council or a particular service in its delivery of the Blaby District Plan.

The Council's new project management system ensures that all corporate projects and major service projects incorporate their own risk register. Senior Leadership Team, sitting as the Programme Board, review progress against all live corporate and major service projects monthly. As part of this monitoring process, the project manager provides an update on any changes to project risks during the month, on an exception basis.

6.2 Project management

Blaby District Council has adopted a standard methodology that will be applied to all projects within the Council. The project manager is responsible for ensuring that risks are identified, recorded, and regularly reviewed.

6.3 Partnership risks

As the Council works in partnership to deliver some of its priorities and services, it is essential that:

- The risks associated with working in partnership with other organisations have been identified. Some of these risks can be managed through formal contracts and partnership agreements.
- Partnerships have effective risk management procedures in place.
- A risk assessment is carried out prior to entering any partnership.
- Appropriate risk controls are in place.
- Risks are reviewed regularly.

6.4 Procurement

Part 11 of the Constitution details the necessary regulations and principles regarding procurement and contract management and advice regarding the potential risk involved in these processes should be first obtained via the Finance Group Manager.

6.5 Committee reports

For all Council, Cabinet Executive, and Committee reports, it is a mandatory requirement that the report author considers the risk management implications of the proposals contained within the report.

6.6 Business Continuity

Business Continuity is a specific risk management process designed to establish and manage the risks that may interrupt or stop effective service delivery. Business Continuity Plans are in place within each service, and these plans complement the Council's risk management approach. Regular testing of the plans takes place within services and all risks to the Council are considered.

The Council's lead officer for business continuity purposes is the Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager.

6.7 Health and Safety

The Council has a Health & Safety policy which gives specific guidance for undertaking risk assessments. Advice and assistance can be obtained from the Corporate Health & Safety Adviser. All services will have an individual Health & Safety Quality Management System (the 'Blueprint') for managing their Health & Safety risks.

Corporate Health & Safety risks are managed through Health & Safety Committee with ultimate responsibility assigned to Senior Leadership Team and the Leader of the Council.

Roles and responsibilities

The following describes how the roles and responsibilities are allocated to members and officers:

Cabinet Executive

- Approval of Risk Management Strategy.

Portfolio Holders

- To be aware of risks that are identified within their areas of responsibility.
- To be assured that risks within their areas of responsibility are being effectively managed.

Audit and Corporate Governance Committee

- To advise the Cabinet Executive on Audit & Risk.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of corporate governance and risk management arrangements and supporting the development and embedding of good practice in risk management.
- Providing positive challenge to ensure that the risk assessment and control measures are robust.

Corporate Risk Group

- Design, operate and monitor a suitable system of internal control to manage risks within the risk parameters set by Senior Leadership Team/Cabinet Executive/Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.
- Maintain and review the Corporate Risk Register and measures to mitigate risks.
- To implement the Risk Management Strategy.

Executive Director (S151 Officer)

- To prepare and promote the authority's Risk Management Strategy in liaison with the Finance Group Manager.
- To develop risk management controls in conjunction with the Finance Group Manager.
- To include all appropriate employees of the authority in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.
- To effect corporate insurance cover.

Finance Group Manager

- To prepare and promote the authority's Risk Management Strategy in liaison with the Executive Director (S151 Officer).
- To develop risk management controls in conjunction with the Executive Director (S151 Officer).
- Co-ordinate risk management across the Council.
- To produce quarterly Risk Management reports for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

- To ensure appropriate training is delivered to officers and members to enable them to effectively carry out their roles.

Internal Audit

- To provide an oversight of risk management and use service/corporate risk registers in relation to the Internal Audit Plan.

Group Managers

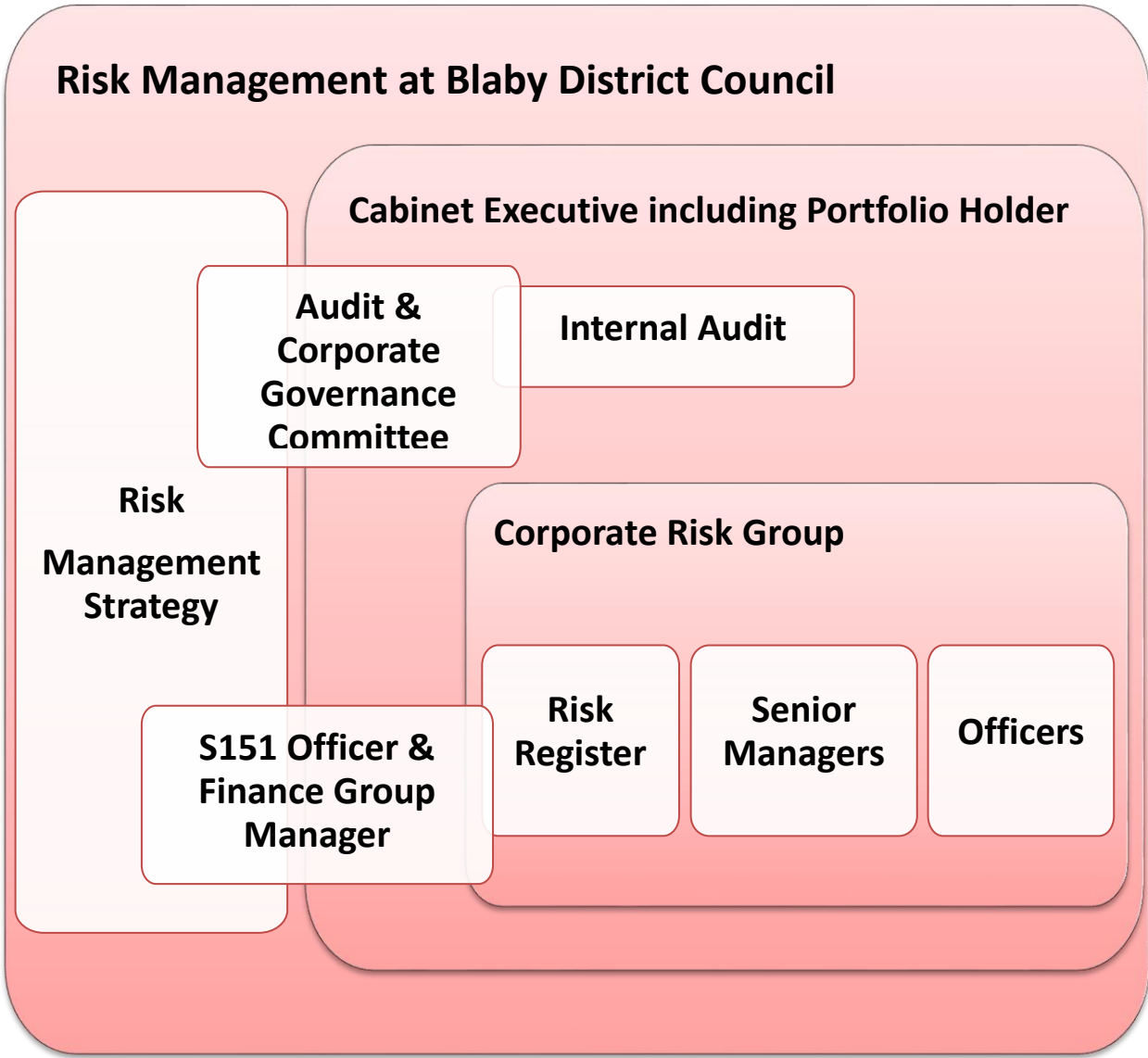
- To take responsibility for risk management, having regard to advice from the Executive Director (S151 Officer), Finance Group Manager, and other specialist officers.
- Identify, analyse, and ensure that there are regular reviews of risk within their services.
- Escalate risks as appropriate to Corporate Risk Group.
- Ensure that all staff are made aware of their responsibility to highlight potential risks to their line manager.
- To notify the Executive Director (S151 Officer) immediately of any loss, liability or damage that may lead to a claim against the authority's insurers.
- To notify the Executive Director (S151 Officer) promptly of all new risks, affecting existing insurances.
- To consult the Executive Director (S151 Officer) and the Monitoring Officer on the terms of any indemnity that the authority is requested to give individual officers.

Service Managers

- To review and manage risks delegated to them by the Group Manager.
- To identify additional risks and put in place controls to manage these risks within their area of responsibility.

All Staff

- To highlight potential risks to their line manager.
- To act in accordance with controls identified through the risk management process to mitigate risks.



Categories of Objectives (Risk Category)

Risk	Definition	Examples
Contractual	Failure of contractors to deliver services or products to the agreed cost and specification.	Contractor fails to deliver service on time.
Environmental	Relating to the environmental consequences of progressing the Council's strategic objectives.	Land use, recycling, pollution, net zero ambitions.
Financial	Affecting the ability of the Council to meet its financial commitments. These include internal budgetary pressures, the failure to purchase adequate insurance cover, external macro level economic changes or consequences. Associated with financial planning and control.	Cost of living, changes in interest rates, inflation, poverty indicators, budget overspends, level of council tax, level of reserves.
Fraud	Related to possible issues of fraud, either by employees, residents, or other stakeholders	Invoices for goods not delivered, claims for benefits not entitled to, false refunds paid.
Health & Safety	Associated with safeguarding workers and others who might be affected by your work activities.	Falls, trips, spills, slips etc that may result in an injury. Exposed electrical wires, lifting heavy boxes, working with poisonous substances.
Legal	Associated with current or potential changes in law. Related to possible breaches of legislation.	Human rights, appliance, or non-appliance of TUPE regulations. Client brings legal challenge.
Partnership	Failure of partnership arrangements to deliver services.	Partnership agencies do not have common goals
Physical	Affecting the building & plant/equipment. Related to	Offices in poor state of repair. use of equipment.

	hazards, fire, flood, security, health and safety.	
Political	Associated with the failure to deliver either local or central government policy or meet the local administration's manifesto commitment.	New political arrangements, political make-up.
Professional	Associated with the particular nature of each profession, internal protocols, and managerial abilities.	Staff restructure, key personnel, internal capacity.
Reputational	Publicity affecting the image, perception, and respect of an organisation. This can affect confidence, collaboration, credit worthiness, customer satisfaction, staff loyalty etc.	Poor performance, complaints, disagreements with partners
Social	Relating to the effects of changes in demographic, residential or socio-economic trends on the Council's ability to meet its objectives.	Aging population, health statistics, migration.
Technological	The pace/scale of changes in technology, or the ability to use technology to address changing demands. Can also include the consequences of technological failures.	Digital agenda, IT infrastructure, Staff/client needs, security standards.

Risk analysis methodology

Details of Risk

The details of the risk should include the cause of the impact and the impact on objectives which might arise (cause and consequence).

Current Risk Rating

Risks are assessed for their impact on the business of the Council and the likelihood of them occurring. Impact and likelihood scores are combined using a 5 x 5 matrix to give a high, medium, or low rating.

Likelihood

- 1 = Zero to Very Low Likelihood
- 2 = Unlikely
- 3 = Likely
- 4 = Very Likely
- 5 = Almost Certain

Impact

- 1 = Zero to Very Low Impact
- 2 = Minor Impact
- 3 = Medium Impact
- 4 = Major Impact
- 5 = Major Disaster

The risk rating is calculated by multiplying the impact and likelihood together and then depending on the score they are sorted into high, medium, or low risks.

Impact x Likelihood = Risk Rating

Risk Score	Matrix Category
16 to 25	High
9 to 15	Medium
1 to 8	Low

Controlled Risk Rating

After having established the current level of risk (High, Medium, Low), a review of the actual measures in place or to be put in place to control the risk to an acceptable/tolerable level should be undertaken. This may affect the impact or likelihood rating (or both) and in turn produce a lower 'controlled' risk rating. In some cases, it may not be possible to lower the rating even with controls in place.

Actions may differ according to the rating of the risk:

- Red (High risk)
Controls should be put in place to achieve a lower 'controlled' risk rating. If the risk cannot be controlled to an acceptable level (green/amber) it should be escalated as appropriate to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Amber (Medium risk)
Controls should be put in place and the risk monitored regularly. Managers should ensure they maintain an awareness of these risks.
- Green (low risk)
This is an acceptable risk and should be monitored appropriately.

Risk Registers

Corporate and Service Risk Registers are held in the Pentana Performance & Risk System.

This document can be made available on request, in other languages and formats (large print, Braille, or on audit tape) by contacting:

Finance Services
Blaby District Council
Council Offices
Narborough
Leicester
LE19 2EP

Tel: 0116 2727625
Email: finance@blaby.gov.uk

Blaby District Council

Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting	13 July 2023
Title of Report	Unaudited Statement of Accounts 2022/23
Report Author	Finance Group Manager

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The report sets out details of the Council's financial performance for 2022/23, covering the General Fund, the Capital Programme, the Collection Fund, and treasury management activities.
- 1.2 It also provides Members with details of the key balance sheet movements that are reflected in the draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the financial performance for 2022/23 is accepted.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 To give Members the opportunity to comment and ask questions in respect of the Council's financial performance, and unaudited accounts for 2022/23.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Council is required to prepare its annual accounts in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code), and in line with International Financial reporting Standards (IFRS). The reason for this is to attempt to produce the accounts in a standardised and consistent format across both the public and private sectors, and to give greater transparency to stakeholders.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require local authorities to publish their audited accounts by 30th September 2023. This means that the public inspection period for 2022/23 must commence on 1st June 2023, meaning that the unaudited accounts had to be signed off by the Executive Director (Section 151) and published on the Council's website by 31st May 2023.

Blaby was one of only 30% of local authorities across England that met the deadline for publishing their unaudited accounts.

To give further context for new Members of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, since the onset of Covid-19, local authorities in general have experienced significant delays with the timely completion of the audit of accounts, even though publication dates were relaxed between 2020/21 and 2022/23. These delays have mainly centred around the difficulties that external audit firms have experienced in recruiting suitably qualified public sector auditors, and consequently being unable to adequately resource their audits.

In Blaby's case, the 2019/20 audited accounts were not signed off and published until August 2021, and the audit of the 2020/21 accounts has still not been completed. The consequences of this are that our auditors, Ernst & Young, are not expected to commence the audit of the 2021/22 accounts until later this year, and the 2022/23 audit will probably not take place until mid-2024. Furthermore, until the audits are brought up to date, there is always the possibility that the accounts may need restating due to the passage of time, and this creates uncertainty for the Council when considering its future spending plans.

4.2 General Fund Revenue Account

The Council's net expenditure for 2022/23 is summarised in Appendix A.

When the Quarter 3 budget review report was presented to Cabinet Executive in February 2023, the forecast outturn was that a contribution from balances of £715,058 would be required. This was on the back of various cost pressures arising out of the current economic climate, including increased fuel prices, the war in the Ukraine, spiralling inflation, and various key income streams struggling to recover to pre-pandemic levels. At that point it was recognised that there was a risk that some of the more demand-led income streams could fail to improve by the end of the financial year. By year end, further updates resulted in a slight reduction in the contribution from balances from £715,058 to £652,958.

However, despite this challenging economic environment, the Council has managed to achieve a slight surplus for 2022/23, resulting in a contribution to balances of £20,535. This surplus has arisen due, primarily, to vacant posts during the financial year, and investment income performing significantly better than budgeted as interest rates have continued to rise. Although this is a positive outcome for 2022/23, it should be noted that the economic climate is still creating a great deal of uncertainty and there are a number of ongoing cost pressures that may affect the Council's financial position in 2023/24.

The first of these is that the annual pay award has yet to be agreed for all employees and there is a strong likelihood that the budgeted pay award of 3% will be insufficient. For every 1% that the pay award exceeds the budget, the cost will be approximately £145,000. Whilst vacant posts may reduce the financial impact, they create additional pressure on the rest of the workforce and can affect service delivery standards unless filled quickly.

In addition to this, many of our key income streams, such as planning, building control, and car parking fees, have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. There is also a continuing high demand for temporary accommodation which results in pressure on the Housing Service and, in financial terms, on housing benefit subsidy recoverable.

The table below gives a snapshot of the main variances against the revised budget.

	£	
<u>Underspends and Additional Income</u>		
Establishment	(466,299)	Savings arising from vacant posts
Investment income	(378,213)	Due to base rate increases and continued high level of cash
New Burdens Grants	(167,415)	Towards administration of business grants, council tax energy rebate, and test and trace scheme
Revenue funding of Capital Programme	(145,281)	Capital schemes delayed until 2023/24
<u>Overspends and Reduced Income</u>		
Housing Benefit payable net of Subsidy	315,773	Cap on temporary accommodation costs recoverable through subsidy
Enderby Road Industrial Estate	134,071	Costs relating to vacant units
Planning fees	95,388	
Car parking fees and charges	82,250	

Carry Forward of Unspent Budgets

As part of the closedown process an exercise has been undertaken to identify where it is reasonable to carry forward unspent budgets from 2022/23 to the new financial year. As a rule, this applies to one-off project related budgets, which are usually externally funded. A total of £3,604,756 has been carried forward to 2023/24, of which £3,255,290 relates specifically to external funding, which is ring fenced and cannot be used for anything other than what it is initially intended for. Included within this amount are two significant grants from DEFRA (Particulates Matter and Let's Go Electric) for £728,822, and the Better Care Fund (Lightbulb Green Grants) for £675,000, as well as unspent UK Shared Prosperity Fund monies.

Earmarked Reserves

In addition to the General Fund balance the Council also maintains several Earmarked Reserves. Some of these are set aside for specific purposes whilst others have been created to mitigate the uncertainties that still surround local government funding and to support Spend to Save opportunities. A detailed breakdown of the movement on Earmarked Reserves appears at Appendix B. The overall balance on Earmarked Reserves has decreased from £14,080,669 at the beginning of the financial year to £12,735,996 on 31st March 2023. However, it should be noted that £1,516,792 of the year-end balance is technically not available for use. This is the balance set aside, as described in the following paragraph – Business Rates Retention – to mitigate the Collection Fund deficit on 31st March 2023.

General Fund Balances

As a result of the outturn referred to above, £20,535 has been added to the General Fund balance. This leaves a year-end balance of £4,619,444, representing 35.91% of the budgeted net revenue expenditure for 2022/23, but only 29.90% when considering planned contributions to support the budget in 2023/24. The Council's upper limit, set as part of its policy on reserves, is 35%.

4.3 Business Rates Retention

When setting the budget for 2022/23 it was expected that business rates income would be approximately £50.3m, of which Blaby's share would be £20.1m (40%). This allowed for ongoing retail relief to certain businesses although at a much-reduced level compared to the two previous years. There was also the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) for which Section 31 grant funding was carried over from 2022/23, and this amounted to £2.3m, which was paid to businesses that met the Council's criteria in 2022/23.

The outturn income from business rates in 2022/23 was £51.2m of which Blaby's share was just under £20.5m. The difference between the budgeted NNDR income and the outturn position flows through the Collection Fund, resulting in a reduction to the deficit. This will then be taken into account when setting the budget for 2024/25. Out of the income share of £20.1m, the Council is required to pay a tariff to central government (£14.5m) and a levy on growth (£2.9m – including an adjustment to the 2020/21 levy), giving a net income from business rates of £2.7m. This is supplemented by Section 31 grant compensation in respect of various reliefs implemented by government (£2.8m). The Council also has to make good its share of the estimated deficit at 31st March 2022, which equates to a further £2.8m, although this is covered by the Section 31 Grant Reserve. A further £0.7m was added to the NNDR Income Reserve to bring the net of all NNDR-related transactions to the £4.7m estimated when the budget was set.

In overall terms, the Business Rates Collection Fund has moved from a deficit of £11,035,638 on 31st March 2022 to a reduced deficit of £3,238,781 on 31st March 2023. Blaby's share of that deficit is £1,295,511 (£4,414,254 on 31st March 2022).

Due to the way in which local authorities are required to account for business rates income, the year-end deficit will not be felt until 2023/24 and beyond. The Council has already allowed for an estimated deficit of £1,313,331, when setting the 2023/24 budget; the difference between the estimated deficit and actual deficit will be brought into account in the 2024/25 budget setting process. There is a balance of £1,516,792 remaining in the Section 31 Grant Reserve, which will cover Blaby's share of the actual deficit on 31st March 2023.

4.4 Council Tax

The Council Tax Collection Fund has moved from a deficit of £730,652 on 31st March 2022 to a deficit of £829,079 at the end of 2022/23. This represents an in-year deficit of £98,427. The outturn position was not as good as than anticipated when setting the 2023/24 budget (£453,150). This is because the net debit was lower than expected, and bad debts written off in the last quarter also had a negative impact on the final position.

Blaby's share of the deficit on 31st March 2023 is £117,574 compared with the previous year deficit share of £104,874.

Accounting for council tax is similar to NNDR, in that any difference between the estimated income and the outturn income flows through the Collection Fund in the form of a surplus or deficit. That surplus or deficit will then be factored in when setting the 2024/25 budget.

4.5 The Capital Programme

In 2022/23 the Council spent £2,331,693 on Capital schemes, compared with the latest Capital Programme budget of £7,781,175. This represents an underspend of £5,449,482 or 70.04% against planned capital expenditure, of which £5,439,203 has been carried forward to 2023/24 to enable the schemes to be completed.

Appendix C shows expenditure against the budget by scheme, whilst the table below provides a high-level summary of capital expenditure and financing.

<u>Capital Expenditure:</u>	Approved Budget £	Revised Budget £	Actual Outturn £	(Under)/ Overspend £
Invest to Save Schemes	0	2,721,917	199,175	(2,522,742)
Essential/Contractual Schemes	1,690,500	2,738,108	1,159,610	(1,578,498)
Desirable Schemes	0	220,000	20,000	(200,000)
Externally Funded Schemes	700,000	2,071,531	952,908	(1,118,623)
Other Schemes	12,000	7,685	0	(7,685)
Contingency Budget	50,000	21,934	0	(21,934)
Total Capital Expenditure	2,452,500	7,781,175	2,331,693	(5,449,482)
<u>Financed by:</u>				
Borrowing	1,118,500	4,665,760	910,265	(3,755,495)
Capital Receipts	534,000	387,495	135,837	(251,658)
Earmarked Reserves	0	264,714	224,514	(40,200)
Revenue Contributions	100,000	153,171	43,005	(110,166)
External Funding	700,000	2,310,035	1,018,072	(1,291,963)
Total Capital Financing	2,452,500	7,781,175	2,331,693	(5,449,482)

The main variances against budget are as follows:

- Regeneration Property - £2,500,000 approved by Council in November 2022. No appropriate opportunities for investment arose during 2022/23.
- Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) – Underspend of £758,526. Expenditure has increased in comparison to recent years, but this is largely due to the impact of inflation on labour and materials prices. There is still a waiting list with Adult Social Care occupational therapists to undertake assessments.
- Refurbishment of vacant units at industrial estate - £450,000. Planned to commence in March 2023 to let the units to a prospective new tenant by 1st April. Discussions with the prospective tenant continued and agreement made for the start date to be extended so that more extensive works could be undertaken to make the units fit for purpose before letting.
- Section 106 Contributions - £289,617: A total of £243,715 was carried forward from 2021/22 with additional contributions to the value of £125,194 being allocated to various community projects during the financial year. Projects to the value of £79,292 were completed by 31st March 2023 with the remaining balance being carried forward for completion in 2023/24.
- Replacement Boiler at the Council Offices - £234,838: Delayed whilst the specification was reviewed to try to reduce costs. This proved to be unsuccessful, and works are now underway.
- Bouskell Park Car Park Improvements - £200,000: Latest estimates suggest that the proposed works would cost double the amount budgeted. To be deferred pending the outcome of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy.

4.6 Treasury Management

Full details of the Council's treasury activities during 2022/23 are included in the Treasury Outturn report to Cabinet Executive on 10th July 2023.

The following table shows the Council's overall treasury position on 31st March 2023 compared with the position 12 months earlier. This excludes other long-term liabilities such as finance lease arrangements.

	Principal at 31 st March 2022	Rate/ Return	Average Life	Principal at 31 st March 2023	Rate/ Return	Average Life
PWLB Debt	£6,141,780	2.24%	17.1 years	£5,929,939	2.24%	16.1 years
Market Debt	£2,000,000	1.75%	0.8 years	0	n/a	n/a
Total debt	£8,141,780	2.12%	14.8 years	£5,929,939	2.24%	16.1 years
Capital Financing Requirement	£13,965,132			£14,486,025		
Over/(under) borrowing	(£5,823,352)			(£8,556,086)		
Short Term investments	(£35,560,000)	0.36%		(£25,456,000)	3.98%	
Long Term Investments	(£1,093,910)	3.46%		(£844,874)	4.84%	
Net debt	(£28,512,130)			(£34,856,960)		

The interest rates in the table above are based on the loans and investments outstanding at the year end and are not necessarily the same as the average rate payable during the financial year.

During 2022/23, the Council maintained an under-borrowed position. This meant that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), was not fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. This strategy was prudent as investment returns were initially low and minimising counterparty risk on placing investments also needed to be considered. One non-Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) loan of £2m was repaid in January 2023, meaning that the gross debt position fell to £5.9m at the end of the financial year.

4.7 Financial Statements

In 2022/23 there were only minor changes in terms of new accounting standards, none of which had any material effect on the format and content of Blaby's accounts.

The net asset position on the Balance Sheet has increased from £3.921m on 31st March 2022 to £35.151m at 31st March 2023. The main reason for this is due to a reduction in the net pension liability following the triennial

review undertaken by the actuary in March 2022. The data from the triennial review was unavailable to us at the time the 2021/22 accounts were produced, but they now been reflected in the 2022/23 accounts. This may lead to the need to restate the March 2022 Balance Sheet once the 2021/22 audit has taken place, although the result for 2022/23 should be unchanged. The large pension gain in 2022/23 has arisen because of the impact of inflation on the discount rate used to calculate the net liability.

Other significant movements on the Balance Sheet include:

- Short Term Investments/Cash and Cash Equivalents have reduced from £36.957m to £25.829m. This reflects the repayment of government grants paid on account to cover business grant schemes, and various reliefs designed to help businesses during the pandemic.
- Short Term Debtors have reduced from £7.844m to £5.593m. This is primarily due to the government share of the business rates deficit for 2021/22 being cleared.
- Short Term Borrowing – down from £2.244m to £0.241m due to repayment of a maturity loan in January 2023.
- Short Term Creditors have fallen from £29.249m to £18.143m. This is partly due to £5.5m government grant received in advance in 2021/22 to fund the Council Tax Energy Rebate scheme, which was distributed to residents in 2022/23. Also due to repayment of Section 31 grants paid on account.
- Unusable Reserves – these are non-cash backed reserves that reflect adjustments made to bring IFRS-based accounting entries into line with legislative requirements. The Balance Sheet position has changed by £31.231m which is the opposite accounting entry to recognise the movement in the net pension liability.

The Council's borrowing requirement increased by £0.521m in year, which represents the additional capital expenditure incurred in 2022/23 that has yet to be funded by capital receipts, grants and contributions, or revenue resources. Overall borrowing fell by £2.212m leading to an increase in the Council's "under-borrowed" position as internal resources continue to be used as a cheaper form of financing capital expenditure than external borrowing.

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

5.1 Not applicable.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1

Current Risk	Actions to reduce the risks
That the draft accounts are misstated.	The accounts presented at Appendix D are subject to independent inspection by the Council's external auditors, Ernst & Young (EY). The audit is not expected to commence until Summer 2024.

7. Other options considered

- 7.1 None. It is good practice to give Members an opportunity to review the financial performance and comment on the headline issues affecting the 2022/23 accounts.

8. Other significant issues

- 8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

9. Appendix

- 9.1 Appendix A – General Fund Revenue Account Summary 2022/23
- 9.2 Appendix B – Earmarked Reserves
- 9.3 Appendix C – Capital Expenditure and Financing 2022/23
- 9.4 Appendix D – Unaudited Statement of Accounts 2022/23

10. Background paper(s)

None.

11. Report author's contact details

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OUTTURN SUMMARY BY PORTFOLIO 2022/23
APPENDIX A

	Approved Budget 2022'23 £	Revised Estimate 2022'23 £	Outturn 2022'23 £	Variance vs Revised £
Expenditure by Portfolio:				
Finance, People & Performance	2,960,187.00	3,247,432.00	2,635,010.91	(612,421.09)
Housing, Community & Environmental Services	3,281,802.00	3,911,990.00	2,621,855.81	(1,290,134.19)
Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement & Business Support Leader	4,614,827.00	4,027,813.00	2,400,613.21	(1,627,199.79)
Neighbourhood Services & Assets	1,728,722.00	1,778,071.00	1,665,928.10	(112,142.90)
Planning Delivery, Enforcement & Corporate Transformation	5,135,841.00	5,823,593.00	5,231,202.46	(592,390.54)
	1,916,804.00	2,778,792.82	2,021,550.99	(757,241.83)
	19,638,183.00	21,567,691.82	16,576,161.48	(4,991,530.34)
Central Items:				
Revenue Contributions towards Capital Expenditure	100,000.00	412,800.00	267,519.14	(145,280.86)
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,173,162.00	389,373.00	389,373.00	0.00
Other Appropriations & Accounting Adjustments	(7,426,799.00)	(5,635,397.00)	(4,948,356.29)	687,040.71
Contribution to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(230,940.00)	(3,225,468.00)	557,137.64	3,782,605.64
	13,253,606.00	13,508,999.82	12,841,834.97	(667,164.85)
Financed By:				
NNDR	(3,158,352.00)	(3,063,563.00)	(2,683,699.00)	379,864.00
Contributions from NNDR Reserves	(2,145,760.00)	(1,726,457.00)	(2,001,811.00)	(275,354.00)
S31 Grant - Business Rates Compensation	(2,214,888.00)	(2,728,979.00)	(2,818,854.00)	(89,875.00)
NNDR (Surplus)/Deficit	2,768,199.00	2,768,199.00	2,766,263.00	(1,936.00)
<i>Sub-total: Total NNDR-related Transactions</i>	(4,750,801.00)	(4,750,800.00)	(4,738,101.00)	12,699.00
New Homes Bonus	(1,020,820.00)	(1,020,820.00)	(1,020,820.00)	0.00
Lower Tier Services Grant	(867,225.00)	(867,225.00)	(867,225.00)	0.00
Services Grant	(153,747.00)	(153,747.00)	(153,747.00)	0.00
Levy Account Surplus Grant	0.00	0.00	(18,704.00)	(18,704.00)
Revenue Support Grant	0.00	0.00	(323.00)	(323.00)
BDC Demand on Collection Fund	(6,106,661.00)	(6,106,661.00)	(6,106,661.00)	0.00
Council Tax (Surplus)/Deficit	43,211.00	43,211.00	43,211.00	0.00
	(12,856,043.00)	(12,856,042.00)	(12,862,370.00)	(6,328.00)
Overspend/(Underspend) for year	397,563.00	652,957.82	(20,535.03)	(673,492.85)
Contribution to/(from) General Fund Balances	(397,563.00)	(652,957.82)	20,535.03	673,492.85

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2022/23

APPENDIX B

TRANSFERS TO/FROM EARMARKED RESERVES

	GL Code	Balance at 31/03/21 £	Reallocated Reserves £	Contributions from I&E A/c £	Utilisation of Balances £	Balance at 31/03/22 £	Reallocated Reserves £	Contributions from I&E A/c £	Utilisation of Balances £	Balance at 31/03/23 £
Leisure Centre Renewals Fund	9999/VBA	(79,364)	0	0	17,004	(62,361)	0	(11,246)	0	(73,607)
Computer Room Environment	9999/VBB	(128,018)	(140,000)	0	12,611	(255,407)	0	0	114,567	(140,840)
Licensing Reserve	9999/VBC	(27,868)	0	0	0	(27,868)	0	0	0	(27,868)
Insurance Reserve Fund	9999/VBD	(100,000)	0	0	0	(100,000)	0	0	0	(100,000)
Blaby Plan Priorities Reserve	9999/VBJ	(563,607)	(200,000)	0	310,940	(452,667)	0	0	86,843	(365,824)
General Reserve Fund	9999/VBK	(1,697,764)	0	0	0	(1,697,764)	0	(50,000)	85,454	(1,662,310)
Ongoing Projects Reserve	9999/VBM	(2,179,548)	0	(2,697,123)	1,953,608	(2,923,063)	0	(3,599,422)	2,759,644	(3,762,841)
Elections Reserve	9999/VBQ	(92,463)	0	(29,481)	0	(121,944)	0	(20,000)	0	(141,944)
Choice Based Lettings Reserve	9999/VBR	(952)	0	0	0	(952)	0	0	0	(952)
New Homes Bonus Reserve	9999/VBT	(41,327)	0	0	0	(41,327)	0	0	0	(41,327)
COVID Support Reserve	9999/VBU	0	(700,000)	0	0	(700,000)	0	0	0	(700,000)
Economic Development Initiatives	9999/VBX	(50,000)	0	0	0	(50,000)	0	0	0	(50,000)
Provision - ERIE Sinking Fund	9999/VCA	(41,717)	0	0	7,063	(34,654)	0	0	7,877	(26,777)
Community Rights Reserve	9999/VCB	(48,724)	0	0	0	(48,724)	0	0	0	(48,724)
Hardship Reserve	9999/VCD	(250,000)	0	(75,000)	0	(325,000)	0	0	0	(325,000)
Parish New Homes Bonus Reserve	9999/VCE	(881)	0	0	0	(881)	0	0	0	(881)
NNDR Income Reserve	9999/VCF	(1,702,174)	0	0	0	(1,702,174)	0	(751,752)	0	(2,453,926)
Flexible Working Reserve	9999/VCG	(94,678)	(100,000)	0	32,000	(162,678)	0	0	0	(162,678)
Local Plan Reserve	9999/VCJ	(483,595)	0	0	0	(483,595)	0	(40,000)	67,289	(456,306)
Lottery Reserve	9999/VCK	(20,712)	0	(5,855)	5,435	(21,132)	0	(5,334)	0	(26,466)
IT System Replacement Reserve	9999/VCL	(71,315)	0	0	16,900	(54,415)	0	0	14,600	(39,815)
Property Fund Reserve	9999/VCM	(50,656)	0	(37,806)	0	(88,462)	0	(40,000)	0	(128,462)
Tax Income Guarantee Reserve	9999/VCN	(1,379,731)	0	0	1,379,731	0	0	0	0	0
S31 Grant Reserve	9999/VCO	(9,488,745)	0	0	5,218,390	(4,270,355)	0	0	2,753,563	(1,516,792)
Huncote Major Emergency Reserve	9999/VCP	0	(500,000)	0	76,567	(423,433)	(100,000)	0	72,590	(450,843)
Court Fees Income Reserve	9999/VCQ	0	0	(31,813)	0	(31,813)	0	0	0	(31,813)
		(18,593,838)	(1,640,000)	(2,877,079)	9,030,248	(14,080,669)	(100,000)	(4,517,754)	5,962,427	(12,735,996)
Less Earmarked Reserves set aside to meet the Collection Fund Deficit		4,270,355				4,270,355				1,516,792
Usable Earmarked Reserves		(14,323,484)				(9,810,314)				(11,219,204)

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - QUARTER ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

	Original Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Budgets Brought Forward from 2021/22 £	Additions and Transfers £	Project completed Saving realised £	Latest Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Capital Expenditure to 31/03/23 £	Variance as at 31/03/23 £
<u>Invest to Save Schemes</u>							
Regeneration Property	0	0	2,500,000	0	2,500,000	0	2,500,000
Huncote Landfill Gas Works to facilitate early re-opening	0	0	95,775	0	95,775	95,775	0
Installation of LED Lighting at Council Offices	0	25,492	0	0	25,492	22,000	3,492
Revenues & Benefits - Document Management & MyView	0	100,650	0	0	100,650	81,400	19,250
Sub Total - Invest to Save Schemes	0	126,142	2,595,775	0	2,721,917	199,175	2,522,742
<u>Essential/Contractual Schemes</u>							
Refurbishment of Vacant Units, Enderby Road Industrial Estate	0	0	450,000	0	450,000	0	450,000
Huncote Landfill Gas Remedial Works	0	0	204,955	0	204,955	204,955	0
Walk & Ride Blaby	180,000	0	(40,000)	0	140,000	0	140,000
Extension of Enderby Leisure Centre Car Park	150,000	0	40,000	0	190,000	0	190,000
Capital Grants Programme	54,500	14,574	(16,496)	0	52,578	51,949	629
Blaby Town Centre Improvements	0	81,626	0	0	81,626	53,024	28,602
Blaby Town Centre Toilets	100,000	0	69,801	0	169,801	53,411	116,390
Conversion of the Old Bank, Narborough	0	38,282	0	0	38,282	1,686	36,596
Works to Landfill Gas Monitoring System, Pavilion	0	10,794	137	0	10,931	0	10,931
Replacement of Air Quality Analysers	10,000	28,854	0	0	38,854	9,211	29,643
Income Management System	20,000	0	0	0	20,000	0	20,000
Financial Management System	0	4,030	0	0	4,030	3,187	843
HR & Payroll System	0	250,000	(100,000)	0	150,000	0	150,000
End User Device Replacement	0	24,805	0	0	24,805	24,805	0
Network Refresh	0	57,000	0	0	57,000	39,401	17,599
Data Centre	0	118,000	0	0	118,000	114,567	3,433
Office 365 Consultancy	0	38,000	(32,000)	0	6,000	1,139	4,861
Network Upgrades - Phase 2	46,000	0	(46,000)	0	0	0	0
ICT Security Upgrades	107,000	0	(95,850)	0	11,150	11,150	0
Fleet Vehicle Replacement Programme	500,000	53,897	(457,195)	0	96,702	96,702	0
Vehicle CCTV & Tracking Upgrade	47,000	0	0	0	47,000	0	47,000
Resurfacing of Main & Overflow Car Parks, Fosse Meadows	150,000	0	0	0	150,000	149,996	4
Entrance & Path Improvements at the Osiers, Braunstone	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	9,984	16
Regrade and dress pathway, Whetstone Way, Whetstone	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	10,000	0
Regrade and dress pathway at Whistle Way, Narborough	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	9,991	9
Crow Mills: Steps Fencing & Paths Upgrade	19,000	0	0	0	19,000	19,000	0
Regrade and dress pathway, Countesthorpe Country Park	10,000	0	0	0	10,000	9,990	10
Improvements to Footpaths at the Osiers, Braunstone	0	15,000	0	0	15,000	15,000	0
Fosse Meadows - Gates, Fencing and Footpaths	13,000	0	0	0	13,000	13,000	0
Performance Management System	0	17,000	(17,000)	0	0	0	0
Replacement of Corporate GIS System	0	18,120	0	0	18,120	14,600	3,520
Replacement Plan Printer	0	0	11,850	0	11,850	11,850	0
Council Offices - Green Heating Solution	0	111,934	128,066	0	240,000	5,162	234,838
Council Offices - Work Stations Upgrades	0	17,296	0	0	17,296	0	17,296
Refurbishment of Council Offices	250,000	50,000	(100,000)	0	200,000	129,348	70,652
Resurfacing of Car Parks	0	91,268	1,734	0	93,002	93,002	0
Renovation of the Ice House, Bouskell Park, Blaby	0	1,649	0	0	1,649	0	1,649
Active Blaby Website Enhancement	4,000	3,477	0	0	7,477	3,500	3,977
Sub Total - Essential & Contractual Schemes	1,690,500	1,045,606	2,002	0	2,738,108	1,159,610	1,578,498
<u>Desirable Schemes (subject to affordability)</u>							
Green Community Grants	0	3,504	16,496	0	20,000	20,000	0
Car Park and bridge improvements, Bouskell Park, Blaby	0	200,000	0	0	200,000	0	200,000
Sub Total - Desirable Schemes	0	203,504	16,496	0	220,000	20,000	200,000
<u>Externally Funded Schemes</u>							
Disabled Facilities Grants	630,000	1,116,455	(137,077)	0	1,609,378	850,852	758,526
Housing Support Grants	30,000	23,244	0	0	53,244	22,764	30,480
Empty Property Grants & Loans	0	28,049	0	(28,049)	0	0	0
Air Quality Action Plan	0	7,734	(7,734)	0	0	0	0
Hardware for IER Implementation	0	3,057	(3,057)	0	0	0	0
CCTV cameras, Blaby Town Centre & Narborough Station	40,000	0	0	0	40,000	0	40,000
Section 106-backed Schemes	0	243,715	125,194	0	368,909	79,292	289,617
Sub Total - Externally Funded Schemes	700,000	1,422,254	(22,674)	(28,049)	2,071,531	952,908	1,118,623
<u>Other Schemes</u>							
Land Charges & Customer Portal	0	26,675	0	(26,675)	0	0	0
iDox Software Upgrade	0	390	0	0	390	0	390
Enabling Microsoft Teams	0	9,969	0	(9,969)	0	0	0
Council Offices - New Exterior Lighting and Signage	0	1,542	0	0	1,542	0	1,542
Council Offices - Replacement of Fire Escape Doors	0	5,753	0	0	5,753	0	5,753
Update to Social Prescribing System	12,000	0	0	(12,000)	0	0	0
Asset Management Group Contingency	50,000	0	(28,066)	0	21,934	0	21,934
Sub Total - Other Schemes	62,000	44,329	(28,066)	(48,644)	29,619	0	29,619
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23	2,452,500	2,841,835	2,563,533	(76,693)	7,781,175	2,331,693	5,449,482

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - QUARTER ENDED 31ST MARCH 2023

	Original Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Budgets Brought Forward from 2021/22 £	Additions and Transfers £	Project completed Saving realised £	Latest Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Capital Expenditure to 31/03/23 £	Variance as at 31/03/23 £
<u>FINANCED BY:</u>	Original Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Budgets Brought Forward from 2021/22 £	Additions and Transfers £	Project completed Saving realised £	Latest Capital Programme 2022/23 £	Capital Expenditure to 31/03/23 £	Variance as at 31/03/23 £
Borrowing	1,118,500	600,931	2,968,298	(21,969)	4,665,760	910,265	3,755,495
Capital Receipts	534,000	438,873	(558,703)	(26,675)	387,495	135,837	251,658
Capital Grants & Contributions	700,000	1,425,831	184,204	0	2,310,035	1,018,072	1,291,963
Capital Reserves	0	324,763	(32,000)	(28,049)	264,714	224,514	40,200
Revenue Funded Capital Expenditure	100,000	51,437	1,734	0	153,171	43,005	110,166
TOTAL FUNDING	2,452,500	2,841,835	2,563,533	(76,693)	7,781,175	2,331,693	5,449,482

BLABY DISTRICT COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

2022/23

(SUBJECT TO AUDIT)

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NARRATIVE REPORT BY SARAH PENNELLI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (SECTION 151)

I am pleased to present Blaby District Council's Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2023. The published accounts are an important element of the overall arrangements for demonstrating the Council's financial stewardship of public money. Although the accounts are backward-looking, they provide the context for the ongoing challenges and pressures on the Council's financial position. Although Covid-19 is no longer as widespread as it was pre-2022/23, some of our key income streams have yet to recover to pre-pandemic levels. In addition to this the war in the Ukraine, soaring energy prices, and inflation in general, have triggered a cost of living crisis that is impacting on residents as well as the Council itself. Despite this, thanks to the considerable efforts of officers across all services, the Council has been able to make a small, yet valuable, contribution to reserves.

During the pandemic, the government provided a range of support measures to help businesses and individuals, and many of these were managed and administered by the Council. Whilst those grant schemes are now closed, the ensuing financial crisis has led to some new grants being introduced to provide help with energy bills. The latest of these schemes, covering payments to individuals who have not received funding via their energy supplier, or who use alternative fuels, will continue into the early part of the 2023/24 financial year.

The future of local government funding remains uncertain, with the likelihood that the Fair Funding Review and expected reset of the business rates baseline will now take place no earlier than 1st April 2025. The financial results for 2022/23 are pleasing in that the call on reserves and balances did not materialise to the extent that was expected. However, there remains a significant risk to the Council's financial position in future years, subject to the outcome of the government's review.

Part of my role as Executive Director (Section 151) is to ensure that the Council's financial affairs are properly administered, and its financial position remains stable and robust. This is essential to ensure that the Council can continue to provide quality services to our residents.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is responsible for issuing regulations that cover the production and publication of local authority accounting statements. The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2022 specify that local authorities must publish their audited accounts for 2022/23 by 30th September 2023. The public inspection period commences on or before the first working day of June which effectively means that I must sign-off the unaudited accounts for publication by 31st May 2023 at the latest.

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23 (the Code). It aims to provide sufficient information to ensure that members of the public, including electors and residents of Blaby, Council Members, partners, stakeholders, and other interested parties can:

- Understand the overarching financial position of the Council and the outturn for 2022/23;
- Have confidence that the public money with which the Council has been entrusted has been used and accounted for in an appropriate manner; and
- Be assured that the financial position of the Council is sound and secure.

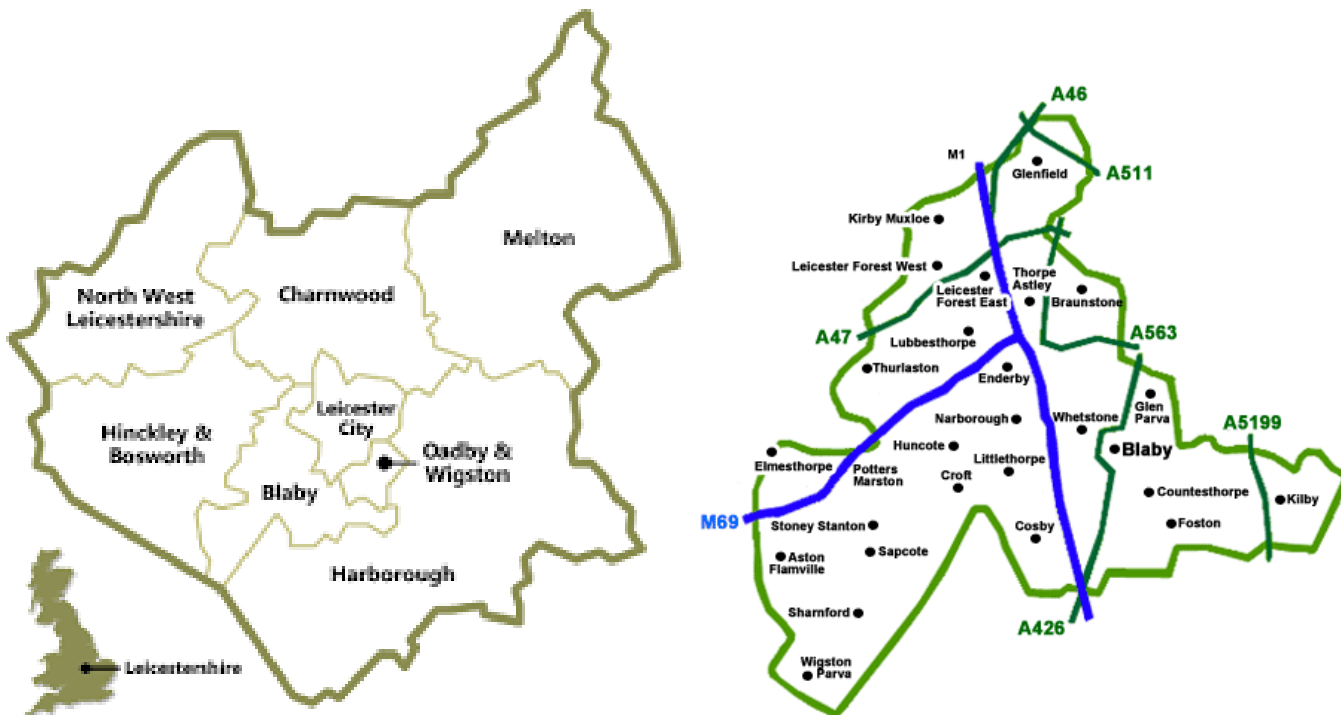
This Narrative Report provides an organisational overview of Blaby District Council and the external environment within which it operates. It also provides a summary of the financial position on 31st March 2023, including the following:

- About Blaby – key facts and figures
- The Blaby District Plan
- The 2022/23 Budget and Council Tax Setting Process
- The Capital Programme 2022/23
- The Council's financial performance in 2022/23
- Non-Financial Performance of the Council
- Performance against Corporate Objectives
- Other Issues
- Summary position
- Receipt of further information
- Acknowledgements

This is followed by an explanation of the Financial Statements and content of the Statement of Accounts.

About Blaby District Council

Blaby District Council is located in the southwest corner of Leicestershire within the East Midlands region. It is one of seven districts within the County, also bordering the City of Leicester. Blaby District covers a geographical area of about 129 km² and is a mix of urban and rural areas with 80% of the population living in areas classed as 'urban'. There are 27 settlements, which are diverse in nature and size.



There are major transport links running through the district including the M1 and the M69 the A563, A5460 and the B4114. Travel-to-work patterns indicate a strong functional relationship between the city and many settlements in the district.

The railway station at Narborough has direct links to Leicester and Birmingham. The district is within easy travelling distance of two international airports.

Fosse Park is within the district boundary and is one of the busiest retail parks in the country, attracting 11 million visitors a year. There are also large-scale business parks and business headquarters including Next and Santander within the District. There are also a number of headquarters for public sector organisations such as Leicestershire Police and Leicestershire County Council.

Key Facts and Information about Blaby

In Blaby, the population size has increased by 9.6%, from around 93,900 in 2011 to 102,900 in 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800. As of 2021, Blaby is the 12th most densely populated of the East Midlands' 35 local authority areas, with around six people living on each football pitch-sized area of land.

The graphic below shows the gender split and the age breakdown of the population in Blaby District.

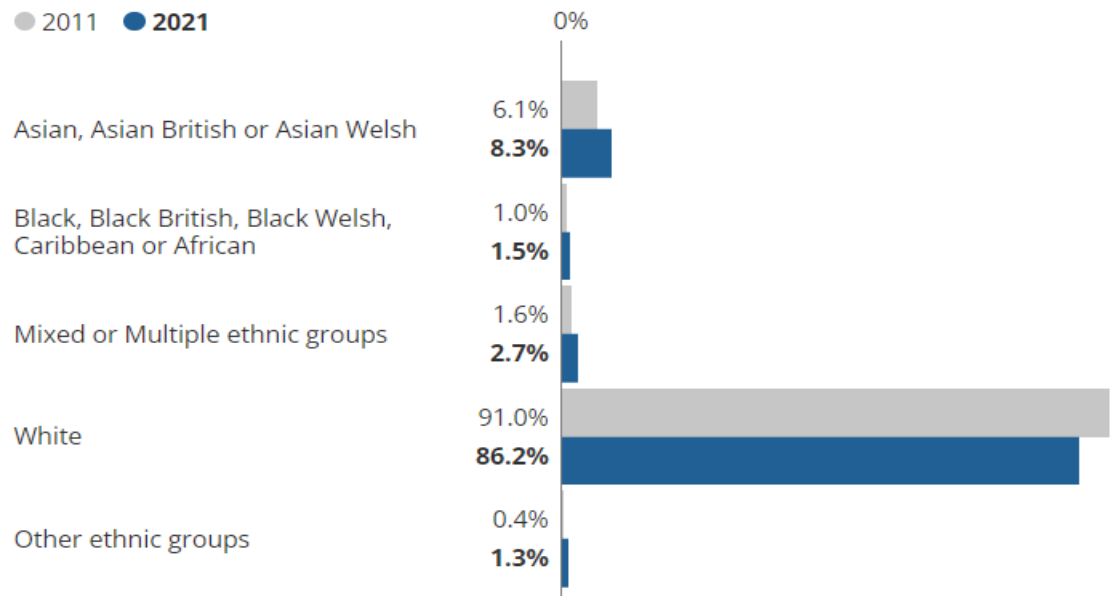


Age	2021
0-14	17.6%
15-24	9.8%
25-34	12.6%
35-44	12.8%
45-54	13.6%
55-64	13.1%
65-74	10.8%
75+	9.6%

Life expectancy is good at nearly 82 years for men women compared to 80 and 83 years nationally.

The ethnic minority population of the district has shown an increase when comparing the 2021 data against 2011. The ethnic minority proportion is at 13.8% compared to 9.1% in 2011.

Percentage of usual residents by ethnic group, **Blaby**



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

Employment

61.5% of Blaby's population is economically active and in employment. This is a reduction of 2.1% when compared to 2011, however the actual number has risen from 48,510 to 51,446, indicating that the proportion of economically inactive people has increased.

Unemployment is at 2.5% of residents who were economically active. This compares to 3.4% nationally.

36% of Blaby's population is now economically inactive.

Unemployment across the districts of South Leicestershire.

	Blaby	Leicester City	Harborough	Hinckley & Bosworth	Oadby & Wigston
Unemployment Census 2021 (ONS)	2.5%	5.0%	1.9%	2.2%	3.1%

Housing

As at February 2023 the average house price in the district is £305,240 compared to £302,212 for the whole of Leicestershire.

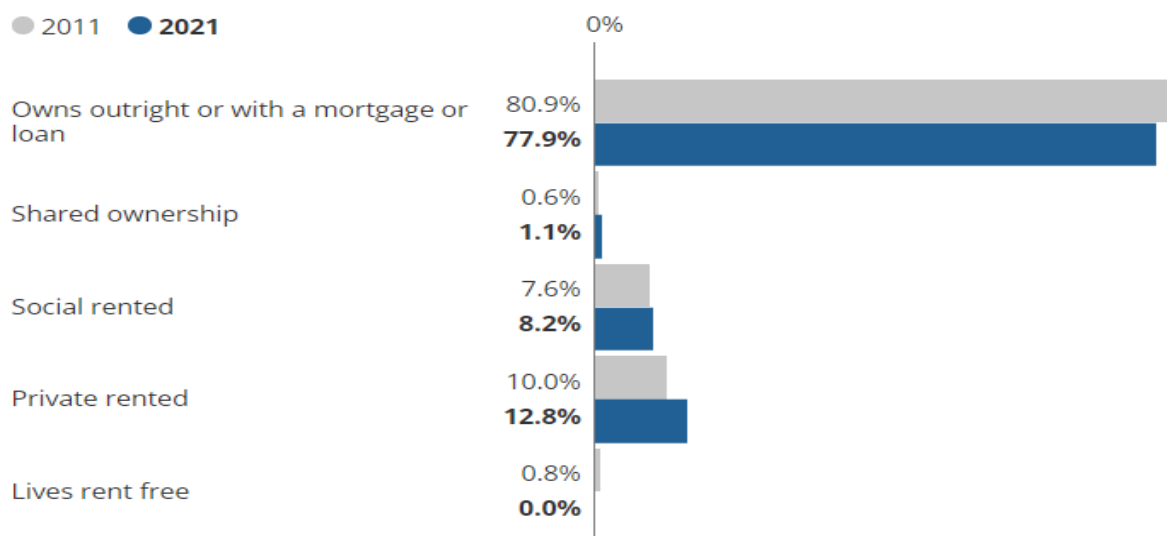
Blaby stood out from other areas for housing. The percentage of households in the social rented sector increased in Blaby but fell across the East Midlands.

In Blaby, the percentage of households in the social rented sector rose from 7.6% in 2011 to 8.2% in 2021. During the same period, the regional percentage fell from 15.8% to 14.9%.

Private renting in Blaby increased from 10.0% to 12.8%, while the rate of home ownership decreased from 80.9% to 77.9%.

Percentage of households by housing tenure, **Blaby**

● 2011 ● 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

Health

Health and recreation is well catered for in the district. We have nine strategic green spaces including Glen Parva Local Nature Reserve which received a Green Flag Award. Our community garden, 'A Place to Grow', helps to support positive health and wellbeing. There are two Council owned leisure centres managed on our behalf by Sport and Leisure Management Ltd.

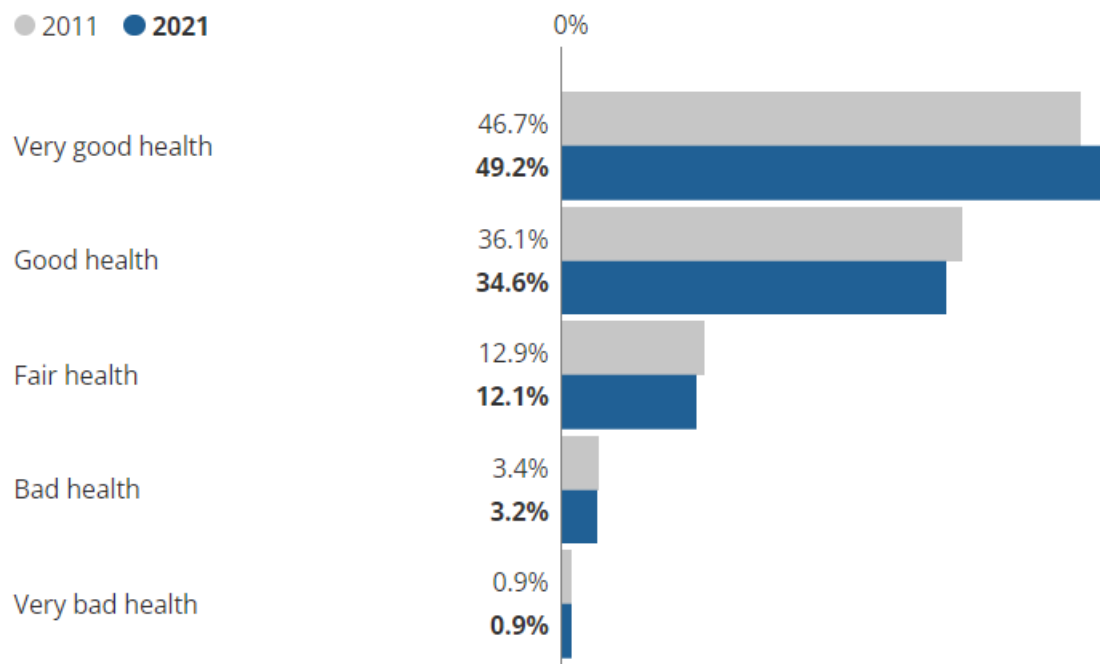
The graph below shows an increase in residents reporting themselves to be in very good health when comparing the 2021 with the 2011 census.

Age-standardised proportion of usual residents by self-reported health,

Blaby



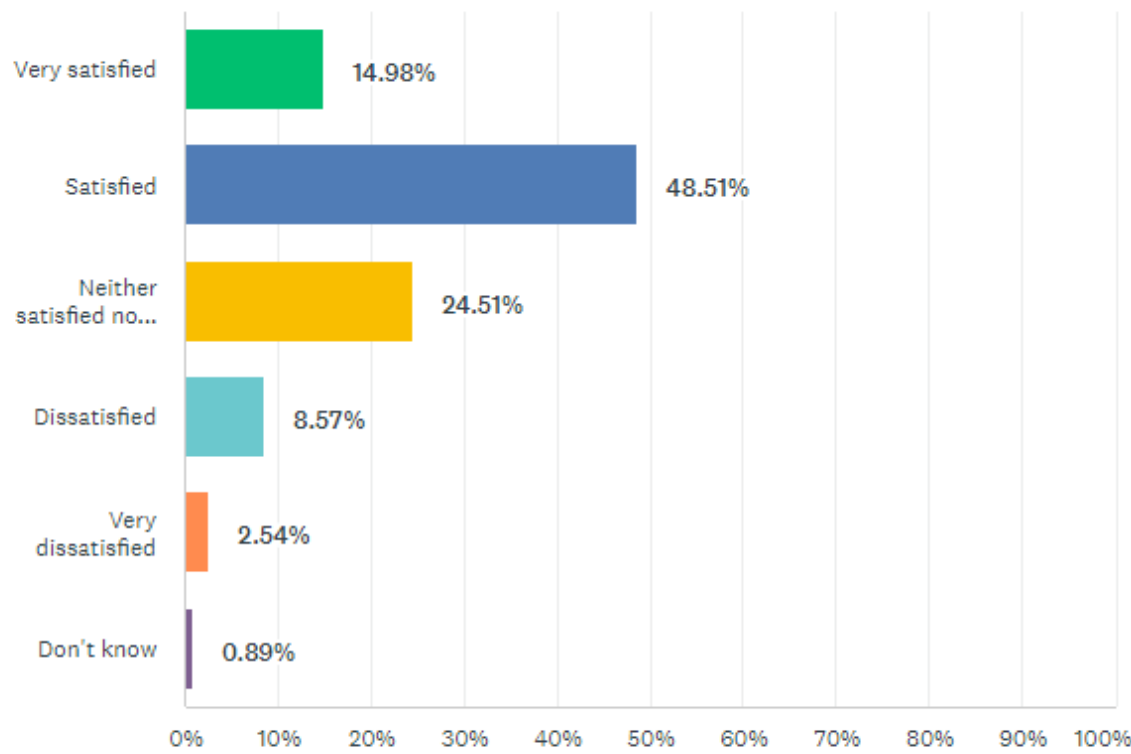
● 2011 ● 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – 2011 Census and Census 2021

Using data from the 2022 Residents' Survey, 63.5% of residents are satisfied with the way the Council operates and delivers services.

Overall, how satisfied, or dissatisfied are you with the way Blaby District Council runs their service?



Political Management Arrangements

During 2022/23 the Council comprised 39 elected Members representing 18 Wards in the District. Elections are held every four years, with the most recent being 4th May 2023. During 2022/23 the Local Boundary Commission undertook a boundary review, the result of which was that the number of District Councillors was reduced from 39 to 36. Alongside this there were changes to some of the previous ward names and boundaries, and these changes were implemented in the local elections held in May.

Members set the strategy and policy framework for the Council, and within which officers deliver services. Blaby operates a Cabinet Executive model which comprises five Cabinet Members. The Leader of the Council is Councillor Terry Richardson (Conservative), and the Deputy Leader is Councillor Maggie Wright (Conservative). The Leader has responsibility for the appointment of Members of the Cabinet, the allocation of Portfolios and the delegation of executive functions.

The Cabinet Executive is currently made up of five Members appointed by the Leader to make decisions on key strategic matters. Each Cabinet Member has portfolio responsibilities in respect of specific Council functions.

The current portfolios which broadly reflect the service groups within the Council are as follows:

1. Leader
2. Finance, People and Performance
3. Neighbourhood Services & Assets
4. Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement & Business Support
5. Housing, Community and Environmental Services
6. Planning Delivery and Enforcement, and Corporate Transformation

The Council had a majority Conservative administration during 2022/23, with the political make up as follows:

- 23 The Conservative Party
- 6 Liberal Democrats
- 6 The Labour Party
- 3 Independent
- 1 Green Party

The Council's Constitution is subject to a continuous review process and a delegation by exception scheme forms an integral part of the arrangements. Amendments to the Constitution are brought before Council as part of the continuous review process.

This political composition of the Council changed following the recent district election held on 4th May 2023, although the Conservative party still maintains overall control with a reduced majority. The political make up is now:

- 19 The Conservative Party
- 9 Liberal Democrats
- 6 The Labour Party
- 2 Green Party

Most of Blaby District falls under the South Leicestershire Parliamentary Constituency and is represented by Mr Alberto Costa, Conservative Member of Parliament. The exceptions are the Blaby District Wards of Ellis, Faire, Kirby Muxloe, and Leicester Forest and Lubbethorpe, which are represented by Mr Edward Argar, Conservative MP for Charnwood Constituency. There is currently a parliamentary boundary review taking place as part of the national 2023 review. There are limited changes proposed for the district. The Charnwood Constituency will become known as Mid-Leicestershire.

A predominantly in-house, comprehensive Member induction package has been, and continues to be, delivered across the Council. It is recognised that there needs to be an ongoing development programme that equips Members with the skills and appropriate levels of knowledge to face future challenges and ensure effective succession planning. A Member Development Steering Group takes a proactive approach to the training programme and guiding projects such as Member ICT.

The Council has previously approved a recommendation from the Member Development Steering Group to adopt a comprehensive “Members Roles and Responsibilities” paper which sets out role profiles and the required skills and knowledge for the various roles Members fulfil in discharging their responsibilities. This includes the role of a Portfolio Holder and what is required of them.

Portfolio Holder roles are intensive with a broad range of responsibilities, some are also appointed to other appropriate committees including the Appointments and Appeals Committees. Executive Members can also be appointed to Outside Bodies and represent the Council on external partnerships. Cabinet Members cannot be Members of the Scrutiny Commission; however, they are required to attend meetings. They are supported by the Senior Leadership Team. Although, the role is not a full-time position, Portfolio Holders currently combine their role with employment and/or a range of caring responsibilities.

The Scrutiny process provides an opportunity for councillors and, in some cases, external representatives, to examine various functions of the Council, to ask questions about how decisions have been made and to consider whether service improvements can be put in place. It provides an opportunity for them to champion issues of public concern and to participate in the development of new policies.

Scrutiny facilitates debate about priorities, budget, the strategy of the Council and its vision for the district. Scrutiny reinforces the local authority’s leadership role in promoting the well-being of the local community because it can enable reviews of services, provided by other organisations to be carried out.

Scrutiny Commission has the power to review and scrutinise:

- The priorities and objectives of the Council
- The policies the Council adopts to meet those objectives
- The Council’s performance in meeting its objectives
- The decisions taken by the Cabinet Executive, committees, and officers
- Services, bodies, or issues which affect the well-being of people in the district

Scrutiny has, in the past, won awards for the quality of its work, and it is hoped that this success and effective challenge will continue. Most non-executive members serve on Scrutiny Working Groups with 11 members making up the Scrutiny Commission (18 in 2022/23).

Councillors are kept informed of the activity of the Council through a variety of channels such as: Portfolio briefings, Informal Cabinet, presentations and briefings at Council meetings, member newsletter emails.

Management Structure

Corporate management is provided by the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) which is responsible for implementing the strategic goals of the Council as decided by Members.

The SLT comprised the following officers during 2022/23:

- The Chief Executive
- Executive Director (Section 151)
- Executive Director
- Business, Partnerships and Health Improvement Group Manager
- Corporate Services Group Manager (Monitoring Officer)
- Environmental Health, Housing and Community Services Group Manager
- Finance Group Manager
- Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager
- Planning and Strategic Growth Group Manager
- Transformation Group Manager (from 1st December 2022)
- Strategic HR Manager

Our Staff

On 31st March 2023 the Council employed 343 members of staff working across a range of services, compared with 342 on 31st March 2022. The number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) on 31st March 2023 was 314 (315 on 31st March 2022).

The demographic make-up of our staff.	%
Females	55.69%
Males	44.31%
Employees disclosing that they have a disability	6.41%
White British	81.05%
Minority Ethnic	10.50%
Undeclared	8.45%
18 to 29	9.62%
30 to 39	13.99%
40 to 49	25.07%
50 to 59	37.91%
60 and over	13.41%

At the end of March 2023 sickness stood at 7.66 days/employee.

The Blaby District Plan

The Council's priorities were last reviewed at the end of 2020 and are set out in the Blaby District Plan 2021-24. The plan serves as a roadmap for Members, partners and Council officers, and demonstrates to our customers that the Council has the interests of the district at heart.

In developing the Blaby Plan we considered data such as the level of unemployment in the district, demographics and health statistics as well as reviewing the work we are doing with partners around the

growth of the district, and key public sector partners on health, public safety, and wellbeing. Through the plan we have shaped a set of priorities and objectives that reflect the aspirations that the Council has for its residents, as well as ensuring that we deliver a sustainable Council in the future.

Our Vision

Blaby District is made up of thriving and vibrant communities where people are happy to live, work and visit.

Our Corporate Priorities and Objectives

Our Corporate Priorities are set every three years to enable us to continue to support the achievement of our Vision for the District.

Our priorities are:

- **A Place to Live** - Strong, healthy, safe, sustainable communities where the most vulnerable are supported
- **A Place to Work** - A thriving, prosperous, innovative local economy with a skilled and healthy workforce contributing to the local community
- **A Place to Visit** - A strong leisure and tourism sector and well maintained and accessible attractions available in the local area encourage visitors to the district

Delivery of these priorities are supported by:

- **Our People Strategy** – Ensuring that Blaby District Council remains a great place to work
- **Our Financial Plans** – Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

The priorities, ambitions and objectives were based on resident's surveys, national priorities, analysis of local data and feedback from staff, members, residents, and partners. In order to ensure that the ambitions are realistic, we support these through the MTFS and People Strategy to ensure that we have the resources in place, with the skills and knowledge required to deliver these.

Key objectives sit below each priority and services will develop operational action plans which support the delivery of those objectives.

All projects are expected to come to Programme Board with a Business Case stating how they contribute to the Blaby District Plan Priorities. Programme Board provides both challenge and support, ensuring that there is a clear link to our priorities, that they are fully costed and resourced. Each month Project Managers report progress along with new issues and risks. Requests for additional finance or staff and so on must be approved by Programme Board.

We monitor the delivery of our priorities regularly through our annual plans, which set out our delivery for the year against these, and report progress to Programme Board each quarter. Currently we produce a formal report of outcomes to Full Council every 6 months, along with performance monitoring.

The Leader also delivers a statement of achievements to each Council meeting as part of the Leader's Statement. We also monitor our resident's priorities through our bi-annual Resident's Surveys and annual Budget Surveys when gathering feedback on our performance, priorities, council tax and communication.

Since the adoption of the Blaby District Plan 2021-24 there have been significant changes nationally which will impact the local area. These include, household fuel increases, increasing inflation, the National Insurance increase, changes to Universal Credit rules and the continued impact of the COVID Pandemic.

The Peer Review that took place in March 2022 recommended a review of the Blaby District Plan to drive the Council and its priorities forward in the wake of the pandemic. Alongside this it is intended to develop our vision to reflect the place in which Blaby now finds itself and where it aspires to be in the future. A one-year plan was subsequently put in place for 2022/23, with the intention that a full review will take place after the district elections in May 2023.

During 2022/23 the Council developed a new corporate performance management framework, including the reintroduction of individual service plans and personal appraisals. The new framework will allow us to collect metric performance data for all services, focusing on outcomes, and to develop service plans that map out the aims and objectives of all services, with a clear link to the Blaby District Plan and vision.

Performance improvement and service transformation will be owned by the people who know and deliver the services best, i.e., our staff and service managers. We will make it clear how everybody contributes to the Council priorities and ambitions.

Our philosophy is to put the customer at the heart of everything that we do, and it is only by listening to our residents and learning from them, that we can truly improve our processes and outcomes to our customers.

As a Council we feel that it is important to look outside of the organisation. We include benchmarking data in our regular Blaby District Plan Progress and performance reports. We are also active members of the East Midlands Performance Group and Benchmarking Subgroup and members of APSE.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is the Council's key financial planning document, and forms part of the Blaby District Plan. The MTFS contains a financial forecast which is usually updated each year to reflect the changes to funding.

The Government announced a single year settlement for the 2022/23 financial year just ended. Planned changes to the Business Rate Retention Scheme, New Homes Bonus Grant, and the proposed implementation of Fair Funding were once again deferred. It had been hoped that the Secretary of State would announce a multi-year settlement effective from 2023/24 but, as has been the case in recent years, only a single year settlement was released. This, coupled with the ongoing uncertainty over the funding reviews, makes it more difficult to gauge the financial picture for future financial years, since many of the funding streams for 2023/24 were either one-off grants or are expected to be discontinued in the medium term.

The Council approved an updated MTFS as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process in February 2023. The MTFS is predicated on the assumption that the business rates baseline will be rebased from 1st April 2025, which will lead to a significant loss of business rates growth accumulated in the last 10 years. This is expected to lead to a budget deficit of around £2.6m in 2025/26 even if some form of damping is introduced to cushion the effect of the loss in funding. The shortfall is forecast to increase to £3.7m in 2026/27 and £4.9m in 2027/28. The future funding estimates within the MTFS are based upon the best available information that could be gained from the national picture and documents within the public domain at the time.

The key risks to the Council's future financial position, the outcome of which remain uncertain, are:

- New Homes Bonus – it is the government's stated intention to discontinue New Homes Bonus, although it remains unclear as to whether it will be replaced by an alternative funding stream.
- Business Rates – indications were that there would be a reset of the business rates baseline, likely to be effective from 2024/25. Given the current cost of living crisis, any such reset is now unlikely to take effect before 2025/26 at the earliest but this remains to be confirmed. Any baseline reset could lead to Blaby losing the benefit of much of the significant growth in business rate income that it has achieved over recent years.
- Fair Funding Review – the government had previously stated its intention to review the formula that it uses to determine the distribution of funding to local authorities. Implementation of this review has been subject to successive deferrals due to the EU Exit, the onset of COVID-19, and now the cost of living crisis. It is unlikely to be implemented until 2025/26 at the earliest.
- Inflation, driven by rising oil, gas and electricity prices and the war in the Ukraine, has been as high as 13% during 2022/23. This has created significant budgetary pressures for the Council, but also jeopardises the wellbeing and living standards of our residents.

People Strategy

The Council recognises that our employees are our most valuable asset and our most significant resource. The best way of continuing to deliver high quality services to our residents is to ensure that our workforce has the right skills and support to succeed. We value the views and ideas of our employees and care about their development and well-being. Therefore, it is important for us to engage with and communicate with employees in various ways. Since the start of the pandemic the corporate “Way We Work” group have been developing the longer-term plan for ‘Agile’ working and responding to the constantly changing requirements arising from COVID-19; most recently ‘Living with COVID’ and supporting staff to return to the offices. More regular communication channels are through monthly ‘Blaby Matters’ briefings to all staff, ‘Sounding Board’ meetings between senior managers and service representatives, regular team meetings, and our intranet site (iBlaby).

In recognition of the importance of our employees, The People Strategy sets out our ambitions around equipping our staff to enable them to best deliver the Council’s priorities. Without motivated and empowered staff, we cannot deliver our ambitious plans. The People Strategy builds upon firm foundations of our previous strategies and continues to develop a range of workforce initiatives. The aims included within the strategy are linked to the Council’s values and overarching principles, the responses from Staff Surveys and other feedback from staff. An action plan is in place to monitor progress on the necessary tasks and to ensure its success. The annual action plan will remain a ‘living’ document so progress can be tracked and updated.

The objectives of the People Strategy are grouped under three broad themes:

- Being developed
- Being healthy
- Being valued

Net Zero

Blaby District Council has taken its responsibilities for climate change seriously and recognises the need to ensure engagement and action are embedded across the organisation. The Council has also employed a dedicated Green Officer and support officer to focus solely on delivering green Initiatives.

Over the past year we have made significant progress towards our Net Zero targets, with a focus on embedding sustainable practices across all areas of delivery. Our efforts in this area have included securing more than £500,000 towards new electrical vehicles and signing up to the Climate and Nature Pact. Additionally, we have worked to improve our green spaces, which have been highly valued by our communities, and we will continue to enhance these strategic areas for all to enjoy.

The Council has benefited from a collaborative project called Flex D to share in a £2.3m grant from LEVI Pilot funding to expand electric charging across the county. Here in Blaby District this will enable us to install a solar canopy at Enderby Leisure Centre providing up to 12 charging points. There will also be support for a rural electric vehicle car club encouraging rural mobility and the take up of electric vehicles with dual chargers in village locations. The Council is also working with Leicestershire County Council to develop a countywide electric vehicle strategy to support the rollout of further charging points across the district, also funded through the LEVI Pilot.

The District Council joined Leicestershire County Council and 16 other key partners and stakeholders in pledging to tackle climate change, nature decline and carbon reduction. The Council was among the first 18 signatories of The Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact. The document is based on the principles of the Glasgow Climate Pact, signed by the UK government in November 2021. It supports national and international efforts to tackle climate change by bringing together key organisations including Councils,

businesses, educational institutions and voluntary, community and social enterprises to drive local action and work towards a number of shared environmental aims. At the core of the Pact is the need to act quickly on reducing the impacts of climate change, reducing carbon emissions to Net Zero and halting ecological decline. As well as supporting climate recovery and working together to deliver effective action on climate change.

We have secured more than half a million pounds to help reduce harmful vehicle emissions under the banner of Let's Go Electric. The money, £573,701, came through the government's annual Air Quality Grant and is being spent on an electric conversion kit for a diesel bin lorry and the purchase of Blaby's first electric road sweeper, following a highly successful trial last year. These will be used specifically in the five Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the District, Enderby, Narborough, Whetstone and the M1 corridor in Leicester Forest East and Thorpe Astley. All these areas feature major traffic routes and dense populations and while air pollutant levels do not exceed national guidelines, they remain higher than the World Health Organisation advises. The main emission concerns surround fine particulate matter and nitrogen oxides, and the Air Quality Grants seek to support Councils in their efforts to tackle these, as well as other emissions, creating a healthier environment for everyone.

While we continue to make strides to ensure our service impact is as environmentally friendly as possible with investigations into electric vehicles it's important to say we have already made significant steps. Thanks to our move to alternative fuel – HVO (hydro treated vegetable oil) – some 90% of our fleet's emissions have been wiped out. All the Council's waste collection heavy vehicle fleet – 16 lorries - were moved to HVO. The Neighbourhood Services Team empty more than 2.5m bins each year and we know we need to ensure our vehicles are as sustainable and environmentally friendly as possible.

Our new Climate Change section has been live on our website for some time now. The brand new section provides a dedicated online space to promote what Blaby District Council is doing to tackle Climate Change as well as provide advice and guidance and toolkits to residents, businesses and the community on what they can do to reduce their carbon footprint and help us achieve our collective Net Zero ambitions.

Information on our Climate Strategy, Energy Efficiency, EV Charging, Solar Together, Help to Heat, Green Grants and more general green advice is available in one place for the first time.

Risk Management

The management of risk is a critical success factor in helping the Council to achieve its objectives. We manage risk in several ways and revised our Risk Management Strategy in November 2019 to reflect this. The Strategy is due for review and revision in Summer 2023.

- **Corporate Risks** – the Corporate Risk Register is monitored on a quarterly basis by the Corporate RiskGroup, which comprises the Chief Executive, two Executive Directors, the Finance Group Manager, and the Council Tax Income and Debt Manager. The group re-evaluates risks considering actions that have been put in place, and assesses potential future risks, as well as reviewing significant service risks.
- **Service Risks** – Service Managers closely monitor the major risks within their own services and update the Service Risk Register on a quarterly basis to reflect any changes to perceived risk.
- **Project-related Risks** – the Council has a robust project management process in place that includes a specific requirement to consider all risks associated with new projects. The Senior Leadership Team, sitting as Programme Board, maintains an overview of project risks as part of its monthly meetings.

Risk Score	Matrix Category
16-25	High
9-15	Medium
1-8	Low

The Corporate Risk Group has identified 22 corporate risks. The following table provides a summary of the status of those corporate risks both before and after control measures are put in place.

Summary by Risk Type	Red	Amber	Green	Total
All Corporate Risks Uncontrolled Rating	12	9	1	22
All Corporate Risks Controlled Rating	4	10	8	22

Partnership Working

Partnership working is a vital component in the way we deliver our services and many of our achievements would not be possible without the significant contribution made by our partners. The ambitions in the Blaby Plan have been identified and supported by our partners as a Vision for the district.

Partnership working takes place in all aspects of our services and our ambitions. Some current examples include:

- **Joint Community Safety Partnership** which represents both Blaby district and Hinckley and Bosworth borough. It comprises a range of organisations that work together to make safer places to live, work, and visit. Community safety remains a top priority to the district and our communities. Blaby District Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council have joined together, along with Leicestershire Police and Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, to share their expertise to help deliver effective and efficient community safety services across both areas.
- **Blaby District Tourism Partnership** – launched in March 2018 to deliver opportunities for growth in the tourism sector within Blaby district. The partnership quickly established a tourism website for the district called Visit Blaby and has successfully attracted funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund to support local restoration and archaeological projects. The partnership has been active in creating a Tourism Growth Plan to 2025. The Growth Plan sets out ambitious targets of growing the value of tourism in the district by £50m, increasing tourism sector jobs from 2,000 to 2,800 and increasing the number of visitors by 1.3m to 4.5m.
- **Lightbulb** – a multi-award winning, integrated housing support service that brings together county and Leicestershire district council's and other local partners, such as adult social care and health, to help people stay safe and keep well in their homes for as long as possible by bringing together a range of practical housing support. Prior to the introduction of Lightbulb some individuals in some local authority areas could wait up to 12 months to have adaptations completed in their home under the Disabled Facilities Grant; now on average adaptations are completed within 17 weeks, within our stated target of the 20 weeks. Lightbulb continues to be innovative with the introduction of a hospital discharge grant to help people leave hospital and return home, a smart technology project which helps people remain independent in their own home and a safe spaces project which supports those individuals who live in hoarded properties.
- **The Housing Enablement Team (HET)** places specialist housing professionals into the University Hospitals Leicester and the Bradgate Mental Health Unit, with the goal of assisting patients with housing issues so that they can be safely discharged, reducing, or preventing discharge delays and improving patient outcomes. HET is a service that is offered across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland (LLR), also covering patients from out-of-area and those with no recourse to public funds, where they are occupying an inpatient bed and have a housing related barrier. The team is funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group for LLR and the Leicestershire Partnership Trust, and the service is run on their behalf by the Council.
- Effective from 1st April 2022, the **Building Control Partnership** moved to a fully delegated operating model led by Blaby. Under this arrangement, delivers the building control function on behalf of five other local authorities (Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton, Oadby and Wigston, and Rutland).

Local Plan

We are proud of our place shaping approach to growth, which is a clear shared priority across members and officers. We have invested considerable resource in ensuring we not only deliver on this but can genuinely be leaders in this field.

Several years ago, we restructured our planning department to create a dedicated Strategic Growth Team, to ensure a clear focus on the right homes in the right places and infrastructure to support this. This culture runs through the whole organisation and has resulted in five awards for our Sustainable Urban Extension at New Lubbethorpe.

In practice this approach is demonstrated in a range of ways such as strong partnership working, a clear political mandate, and a strong focus on areas such as urban design. We have had a cross-organisational Affordable Housing Working Group for several years, which ensures that we can deliver on a pipeline of affordable housing and other specialist requirements.

A considerable amount of joint strategic planning is ongoing at the Leicester and Leicestershire level, and this is delivered by a high-level Strategic Planning Group and Members Advisory Group (MAG) which is chaired by the Leader of Blaby District Council.

These groups have been driving forward a number of key pieces of work, which seek to deliver growth across the City and County.

One of these has been work to agree housing distribution, and individual housing requirement targets, for districts and boroughs. This was particularly challenging given the significant increase in housing need given to Leicester City by the Government in 2020, which has led to the identification of extensive unmet need. With a strong partnership arrangement in place, all the districts and boroughs have worked together to procure evidence to inform the apportionment of the unmet need that has culminated in a Statement of Common Ground signed by the council in December 2021.

We are working on a new Local Plan, which will deliver our vision for the district to at least 2040. Our current Local Plan runs to 2029, but we started work on the new plan as soon as this was adopted to ensure that we stay proactive in our delivery of growth.

The new Local Plan will cover housing and employment allocations, as well as a range of development policies to deliver our Blaby Growth Plan and place shaping aspirations.

Community Engagement

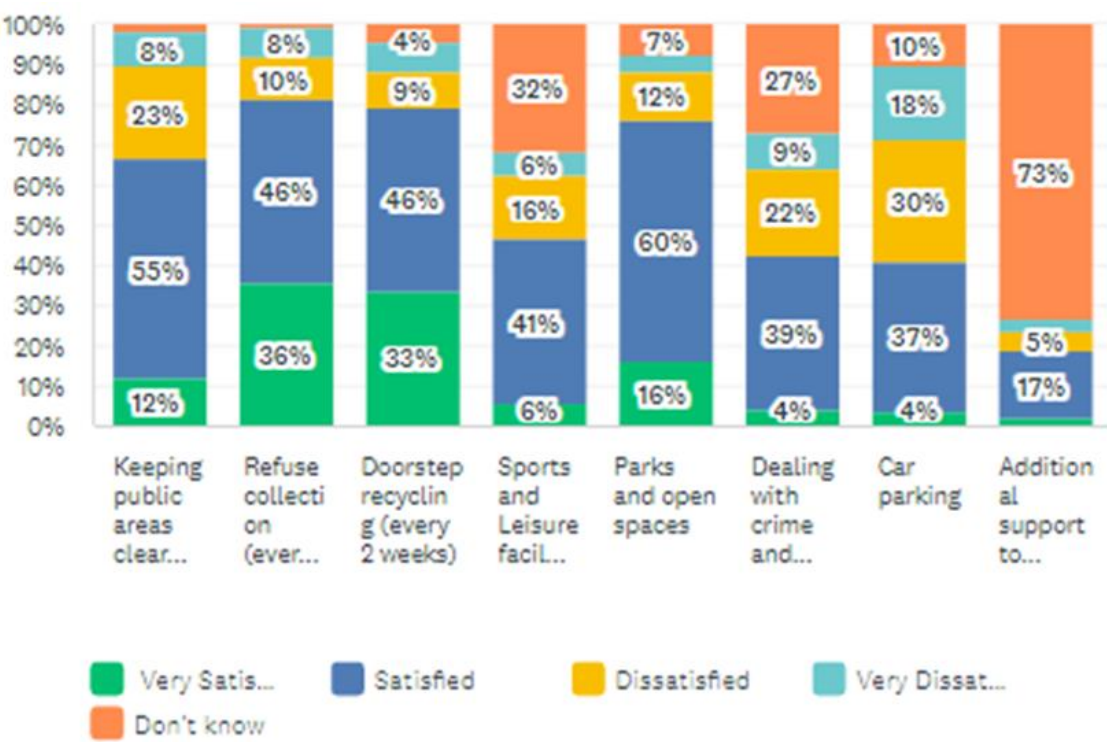
As we work to put the customer at the heart of everything we do, we strive to continually improve services to residents. Consultation supports this by involving people and ensuring services are appropriate to the needs of the customer. In order to deliver fit for purpose services, projects and policies it is important that we consult our residents, stakeholders and partners in a co-ordinated, well-planned, robust and accessible way.

The Council regularly engages with residents, partners, and stakeholders. We undertake corporate consultation and engage at a service specific level. We want to listen to the needs of our residents and ensure we understand their needs and views.

In 2022, we undertook our corporate Resident’s Survey. Each year we alternate a full resident’s survey with a shorter, budget focused questionnaire. Both cover value for money, potential council tax increases, and an assessment of the priorities for the district.

However, during each year several consultation exercises take place. Some of these are regular service satisfaction surveys such as for health and well-being, while others are one off surveys to inform our plans, policies, and changes to services. Examples of these include consultation on the Blaby District Plan 2021-24, the New Local Plan Options Consultation and the Bin Service Review.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following individual services in your area?



LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC)

In March 2022, the Council welcomed a Peer Review team comprising senior officers, a council leader, and representatives from the Local Government Association (LGA) from across the UK, to undertake a corporate peer challenge. The CPC gave Blaby a valuable opportunity to gain insight, guidance, and feedback as to how we run as an organisation.

The Peer Review team considered the following themes that are critical to a local authority's performance and improvement:

- Local priorities and outcomes
- Organisational and place leadership
- Governance and culture
- Financial planning and management
- Capacity for improvement

Over a period of four days in March, the team reviewed documents provided to them by the Council, gathered information, and spoke to a range of Council officers, Members, and external stakeholders.

The final feedback report, issued in June 2022, was very positive and concluded that the Council is a well-run local authority with a sound financial position, strong leadership, and committed staff.

Members of the Peer Review team revisited the Council in December 2022 to consider what progress the Council has made against each of the recommendations arising from the review.

1. Develop and lead a long-term vision for Blaby as a place/district with partners.

We have begun to have conversations with partners concerning the future to ensure that our vision will be developed, and resources aligned with those of our partners. One example of this is the development of the Community Health and Wellbeing Plan, where we are seeking to gather information, views, and priorities that will feed into the wider piece of work.

2. Review the Council's corporate plan to drive the Council and its priorities forward, post pandemic.

To be progressed after the district elections in May 2023, although in the meantime a one-year plan has been developed, encompassing key parts of the peer review.

3. Develop a corporate performance management framework, including service plans and personal appraisals.

Blaby's approach has been to develop a new performance framework to include the collection of metric performance data for all services, along with service plans that map out the aims and objectives of each service and align to the corporate plan and vision. An alternative performance and risk management system has been procured and implemented. This will enable the effective collation and reporting of measures and actions against service plans and the Corporate Plan, for use by Service Managers, Senior Leadership Team, and Members.

4. Develop an overall delivery/business plan, including targets, building on our Medium-Term Financial Strategy and other plans, to address local government financial challenges.

Financial updates and potential budget gaps have been communicated to the Service Manager Group, the Senior Leadership Team and Cabinet Members and budget holders have been asked to identify opportunities to close that gap within both the current year budget and as part of the formulation of the budget for the forthcoming year. An SLT workshop identified cost savings, income generation opportunities, and investment areas, and Cabinet Members have given a steer as to which options may be considered for implementation. This steer, and the better-than-expected financial settlement for 2023/24, will enable the Council to formulate these initiatives into a delivery plan over the medium term.

5. Define what transformation means to the Council and any consequent organisational change required.

Additional resource for the Transformation agenda has been added to the establishment and both the Transformation Group Manager and Transformation Service Manager have been recruited. The principles have been communicated to Service Managers and the wider workforce to introduce our transformation agenda and respond to questions that the organisation had regarding these roles and the way forward for the Council. The Transformation team has prioritised several services to identify “quick wins” and longer-term service improvements.

6. Define what commerciality will mean for the Council, and challenge Members’ and officers’ appetite for risk.

Commercial support is now being provided to the Council utilising the skills and experience of the Commercial Director from a neighbouring authority 2 days a week. Informal discussions were held with Cabinet at an early stage to gauge the approach to commerciality and risk and a set of principles has been agreed by Council along with a commercialisation position statement. Leading on from this Council has authorised £2.5m for strategic property investment for regeneration and discussions have been progressing to make the first investment. The Commercial Director is providing support for both the strategic asset review and the future accommodation/office plans. A business case template to be used across the Council has been developed, and commerciality training has been delivered to SLT and Service Managers.

7. Use communications to full effect throughout the Council, e.g., to best engage with customers, promote our achievements and services etc.

We have made changes to our external communication focusing on proactive communication for key Council meetings i.e., Planning/Cabinet and Council to ensure that decisions are captured and disseminated swiftly to the public and press. The appointment of the Customer Insight, Experience and Engagement Service Manager will support the Council and work with the Communications Team to engage with customers and improve the customer experience. On 30th November 2022 we invited the Local Government Association to undertake a review and health check of Communications. A summary of the feedback included some positive comments around how the team is valued by people, noting that they are a hardworking and capable team who do a lot with a small resource.

8. Review and refresh the scrutiny function.

We have sourced the support of an Independent Scrutiny Consultant who met with officers and the Scrutiny Commissioners for an open dialogue concerning what works well, what areas the Commissioners considered needed focus and improvement. A range of measures has been agreed to support the Scrutiny function going forward.

The 2022/23 Budget Process

The 2022/23 budget process commenced in September 2021 with the Finance team meeting with services to formulate a base budget. The estimates were refined over the course of the next few months before being presented to Scrutiny Commission in January 2022, where Scrutiny Members were provided with the opportunity to question Portfolio Holders about their service spending plans for the forthcoming financial year.

Scrutiny Members were advised of the results of the provisional financial settlement, received in December 2021, and the impact on the Council's 2022/23 budget. The settlement was for one year only, making it difficult to predict the level of funding in future financial years. It was recognised that there was a great deal of uncertainty surrounding how changes to business rates retention and the Fair Funding Review might impact on Blaby. The government had previously announced its intention to consult on the future of New Homes Bonus and, whilst it was to continue for a further year, the expectation was that this significant funding stream was likely to come to an end after 2022/23. At this point a budget gap of £1.35m was forecast for 2022/23.

A range of measures were put forward that would help to reduce the budget gap to a more manageable level. These measures included:

- Increasing council tax by £5 at Band D level, in accordance with the Government's referendum principles.
- Releasing £0.5m from the NNDR Income Reserve – this reserve has been built up over time by using accumulated growth from business rates.
- Increasing the vacancy savings provision to reflect the likelihood of vacancies occurring during the financial year.
- Removal of the trade waste concession to schools and charities.
- Increasing green waste charges.
- Ceasing publication of the quarterly "Contact" magazine issued to residents.

By implementing the above measures, it was estimated that the budget shortfall could be reduced to just under £0.4m, which would be met from the General Fund balances.

In its response to the administration's budget proposals, Scrutiny was supportive of the proposal to increase the band D council tax by £5, which would generate an additional £171,000, but was concerned about the financial pressure that this would place on residents given the rising cost of living, including fuel poverty. Scrutiny also asked that cabinet looked at other measures to mitigate the impact on schools and charities arising from the planned removal of the trade waste concession.

At its meeting of 21st February 2022, Cabinet Executive was presented with a net expenditure budget of £12.856m, which was consequently approved.

Cabinet Executive recommended the budget proposals to Council, and the budget was approved by Council at its meeting on 24th February 2022. At the same meeting the Council also approved the

Council Tax for 2022/23, the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy, and the five-year Capital Programme.

Council Tax

Council Tax is the largest single revenue stream that is used to support the Council's revenue budget, contributing just over 47% towards the net budget requirement.

Each year the government sets out the principles which determine whether a local authority's proposed council tax increase is excessive. For 2022/23, the basic amount of council tax for a shire district council, such as Blaby, would be considered excessive if:

- It was 2%, or more than 2%, greater than the basic amount of council tax in 2021/22; and
- It was more than £5 greater than the basic amount of council tax in 2021/22.

This means that Blaby was able to increase its Band D council tax by the greater of 1.99% or £5 in 2022/23 without triggering a referendum. If a referendum were triggered this would require the local electorate to be given an opportunity to vote to support or veto the increase in council tax.

Given the continuing uncertainty over the future of local government funding, coupled with a potentially significant future budget shortfall, Council decided to increase the Band D Council Tax by £5, the maximum increase permissible under the referendum rules. A comparison of Council Tax levels for 2021/22 and 2022/23 is shown in the following table.

	2021/22 £	2022/23 £	Change %
Leicestershire County Council			
- Main element*	1,252.80	1,280.87	1.99
- Adult Social Care element*	157.98	172.09	1.00
- Total	1,410.78	1,452.96	2.99
Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Combined Fire Authority	69.29	74.29	7.22
Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire	248.23	258.23	4.03
Blaby District Council	173.32	178.32	2.89
Average Parish Councils	111.92	115.57	3.26
Total	2,013.54	2,079.37	3.27

*In accordance with Government guidance each percentage is calculated as an increase to the 2021/22 total precept of £1,410.78.

Council Tax Base

The Council Tax Base for 2022/23 was set at 34,246.23, an increase of 269.12 Band D equivalent properties compared with the previous year (33,977.11).

Income Generation and Commercialisation

The Council's Commercial Strategy aligns closely with the Blaby District Plan and other key strategies, contributing towards our ambition to make Blaby District Council financially sustainable and creating a district where people are happy to live, work and visit.

We aim to achieve this ambition in the following ways:

- By creating a commercial culture/ethos
- Maximising income but still retaining the status as the 'safety net for the vulnerable'
- Maximising the Blaby pound
- Proactively identifying opportunities for commercial investments
- Focusing resources on initiatives that will drive financial or social benefit
- Encouraging communication and access to services with residents and customers through digital channels, and furthering Blaby's reputation for delivering quality services
- Reviewing chargeable, Non-Statutory Services to generate income

The updated Commercial Strategy, covering the period 2022 to 2027 was approved by Council on 24 February 2022 and is available to download on the Council's website.

Reserves and Balances

The 2022/23 budget was formulated and approved on the basis that a contribution of £397,563 would be required from General Fund Balances, with an additional £230,940 being released from earmarked reserves to support specific one-off expenditure, to set a balanced budget. The estimated General Fund balance on 31st March 2023 would, therefore, be £3.042m representing 23.7% of the proposed net revenue budget for 2022/23. This is within the Council's policy limit of holding between 10% and 35% of the proposed relevant annual net revenue budget.

In addition to the unallocated General Fund Balance, the Council maintains several earmarked reserves set aside to provide for future expenditure plans, as mentioned above. These are covered in detail in Note 9 to the Financial Statements.

Although the Council's current reserves and balances remain in a relatively healthy position it is not prudent to expect that they are sufficient to sustain the Council's current level of spending in the longer term, in the light of uncertainties over the future of local government funding. To underline this, Blaby was ranked only 93rd of 132 English districts in terms of the level of usable reserves at 31st March 2022.

Budget Monitoring

The Council has well established and robust financial management procedures in place to monitor budgets and to identify and mitigate any forecast over spending. The process for the management and monitoring of budgets is continuously refined to help ensure that the Council's longer term financial position is sustainable. The Financial Management System software was upgraded at the end of October 2020 to ensure that it remains compliant and fit for purpose. As part of the upgrade the Finance team rolled out new budget monitoring and forecasting modules during the summer of 2021. These modules have further enhanced our budget monitoring capabilities.

Budget managers are aligned to named Business Accountants to ensure continuity and understanding of the budgetary needs of the service. The Finance team provides monthly budget reports to services and facilitate regular meetings to jointly monitor progress against the budget. The Finance team continues to look to strengthen and bring greater resilience to the budget monitoring process, which will become increasingly important over the next few years as the Council strives to meet its savings targets.

Quarterly revenue and capital budget monitoring reports are presented to the Cabinet Executive and/or Council throughout the financial year. The first quarterly revenue monitoring report to Cabinet highlighted the impact that rising inflation, and the wider cost-of-living crisis was beginning to have on the Council's finances, with a projected contribution of £975,735 required from General Fund balances. This was in part due to Council approving additional funding from reserves for, e.g., specialist support in response to the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange. However, it was also noted that the national pay offer exceeded what had been allowed for in the budget, and this could potentially add another £0.5m to the call on balances. Furthermore, some of our key income streams were still not reaching normally expected levels in the wake of the pandemic and the cost-of living crisis. Additional spending pressure was still being experienced in some services, most significantly in homelessness, where considerable reliance was still being placed upon bed and breakfast accommodation. By quarter 2, the picture had improved slightly due to the Council's decision to revise its policy for writing down borrowing costs (the Minimum Revenue Provision), which brought up front savings in the short to medium term. However, by the time the Quarter 3 report was presented to Cabinet, the situation had worsened again as the impact of the cost-of-living crisis began to take its toll on key income streams, in particular planning fees, building control income, and car park charges. The expected contribution from balances was, by then, expected to be just over £0.7m.

Financial Performance of the Council 2022/23

The Council's 2022/23 revenue outturn position is shown in the table below. The original budget set at the Council meeting on 24th February 2022 was £12,856,043, supported by contributions of £397,563 from General Fund Balances and £230,940 from earmarked reserves. However, budgetary changes in the year meant that, in February 2023, contributions of £715,008 and £3,225,468 were expected from General Fund Balances and Earmarked Reserves respectively. Ultimately, the Council achieved a small surplus of £20,535 representing a positive variance of £673,493 compared to the latest forecast. This surplus has been credited to General Fund balances, representing a crucial contribution towards ensuring the Council's future financial sustainability.

Several factors have contributed to the positive outturn in 2022/23. Most significantly were savings of £0.402m in relation to vacant posts, and additional income from the investment of surplus cash (£0.374m). Other key income streams such as planning fees, building control fees, and car parking fees and charges have continued to struggle compared with pre-pandemic levels, and exacerbated by the cost of living crisis. Homelessness is another service that continues to face significant demand and pressure due to the economic downturn. A large proportion of the cost of housing homeless individuals and families in bed and breakfast accommodation is met by housing benefit. However, the Council is unable to recover all the housing benefit payable through government subsidy, leading to a shortfall of £0.316m for the financial year.

2022/23 Outturn	2022/23 Approved Budget £	2022/23 Revised Budget £	2022/23 Actual Outturn £
Finance, People and Performance	3,655,213	3,948,947	3,498,724
Housing, Community and Environmental Services	2,418,194	3,048,341	1,699,936
Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support	3,237,324	2,643,821	849,248
Leader	1,703,289	1,834,638	1,566,751
Neighbourhood Services and Assets	5,058,750	5,746,543	5,466,796
Planning Delivery and Enforcement and Corporate Transformation	3,565,413	4,345,402	3,494,719
	19,638,183	21,567,692	16,576,175
Central Items:			
Revenue Contributions towards Capital Expenditure	100,000	412,800	267,519
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,173,162	389,373	389,373
Capital Accounting Adjustments	(4,766,030)	(2,765,552)	(2,795,434)
Pension Fund Adjustments	(2,918,470)	(2,918,470)	(1,974,483)
Employee Benefits Adjustments	0	0	1,228
Property Fund Adjustments	0	0	(249,036)
Other Central Provisions	257,701	48,625	69,355
Contribution to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	(230,940)	(3,225,468)	557,138
Net Revenue Expenditure	13,253,606	13,509,000	12,841,835
Financed by:			
Income from National Non-Domestic Rates	(4,750,801)	(4,750,801)	(4,738,101)
New Homes Bonus Grant	(1,020,820)	(1,020,820)	(1,020,820)
Lower Tier Services Grant	(867,225)	(867,225)	(867,225)
Services Grant	(153,747)	(153,747)	(153,747)
Levy Account Surplus Grant	0	0	(18,704)
Revenue Support Grant	0	0	(323)
Council Tax Demand on the Collection Fund	(6,106,661)	(6,106,661)	(6,106,661)
Council Tax (Surplus)/Deficit	43,211	43,211	43,211
	(12,856,043)	(12,856,043)	(12,862,370)
Contribution to/(from) General Fund Balances	(397,563)	(652,957)	20,535

Reserves and Balances – Financial Resilience

The level of General Fund balances, included in the Balance Sheet at £4.619m, contribute to the Council's financial health. The General Fund balance plays an important part in maintaining the financial stability of the authority primarily by: -

- Meeting unforeseen expenditure pressures and income reductions that arise in the financial year;
- Meeting the cost of one-off items of expenditure; and
- Supporting the stability of the Council's financial position by providing a source of funding in times of uncertainty.

As referred to above, the Council added £20,535 to its General Fund balances on 31st March 2023, increasing the available balance to £4.619m.

The Council's policy in respect of its General Fund balances is that they must sit within a range of 10% to 35% of the net budget requirement in any given year. The addition of £20,535 in 2022/23 means that balances represent 29.9% of the 2023/24 net budget requirement, after considering planned contributions to support the budget. This compares favourably with the 24.8% estimated at budget stage, enhancing the Council's resilience going into 2023/24.

The Council also holds earmarked reserves on the Balance Sheet with a total value of £12.736m on 31st March 2023 (14.081m on 31st March 2022). Further detail on the balance and purpose of each earmarked reserve appears in note 9 to the Financial Statements. These reserves are held to manage future risks and expenditure priorities.

There were several significant movements in earmarked reserves during 2022/23. The most significant of these relates to Section 31 grants received from the Government in compensation for lost business rate income due to expanded retail relief given to certain business sectors in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. Blaby received £22.201m of Section 31 funding on account, to support its cash flow position, including shares relating to the Government and major preceptors that must be repaid. On 1st April 2022, Blaby was still holding £4.270m in respect of Section 31 grants to mitigate the unusually large Collection Fund deficit charged to the General Fund, originally in 2020/21 but ongoing into 2021/22, 2022/23, and 2023/24. Some of this balance (£2,754m) has been released during 2022/23 to offset Blaby's share of the Collection Fund deficit that was recognised in the 2022/23 budget. On 31st March 2023, there is £1.517m remaining in earmarked reserves to meet the 2023/24 Collection Fund deficit. This effectively reduces the true, usable balance of earmarked reserves to £11.219m. A net of £0.840m has been added to the Ongoing Projects Reserve, reflecting the balance of unused external funding and other one-off budgets carried forward into 2023/24. A further £0.752m has been added to the NNDR Income Reserve.

The level of reserves and balances are a key element of CIPFA's Financial Resilience Index, published for the first time in December 2019. Although the indicators in respect of reserves sustainability and change in reserves were on the low side when compared to other authorities, they do indicate a stable but increasing trend. However, given the uncertainty over the future of major funding streams, such as new Homes Bonus and Retained Business rates, this is an area that will require greater focus in the future.

Treasury Management

The importance of the treasury management function cannot be understated. As a key component of the Council's day-to-day operations, it deals with:

- Cash flow planning – ensuring that cash is available when needed and investing surplus balances whilst minimising risk to the Council's financial position
- Funding capital spending plans – capital expenditure often requires longer term cash flow planning. This may involve arranging loans or using longer term cash flow surpluses

The Council has the facility to raise finance for capital expenditure and operational requirements from several approved borrowing institutions subject to it not exceeding its authorised limit for external debt, as required by the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy, approved on 24th February 2022, sets a range of prudential indicators including the authorised and operational limits on borrowing.

Borrowing

On 31 March 2023, the Council had total borrowings of £5.930m.

The following table illustrates the limits and levels of borrowing as of 31 March 2023 as compared to the preceding year end.

Borrowing Limits and Levels	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Borrowing Limits:		
Authorised Limit for External Debt	23,000,000	17,544,000
Operational Boundary	20,700,000	16,290,000
Actual Borrowing:		
Long Term Borrowing	5,713,439	5,929,939
Short Term Borrowing	216,500	2,211,841
	5,929,939	8,141,780

Although the Council has a borrowing requirement of £14.486m its actual external borrowing is just £5.930m. This is due to the Council's stated decision to use internal balances and reserves to fund capital expenditure on a temporary basis to manage interest rate risk and make revenue savings.

Investing

At the end of the financial year the Council had £25.456m of cash invested.

The Council's investment strategy set out a benchmark for the average rate of return on investments. However, the pursuit of a target rate of return is tempered by the need to maintain sufficient liquidity for the Council's day-to-day operations and, most importantly, to ensure that funds are invested with secure institutions. In 2022/23 the Council achieved a rate of return of 3.98%.

The Council has an investment of £1m with the Lothbury Property Trust which yielded dividends in year of £0.041m with an average rate of return of 4.84%. This rate of return reflects the longer-term nature of the investment. The fund has suffered a significant drop in value since July 2022, having previously recovered well following the pandemic. The fund value on 31st March 2023 was £0.845m. At present there is a statutory over-ride in place that removes the need to charge the reduction in fund value to the General Fund. There is no guarantee that this over-ride will remain in perpetuity, so the Council is transferring any proceeds from investment into an earmarked reserve as a mitigation against future fluctuations in the fund value. There is currently £0.128m in the Property Fund Interest Reserve.

Capital Programme

The 2022/23 Capital Programme of £2,452,500 was approved by Council on 24th February 2022 as part of the rolling 5-year capital planning process. The 5-year Capital Programme, along with the accompanying Capital Strategy for the same period, provided the framework within which the Council's capital investment plans were to be delivered. The following table shows the original proposed capital expenditure plan for 2022/23 through to 2026/27.

Capital 5 Year Plan	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	2025/26 £	2026/27 £
Corporate Aims & Objectives	1,144,500	714,500	880,792	714,500	714,500
Asset Management Planning	1,242,000	1,854,000	2,468,000	650,000	837,000
Other Capital Schemes	16,000	0	0	0	0
Contingency	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total Expenditure	2,452,500	2,618,500	3,407,792	1,414,500	1,601,500

As the financial year progressed, the initial plans were revised to incorporate unspent budget reprofiled from the previous financial year, new assumptions, approvals, and scheme updates, as information became available. This led to a Revised Capital Programme total of £7,781,175 for 2022/23.

However, the final expenditure on capital schemes in 2022/23 was £2,331,693 compared to the revised forecast spend above. The variance between the forecast and outturn was £5,449,482 or 70.04%. This was due to schemes which were not completed by the end of the financial year. Incomplete schemes amounting to £5,349,203, will be carried forward to 2023/24 together with the associated resources.

The following table provides an analysis of capital expenditure and how it was financed, compared with the revised forecast.

Analysis of Capital Expenditure to Revised Forecast	2022/23 Revised Forecast £	2022/23 Actual Expenditure £	Variance Overspend (Underspend) £
Invest to Save Schemes	2,721,917	199,175	(2,522,742)
Essential and/or Contractual Schemes	2,738,108	1,159,610	(1,578,498)
Desirable Schemes (subject to affordability)	220,000	20,000	(200,000)
Externally Funded Schemes	2,071,531	952,908	(1,118,623)
Other Schemes	7,685	0	(7,685)
Contingency	21,934	0	(21,934)
Total Expenditure	7,781,175	2,331,693	(5,449,482)
Financed by:			
Borrowing	4,665,760	910,265	(3,755,495)
Capital Receipts	387,495	135,837	(251,658)
Capital Reserves	264,714	224,514	(40,200)
Revenue Contributions	153,171	43,005	(110,166)
External Funding	2,310,035	1,018,072	(1,291,963)
Total Resources	7,781,175	2,331,693	(5,449,482)

The most significant variances between actual expenditure and planned expenditure in 2022/23 are as follows:

	Planned Capital Expenditure £	Actual Capital Expenditure £	Variance Overspend (Underspend) £
Regeneration Property	2,500,000	0	(2,500,000)
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,609,378	850,852	(758,526)
Refurbishment of Vacant Units at Industrial Estate	450,000	0	(450,000)
Section 31-backed Schemes	368,909	79,292	(289,617)
Council Offices – Green Heating Solution	240,000	5,162	(234,838)
Bridge & Car Park Improvements, Bouskell Park, Blaby	200,000	0	(200,000)
Extension of Enderby Leisure Centre Car Park	190,000	0	(190,000)
HR and Payroll System	150,000	0	(150,000)
Walk Ride Blaby	140,000	0	(140,000)
Blaby Town Centre Toilets	169,801	53,411	(116,390)
All Other Schemes	1,763,087	1,342,976	(420,111)
Totals	7,781,175	2,331,693	(5,449,482)

The Balance Sheet Position

The Council's Balance Sheet reflects a net asset position despite the presence of the pension liability explained on the next page. Long term assets comprise property, plant and equipment, as well as intangible assets and long-term debtors.

	31 st March 2023 £	31 st March 2022 £
Long Term Assets	34,320,999	34,792,820
Current Assets	31,676,940	44,043,133
Current Liabilities	(21,431,493)	(34,270,926)
Long Term Liabilities (Including net Pension Liability)	(9,415,094)	(40,644,474)
Net Assets/ (Liabilities)	35,151,350	3,920,553
Funded by:		
Usable Reserves	20,612,106	22,464,927
Unusable Reserves	14,539,244	(18,544,374)

Pension Liability

The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), administered by Leicestershire County Council, through which pension provision is made for those officers who wish to join the scheme. The Council's share of the net pension liability on 31st March 2023 amounted to £3,007,000 (£33,978,000 as at 31st March 2022) and is offset by the Pensions Reserve, movements on which are disclosed in the Movement in Reserves Statement, ensuring that there is no impact on the level of Council Tax.

As at 31st March 2023, the net discount rate (discount rate net of CPI inflation) has increased significantly compared to the previous year end, leading to a large gain on the balance sheet. In addition to this, the financial assumptions used by the actuary in determining the liability are now based on the triennial funding valuation undertaken on 31st March 2022. The results of the valuation were not available at the time that the 2021/22 accounts were prepared, and so the accounts were instead based on a roll forward of the 2019 funding valuation.

The existence of a net pension liability has significance for the Council's contributions to the scheme, which may need to increase in the long-term, subject to the outcome of the next triennial valuation.

Provisions, Contingencies and Material Write-offs

The Balance Sheet includes provisions totalling £2,054,677 as of 31st March 2023 – these are detailed in note 22 to the Financial Statements. The most significant of these is the provision in respect of outstanding business rates appeals which stands at £1,810,000 on 31st March 2023 (£1,872,000 on 31st March 2022).

Where a liability is possible but not likely, or the cost cannot be reliably estimated, the Council is required to disclose a contingent liability. Further details concerning contingent liabilities recognised in 2022/23 are provided in note 38.

Write offs are processed during the financial year in line with Financial Regulations. Total write offs against key income streams are summarised below:

Write Offs	2022/23 £
Collection Fund Write Offs	284,886
General Fund Write Offs	54,040
	338,926

Non-Financial Performance of the Council 2022/23

Achievements

Some of our achievements against the Blaby District Plan

A Place to Live:

- Huncote Leisure Centre – we have undertaken a range of measures at the site since November 2021, when high levels of methane emissions were recorded. New bore holes, gas monitoring wells, a passive ventilation system, and an upgraded flare stack have all been installed. The Leisure Centre building, car park, and Parish Council field were all re-opened in October 2022, and officers continue to monitor the landfill gas levels.
- We trialled an electric road sweeper as part of the Council's commitment to move towards fossil fuel alternatives to power our fleet vehicles.
- More than 2,000 people attended a special celebration event in June in recognition of the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee.
- The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Michael Gove, visited and gave the seal of approval to our award-winning development at New Lubbethorpe. Homes England, the government body responsible for funding new affordable housing and increasing the number of new homes throughout the country, also visited New Lubbethorpe during 2022/23.
- On 1st April 2022, the Building Control Teams from Blaby and five other Leicestershire districts came together to form the Leicestershire Building Control Partnership led by Blaby. The new partnership strengthens the building control service across the county, with service developments and improvements including a 24/7, 365 days a year emergency call out service for responding to dangerous buildings or aiding the emergency services.

A Place to Work:

- Our Housing Enablement Team secured additional funding of almost £0.8m to provide housing-related support to inpatients in the hospitals in Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland. This enables us to deliver this vital service for another three years, and in more hospitals, reaching more vulnerable patients.
- We hosted three job fairs during 2022/23, offering support such as upskilling, training, access to DWP work coaches, and volunteering opportunities.
- We have worked hard to support displaced Ukrainian families arriving in the district under the national scheme, following the Russian invasion last year.
- Over £5m of Council Tax Energy Rebate payments distributed to around 38,000 households across the district.

A Place to Visit:

- The Active Blaby team had a successful summer, hosting free activity days across the district for hundreds of local families.
- The Tourism team visited Fosse Park at the end of September to promote tourism attractions in the district, engage with residents and shoppers to highlight the Fosse Foxes Trail, and shared information on walking trails and cycle maps of the district.
- We have improved the infrastructure at several of our parks and open spaces, including the overflow car park at Fosse Meadows, and fencing and footpath upgrades at the Osiers and Crow Mills.

More information is available in the Annual Leader's Statement presented to the Annual Council meeting in May 2023.

Performance against Corporate Objectives

During 2022/23, the Performance & Systems Team, was focused on implementing a new Performance Management Framework in line with recommendations published in the Corporate Peer Challenge. This work will improve the infrastructure, systems, and culture of performance reporting across the Council services. Consequently, this report is likely to evolve in the future as the new methods are introduced.

At the time of publication, the performance results were not available. Full details will be included in the published audited accounts.

Other Issues

Council Tax Energy Rebate

In February 2022, the government announced measures to help households with rising energy costs. This included a £150 council tax energy rebate, directed mainly at households falling within council tax bands A to D, with a discretionary scheme for low-income households in higher banded properties. Local authorities were asked to administer the distribution of the £150 payments and Blaby received an allocation of £5,597,700 to cover this. Blaby were the first authority in Leicestershire to start distributing payments to residents in bands A to D. Both the main scheme and discretionary scheme are now closed. In total, £5,569,500 was distributed to around 38,000 households.

Homes for Ukraine

The Council continues to respond to the Government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme, with housing, communities and leadership resources being allocated to enable a positive and proactive response. Allocation of a government funding tariff was agreed with County Council colleagues during 2022/23, and Blaby received £75,000 towards the administration of the local response.

Work took place with partners in government and other local authorities to quickly establish a process to do this safely and efficiently. One important task was to assess whether the sponsors' homes had sufficient space and were safe for their Ukrainian guests to move into.

It took our Environmental Health team just two weeks to produce a procedure to inspect homes and send the information of 20 properties back to the relevant authorities on top of their already heavy workload.

The team prioritised the importance of making this process move as quickly as possible. Our Housing Team also dealt with three homeless families who arrived under the Family Visa scheme, with our Resident Support Team supporting these families. Customers Services Team and Benefits Team also dealt with enquiries from both sponsors and family members.

Huncote Leisure Centre

The leisure centre was constructed in the 1970s, and it was known and documented that the land to the rear of the building was the site of a former landfill site. As such, the site has long been subject to landfill gas monitoring measures. On 2nd November 2021, during planned landfill gas mitigation works to the rear of the leisure centre, contractors recorded higher than expected methane emissions. As a result, a major incident was declared, and the leisure centre and surrounding site were closed.

Since then, various measures have been put in place to mitigate the high-level emissions, including the installation of new bore holes, wells, a passive ventilation system, and a new flare stack. Landfill gas measures have been monitored by officers since the emergency plan was invoked, throughout the duration of the works listed above, and is still ongoing.

The leisure centre building, car park, and the Parish Council field were reopened in October 2022, and work is ongoing to reach a point where the field and footpaths to the rear of the centre can also be reopened.

Summary Position

Despite the financial background Blaby is maintaining its reputation for sound financial stewardship and continues to seek innovative ways of delivering services and income generation. This approach has been reflected in the financial performance for 2022/23. Although the surplus for 2022/23 was quite small, it represents a positive position when compared to the forecast set out in the 2023/24 budget report. This is, in no small part, due to the diligence and hard work of officers across the Council. The Council faces many challenges going into the new financial year, including the ongoing impact of the pandemic on key income streams and service demand, the ongoing uncertainty of local government funding, and the cost of living crisis. Our financial reserves give some stability in the short term but in the medium to longer term the Council will need to look at service transformation and income generation opportunities to meet the expected future budget gaps. The MTFS will need to be regularly reviewed and budgets closely monitored to ensure the Council's ongoing financial sustainability.

Receipt of Further Information

For further information about these accounts please email finance@blaby.gov.uk or write to Finance Services, Blaby District Council, Council Offices, Narborough, Leicester LE19 2EP.

Acknowledgements

The production of the Statement of Accounts would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of staff across the Council. I would like to express my thanks to all colleagues, from the Finance team and other services, for their contribution towards the preparation of this document. I would also like to thank them for all their support during the financial year.



Sarah Pennelli

Executive Director

(Section 151 Officer)

31st May 2023

Explanation of the Financial Statements

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require the Council to produce a Statement of Accounts for each financial year. These statements contain a number of different elements which are explained below:

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

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

Movement in Reserves Statement

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

Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet shows the value as at the Balance Sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the authority. The net assets of the authority (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the authority. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category of reserves are usable reserves, that is, those reserves that the authority may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use. For example, the Capital Receipts Reserve that may only be used to fund capital expenditure or to repay debt. The second category of reserves includes those that the authority is not able to use to provide services. This category of reserves includes those that hold unrealised gains and losses (for example, the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets are sold; and reserves that hold timing differences shown in the Movement in Reserves Statement line "adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations".

Cash Flow Statement

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

Notes to the Financial Statements

These provide further explanation of specific items within the Financial Statements to which they relate.

Collection Fund

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the statutory obligation for billing authorities to maintain a separate Collection Fund. The statement shows the transactions of the billing authority in relation to the collection of council tax and non-domestic rates and its distribution to precepting bodies and the Government. For Blaby, the council tax precepting bodies are Leicestershire County Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority.

The Statement of Responsibilities for the Statement of Accounts - sets out the principal responsibilities of the Authority and its officers in relation to the Accounting Statements. It confirms that the Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Code.

The Annual Governance Statement - sets out the framework within which financial and operational control is managed and reviewed and the main components of the system of control, including the arrangements for internal audit.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Authority's Responsibilities

The Authority is required to:

- make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. In this authority, that officer is the Executive Director (Section 151)
- manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets
- approve the Statement of Accounts

The Executive Director (Section 151)'s Responsibilities

The Executive Director (Section 151) is responsible for the preparation of the Authority'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 this Statement of Accounts, the Executive Director (Section 151) 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 Executive Director (Section 151) has also:

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

Certification of Accounts

I certify that the Statement of Accounts gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2023 and the Council's income and expenditure for the year then ended.



Sarah Pennelli

Executive Director

(S151 Officer)

31st May 2023

APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS

This unaudited Statement of Accounts is to be presented to Blaby District Council's Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 13th July 2023 but remains subject to completion of the annual audit process.

CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS and EXPLANATORY NOTES

Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

2021/22 Restated Gross Expenditure £	2021/22 Restated Gross Income £	2021/22 Restated Net Expenditure £	Service	2022/23 Gross Expenditure £	2022/23 Gross Income £	2022/23 Net Expenditure £
2,896,652	(1,066,299)	1,830,353	Housing, Community and Environmental Services	3,771,266	(2,071,329)	1,699,937
6,520,521	(1,732,708)	4,787,813	Neighbourhood Services and Assets	7,200,683	(1,985,448)	5,215,235
16,697,995	(13,713,757)	2,984,238	Finance, People and Performance	13,233,051	(9,753,498)	3,479,553
5,142,692	(4,368,299)	774,393	Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support	5,691,515	(3,657,372)	2,034,143
1,984,607	(545,529)	1,439,078	Leader	1,879,237	(304,951)	1,574,286
3,998,597	(930,216)	3,068,381	Planning Delivery, Enforcement and Corporate Transformation	4,386,586	(891,867)	3,494,719
37,241,064	(22,356,808)	14,884,256	Cost Of Services	36,162,338	(18,664,465)	17,497,873
3,802,855	(197,250)	3,605,605	Other Operating Expenditure (Note 10)	3,957,970	(49,383)	3,908,587
1,332,945	(696,576)	636,369	Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure (Note 11)	1,676,781	(1,822,426)	(145,646)
0	(17,581,865)	(17,581,865)	Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure (Note 12)	0	(18,001,299)	(18,001,299)
		1,544,365	(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services			3,259,515
		(708,126)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment Assets			(601,830)
		(15,009,437)	Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability			(33,888,483)
		(15,717,563)	Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(34,490,313)
		15,207,228	Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure			(31,230,798)

The 2021/22 figures have been restated due to a change in service areas covered within each portfolio.

Movement in Reserves Statement

2022/23	General Fund Balance £	Collection Fund Reserve £	Capital Receipts Reserve £	Capital Grants Unapplied £	Total Usable Reserves £	Unusable Reserves £	Total Authority Reserves £
Balance at 31 March 2022	14,509,224	4,270,355	2,124,070	1,561,278	22,464,927	(18,544,375)	3,920,552
Movement in Reserves during 2022/23							
Surplus/(Deficit) on provision of Services	(3,259,515)	0	0	0	(3,259,515)	0	(3,259,515)
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	34,490,313	34,490,313
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(3,259,515)	0	0	0	(3,259,515)	34,490,313	31,230,798
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 8)	4,588,940	(2,753,563)	(85,975)	(342,707)	1,406,695	(1,406,695)	0
Increase/(Decrease) in 2022/23	1,329,425	(2,753,563)	(85,975)	(342,707)	(1,852,820)	33,083,618	31,230,798
Balance at 31 March 2023	15,838,649	1,516,792	2,038,095	1,218,571	20,612,107	14,539,243	35,151,350

2021/22	General Fund Balance £	Collection Fund Reserve £	Capital Receipts Reserve £	Capital Grants Unapplied £	Total Usable Reserves £	Unusable Reserves £	Total Authority Reserves £
Balance at 31 March 2021	12,940,040	10,868,476	1,087,804	1,558,498	26,454,817	(36,707,463)	(10,252,645)
Movement in Reserves during 2021/22							
Surplus/(Deficit) on provision of Services	(1,544,365)	0	0	0	(1,544,365)	0	(1,544,365)
Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	15,717,563	15,717,563
Total Comprehensive Income and Expenditure	(1,544,365)	0	0	0	(1,544,365)	15,717,563	14,173,198
Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations (Note 8)	3,113,549	(6,598,121)	1,036,266	2,780	(2,445,525)	2,445,525	0
Increase/(Decrease) in 2021/22	1,569,184	(6,598,121)	1,036,266	2,780	(3,989,890)	18,163,088	14,173,198
Balance at 31 March 2022	14,509,224	4,270,355	2,124,070	1,561,278	22,464,927	(18,544,375)	3,920,552

Balance Sheet

31 March 2022 £		Note	31 March 2023 £
33,078,374	Property, Plant and Equipment	13	32,794,670
475,000	Investment Property	15	515,000
38,908	Intangible Assets	16	59,826
1,093,910	Long Term Investments	17	844,874
106,629	Long Term Debtors	17	106,629
34,792,821	Long Term Assets		34,320,999
37,251	Inventories		49,803
10,009,344	Short Term Investments		4,065,728
7,843,893	Short Term Debtors	18	5,593,141
25,947,639	Cash and Cash Equivalents	19	21,763,263
205,006	Assets Held for Sale	20	205,004
44,043,133	Current Assets		31,676,940
(2,244,385)	Short Term Borrowing	17	(241,279)
(29,248,576)	Short Term Creditors	21	(18,142,774)
(674,717)	Grants Receipts in Advance - Capital		(992,763)
(2,103,247)	Provisions	22	(2,054,677)
(34,270,925)	Current Liabilities		(21,431,493)
(6,385,096)	Long Term Borrowing	17	(6,168,330)
(34,259,380)	Other Long-Term Liabilities		(3,246,764)
(40,644,476)	Long Term Liabilities		(9,415,094)
3,920,553	Net Assets/Liabilities		35,151,350
(22,464,927)	Usable Reserves		(20,612,106)
18,544,374	Unusable Reserves	23	(14,539,244)
(3,920,553)	Total Reserves		(35,151,350)



Sarah Pennelli

Executive Director

(S151 Officer)

31st May 2023

Cash Flow Statement

2021/22 £		Note	2022/23 £
1,544,365	Net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services		3,259,515
	Adjustments to the net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements:		
(1,645,258)	Depreciation		(1,956,114)
(16,272)	Amortisations		(17,781)
96,465	(Increase)/decrease in creditors		14,208,969
169,794	Increase/(decrease) in debtors		804,559
16,484	Increase/(decrease) in inventories		12,552
(3,301,437)	Movement in pension liability		(2,917,483)
(1,125,000)	Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold, or derecognised		(479)
1,160,443	Other non-cash items charged to the net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services		59,083
(4,644,781)			10,193,306
(9,691,116)	Adjustments for items included in the net (surplus)/deficit on the provision of services that are investing and financing activities		(12,558,873)
(12,791,532)	Net cash flows from Operating Activities	24	893,948
14,246,628	Investing Activities	25	7,241,263
(11,049,818)	Financing Activities	26	(3,950,835)
(9,594,722)	Net (increase)/decrease in cash and cash equivalents		4,184,376
(16,352,917)	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		(25,947,639)
(25,947,639)	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		(21,763,263)

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1. Accounting Policies

i. General Principles

The Statement of Accounts summarises the Council's transactions for the 2022/23 financial year and its position at the year-end 31 March 2023. The Council is required to prepare an annual Statement of Accounts by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which those Regulations require to be prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices under Section 21 of the 2003 Act primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2022/23, supported by International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

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

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

The Statement of Accounts has been prepared with reference to:

- The objective of providing information about the financial position, performance and cash flows in a way that meets the common needs of most users.
- The objective of showing the results of stewardship and accountability of elected members and management of the resources entrusted to them.
- The underlying assumption of going concern.

Going Concern Basis:

The provisions in the Code of Audit Practice in respect of going concern reporting requirements reflect the economic and statutory environment in which local authorities operate. These provisions confirm that, as authorities cannot be created or dissolved without statutory prescription, they must prepare their financial statements on a going concern basis of accounting. Local authorities carry out functions essential to the local community and are themselves revenue-raising bodies (with limits on their revenue raising powers arising only at the discretion of central government). If an authority were in financial difficulty, the prospects are thus that alternative arrangements might be made by central government either for the continuation of the services it provides or for assistance with the recovery of a deficit over more than one financial year. Therefore, it would not be appropriate for local authority financial statements to be provided on anything other than a going concern basis. Accounts drawn up under the Code therefore assume that a local authority's services will continue to operate for the foreseeable future.

During the Covid-19 pandemic there was a great deal of uncertainty over the Council's financial position due to added expenditure pressures and reductions to key income streams. Whilst the pandemic is now over, there is still a residual impact on income levels and service pressures are exacerbated by the cost of living crisis.

The Council updated its Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in February 2023 as part of the 2023/24 budget setting process. The MTFS set out the financial forecast for the period through to 2027/28. Whilst a balanced budget was set for 2023/24, with a relatively low level of support required from balances, there are increasingly significant budget shortfalls forecast from 2024/25 onwards, due to inflationary pressures, increasing demand for services, and the ongoing reduction of income post-pandemic. There is also considerable uncertainty over the future nature and level

of central government funding for local authorities, including the risk of changes to business rates which could result in a significant loss in retained business rate income from 2025/26. To counteract the forecast budget shortfalls, the Council has begun work on a range of measures designed to transform service delivery and generate budget savings.

In mitigation, the Council's balances and reserves are robust and this helps to underpin the assessment of going concern. Furthermore, the Council's cash flow forecast demonstrates that cash balances will remain in a positive position for a minimum of 12 months from the approval of these accounts, meaning that the going concern basis of accounting will continue to apply for the foreseeable future.

ii. Accruals of Income and Expenditure

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

- Revenue from 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 payable on borrowings and receivable on investments is accounted for respectively as expenditure and income based on the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure has been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Expenditure is accrued where goods or services have been received before 31 March but the invoice relating to the goods or services is paid after 31 March. Similarly, income is accrued where it is due before 31 March, but an invoice has not been raised or payment has not been received. 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.

iii. Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

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.

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

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

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

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

v. Charges to Revenue for Non-Current Assets

Services, support services and trading accounts are debited with the following amounts to record the cost of holding non-current assets during the year:

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

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

In September 2022, the Council approved a change in its MRP Policy, effective from 1st April 2022.

- For supported capital expenditure incurred before 1st April 2008, the Council will apply the Asset Life Method using an annuity calculation over 50 years.
- For unsupported borrowing undertaken after 1st April 2008, MRP will be charged on an annuity basis over the weighted average life of the assets in question.

The change in policy has resulted in a reduction in MRP of £0.7m in 2022/23.

vi. Council Tax and Business Rates

The Council, as a billing authority, acts as agent in the collection of council tax and business rates (or non-domestic rates/NDR) on behalf of the major preceptors and government. The Council is principal in terms of collecting council tax and business rates for itself. Billing authorities are required by statute to maintain a separate account, known as the Collection Fund, for the collection and distribution of amounts due in respect of council tax and business rates. Under the legislative framework, billing authorities, major preceptors, and central government (for NNDR) share proportionately the risks and rewards that the amount of council tax and business rates collected could be less or more than predicted.

Accounting for Council Tax and Business Rates

The council tax and business rates income included in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES) is the Council's share of the accrued income for the year. However, regulations determine the amount of council tax and business rates that must be included in the

General Fund. As a result, the difference between the income included in the CIES and the amount credited to the General Fund under regulation is credited to the Collection Fund Adjustment Account and included as a reconciling amount in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

Where debtor balances for the above are identified as impaired, due to a likelihood arising from a past event that payment might not be received, the balance is written down and a charge made to the Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure line in the CIES. The impairment loss is measured as the difference between the carrying amount and the revised future cash flows.

vii. Employee Benefits

Benefits Payable During Employment – short term employee benefits are those due to be settled wholly within 12 months of the year end. They include such benefits as salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (for example, car loans) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the authority. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements 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 rate 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 Short-Term Accumulated Absences Account, so that holiday entitlements are charged to revenue in the financial year in which the holiday absence occurs.

Termination Benefits – termination benefits are amounts payable because 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 in exchange for those benefits. They are charged on an accrual's basis to the appropriate service or, where applicable, to the Non-Distributed Costs line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement at the earlier of when the Council can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the Council recognises costs for a restructuring.

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

Post-Employment Benefits – employees of the Council are members of the Local Government Pensions Scheme, administered by Leicestershire County Council. The scheme provides defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees worked for the Council.

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

- The liabilities of the Leicestershire pension scheme attributable to the Council are included in the balance sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – that is, an

assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, and so on, and estimates of projected earnings for current employees.

- Liabilities are discounted to their value at current prices, using a discount rate set by the actuary.
- The assets of the pension fund attributable to the Council are included in the balance sheet at their fair value:
 - quoted securities – current bid price
 - unquoted securities – professional estimate
 - unitised securities – current bid price
 - property - market value

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

Service cost comprising:

- current service cost – the increase in liabilities because of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employee worked.
- past service cost – the increase in liabilities because of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years – debited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of Non-Distributed Costs.
- Net interest on the net defined benefit liability, that is net interest expense for the Council – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability that arises from the passage of time charged to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments

Re-measurements comprising:

- the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- actuarial gains and losses – changes in the net pensions liability that arise because events have not coincided with assumptions made at the last actuarial valuation or because the actuaries have updated their assumptions – charged to the Pensions Reserve as Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.
- Contributions paid to the Local Government Pension Fund – cash paid as employer's contributions to the pension fund in settlement of liabilities; not accounted for as an expense.

In relation to retirement benefits, statutory provisions require the General Fund balance to be charged with the amount payable by the Council to the pension fund or directly to pensioners in the year, not the amount calculated according to the relevant accounting standards. In the

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

Discretionary Benefits – The Council also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise because 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.

viii. Events After the Reporting Period

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

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

ix. Financial Instruments

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

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

Financial Assets

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

- Amortised cost
- Fair value through profit or loss (FVPL)
- Fair value through other comprehensive income (FVOCI)

The Council's business model is to hold investments to collect contractual cash flows. Financial assets are, therefore, measured at amortised cost. The only exception to this would be financial assets whose contractual payments are not solely payment of principal and interest, that is where the cash flows do not take the form of a basic debt instrument.

Financial Assets Measured at Amortised Cost

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

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

Expected Credit Loss Model

Where material, the Council recognises expected credit losses on its financial assets held at amortised cost, either on a 12 month or lifetime basis. The expected credit loss model also applies to lease receivables and contract assets. Only lifetime losses are recognised for trade receivables (debtors) held by the Council.

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

Financial Assets Measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss

Financial assets that are measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss are recognised on the balance sheet when the authority becomes a party to the contractual provisions of a financial instrument and are initially measured and carried at fair value. Fair value gains and losses are recognised as they arise in the surplus or deficit on the provision of services.

Fair Value Measurements of Financial Assets

Fair value of an asset is the price that would be received to sell an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. The fair value measurements of the Council's financial assets are based on the following techniques:

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

The inputs to the measurement techniques are categorised in accordance with the following three levels:

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

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

x. Government Grants and Contributions

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

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

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

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

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

xi. Heritage Assets

Heritage assets are assets that are held principally for their contribution to knowledge or culture. The Council's only heritage asset is the Ice House situated in the grounds of Bouskell Park, Blaby, a grade 2 listed building. Heritage Assets are recognised and measured (including the treatment of revaluation gains and losses) in accordance with the Council's accounting policies on property, plant, and equipment.

The carrying amounts of heritage assets are reviewed where there is evidence of impairment, for example, where an asset has suffered physical deterioration or breakage or where doubts arise as to its authenticity. Any impairment is recognised and measured in accordance with the Council's general policies on impairment – see note xvi below.

xii. Intangible Assets

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have any physical substance but are controlled by the Council because of past events (for example, software licences) is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the Council.

Expenditure on the development of websites is not capitalised if the website is solely or primarily intended to promote or advertise the Council's goods and services.

Intangible assets are initially measured at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of assets held by the Council can be determined by reference to an active market. In practice, no intangible asset held by the Council meets this criterion, and they are therefore carried at amortised cost. The depreciable amount of an intangible asset is amortised over its useful life to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. An asset is tested for impairment whenever there is an indication that the asset might be impaired. Any losses recognised are posted to the relevant service line(s) in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Any gain or loss arising on the disposal or abandonment of an intangible asset is posted to the Other Operating Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

Where expenditure on intangible assets qualifies as capital expenditure for statutory purposes, amortisation, impairment losses and disposal gains and losses are not permitted 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, for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000, the Capital Receipts Reserve.

xiii. Investment Property

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

Investment properties are measured initially at cost and subsequently at fair value, being the price that would be received to sell such an asset in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. As a non-financial asset, investment properties are measured at highest and best use. They are not depreciated but are revalued annually according to market conditions at the year end. 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 also applied to gains or losses on disposal.

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

xiv. Leases

Leases are classified as finance leases where the terms of the lease transfer substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of the property, plant, or equipment from the lessor to the lessee. The Council recognises "substantially all" as being at least 75% of the value of the

asset, unless on an individual case basis this would not give a true representation of the substance of the transaction. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

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

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

The Authority as Lessee

Finance Leases

Property, plant, and equipment held under finance leases is recognised on the Balance Sheet at the commencement of the lease at its fair value measured at the lease's inception (or the present value of the minimum lease payments, if lower). The asset recognised is matched by a liability for the obligation to pay the lessor. Initial direct costs of the Council are added to the carrying amount of the asset. Premiums paid on entry into a lease are applied to writing down the lease liability. Contingent rents are charged as expenses in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease payments are apportioned between:

- A charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property, plant, or equipment – applied to write down the lease liability, and
- A finance charge – debited to the Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

Property, plant, and equipment recognised under finance leases is accounted for using the policies applied generally to such assets, subject to depreciation being charged over the lease term if this is shorter than the asset's estimated useful life (where ownership of the asset does not transfer to the authority at the end of the lease period).

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

Operating Leases

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

The Authority as Lessor

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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (that is, netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal), 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 to the Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When the future rentals are received, the element for the capital receipt for the disposal of the asset is used to write down the 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 Adjustments 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. Credits are made on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease, even if this does not match the pattern of payments (for example, there is a premium paid at the commencement of the lease). 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.

xv. Overheads and Support Services

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

xvi. Property, Plant and Equipment

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

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 (that is, repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred.

Measurement – assets are initially measured at cost, comprising:

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

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

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

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

- Infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – depreciated historical cost.
- Surplus assets – the current value measurement base is fair value, estimated at highest and best use from a market participant's perspective.
- All other assets – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV).

Where there is no market-based evidence of fair value because of the specialist nature of an asset, depreciated replacement cost (DRC) is used as an estimate of current value.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- Dwellings and other buildings – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the property as estimated by the valuer.
- Vehicles, plant, furniture, and equipment – straight-line allocation over the useful life of the asset, based on the historic cost of that asset.
- Infrastructure – straight-line allocation over 1 to 15 years

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. The balance of receipts remains within the 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 fixed assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are appropriated to the Capital Adjustment Account from the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

xvii. Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Provisions – Provisions are made where an event has taken place on or before the Balance Sheet date:

- That gives the Council a present obligation.
- That probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential.
- Where a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation.

If it is not clear whether an event has taken place on or before the Balance Sheet date, it is deemed to give rise to a present obligation if, taking account of all available evidence, it is more likely than not that a present obligation exists on the Balance Sheet date. The present obligation can be legal or constructive.

Provisions are charged as an expense to the appropriate service line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement when the Council has an obligation and are measured at the best estimate at the Balance Sheet date of the expenditure required to settle the obligation, taking into account relevant risks and uncertainties.

Estimated settlements are reviewed at the end of each financial year. Where it becomes less probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

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

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

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

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

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

xviii. Reserves

The Council sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by appropriating amounts out of the General Fund Balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the Surplus or Deficit on Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then transferred back into the General Fund Balance so that there is no net charge against council tax for the expenditure.

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

xix. Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

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

xx. Value Added Tax (VAT)

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

2. Accounting Standards Issued But Not Yet Adopted

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (the Code) requires the disclosure of information in relation to the anticipated impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard that has been issued but not yet adopted.

The code also requires that changes in accounting policy are applied retrospectively unless transitional arrangements are specified by the Code. This would result in an impact on disclosures spanning two financial years.

Accounting changes that are introduced by the 2023/24 code where disclosures are required in the 2022/23 Financial Statements are as follows:

- IFRS 16 Leases – only affecting those authorities that have decided to voluntarily implement IFRS 16 in the 2023/24 financial year.
- For authorities that adopted IFRS16 in 2022/23 but chose to defer implementation of IFRS16 to Private Finance Initiatives/Public-Private Partnership arrangements until 2023/24, information on that more specific accounting change is required in the 2022/23 statement of accounts.
- Definition of Accounting Estimates (Amendments to IAS8) issued in February 2021.
- Disclosure of Accounting Policies (Amendments to IAS1 and IFRS Practice Statement 2) issued in February 2021.
- Deferred Tax related to Assets and Liabilities arising from a Single Transaction (Amendments to IAS12) issued in May 2021.

The above standards either do not apply to Blaby (in the case of IFRS16) or are not expected to have a significant impact on the Council's accounts.

3. Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies

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

Local Government Funding

There continues to be a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government, particularly concerning the rebasing of the business rates baseline and the Fairer Funding Review. Government has announced that it is unlikely to introduce any changes before 2025/26 but the timing and extent of any potential changes remain unconfirmed. However, the Council's view is that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the Council's assets might be impaired because of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision.

Embedded Leases and Derivatives

All material contractual arrangements have been reviewed in order to determine whether they contain embedded leases or embedded derivatives, although none have been identified as such.

Provision for Business Rates Appeals

The Council has set aside a provision which reflects its estimate of the potential cost of refunding ratepayers who successfully appeal against the rateable value of their property. The value of this provision has been determined as follows:

- 2010 Rating List – based on an assessment of outstanding appeals at 31 March 2023 in conjunction with an external expert. One key judgement made in arriving at the value of the provision is that appeals that are assessed as likely to be withdrawn have not been included.
- 2017 Rating List – based upon checks and challenges submitted as at 31st March 2023, potential threats based on our external expert's assessment of the rating list, and an internal review of businesses with a rateable value of £250,000 or more. For the purposes of checks and challenges, a 90% accuracy rate has been assumed.

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 31 March 2023 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

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.

If the useful life of assets is reduced, depreciation increases and the carrying amount of the assets falls. It is estimated that the annual depreciation charge for buildings would increase by £111,459 for every year that useful lives had to be reduced.

As detailed in Note 13, a desktop valuation was undertaken as at 31 March 2023 by Mr K. Shirer BA (Hons) MRICS, of the District Valuation Office. The valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

Pensions Liability

Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating to the discount rate used, the rate at which salaries are projected to increase, changes in retirement ages, mortality rates and expected returns on pension fund assets. A firm of consulting actuaries, Hymans Robertson LLP, is engaged by Leicestershire County Council on behalf of all Leicestershire authorities to provide specialist advice about the assumptions to be applied.

The effects on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For instance, a 0.1% decrease in the discount rate assumption would result in an increase in the pension liability of 2% (£1,461,000).

The Council's share of the net pension liability on 31 March 2023 has decreased by £30,971,000. The most significant contributory factor leading to this decrease is that the 2022 triennial funding valuation results are now available and have been used to project the pension obligations at the latest balance sheet date. As at 31st March 2023, the net discount rate (net of CPI inflation) has significantly increased compared to 31st March 2022, leading to a large gain in year.

During 2022/23, the actuaries advised that the net pension liability had increased by £9,651,000 because of experience but decreased by £44,956,000 attributable to updating of the financial and demographic assumptions.

Arrears

On 31 March 2023, the Council had a balance of sundry debtors for £1,505,645. A review of significant balances suggested that on average an impairment of doubtful debts of just under 75% (£1,123,703) was appropriate. However, in the current economic climate it is not certain that such an allowance would be sufficient.

If collection rates were to deteriorate, a doubling of the amount of the impairment of doubtful debts would require an additional £179,033 to be set aside as an allowance.

5. Material Items of Income and Expense

This note identifies material items of income and expenditure that are not disclosed on the face of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Council received £5.481m in respect of the Council Tax Energy Bill Rebate for distribution to eligible households within the district. The Council had no control over the eligibility criteria and considers that it was acting as agent on behalf of the government.

The total amount paid out during 2022/23 was £5.459m.

6. Events after the Reporting Period

The Statement of Accounts was authorised for issue by the Strategic Director (Section 151) on 31 May 2023. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements or notes.

There were no material post balance sheet events arising between 31 March 2023 and the date on which the accounts were authorised for issue.

7. Expenditure and Funding Analysis

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

2021/22 Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance (Restated) £	2021/22 Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis (Restated) £	2021/22 Net Expenditure in the CIES (Restated) £		2022/23 Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balance £	2022/23 Adjustments between the Funding and Accounting Basis £	2022/23 Net Expenditure in the CIES £
1,456,223	(374,130)	1,830,353	Housing, Community and Environmental Services	1,316,324	(383,613)	1,699,937
2,934,282	(1,853,532)	4,787,813	Neighbourhood Services and Assets	3,302,159	(1,913,076)	5,215,235
2,665,363	(318,874)	2,984,238	Finance, People and Performance	2,745,605	(733,948)	3,479,553
82,757	(691,636)	774,393	Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support	366,520	(1,667,623)	2,034,143
1,232,668	(206,410)	1,439,078	Leader	1,424,479	(149,807)	1,574,286
2,364,438	(703,943)	3,068,381	Planning Delivery, Enforcement and Corporate Transformation	2,910,986	(583,733)	3,494,719
10,735,732	(4,148,524)	14,884,256	Net Cost of Services	12,066,073	(5,431,800)	17,497,873
(5,706,795)	7,633,096	(13,339,891)	Other Income and Expenditure	(10,641,934)	3,596,423	(14,238,358)
5,028,937	3,484,572	1,544,365	(Surplus) or Deficit	1,424,138	(1,835,377)	3,259,515
23,808,516			Opening General Fund Balance	18,779,579		
(5,028,937)			Less/Plus Surplus or (Deficit) on General Fund Balance in Year	(1,424,138)		
18,779,579			Closing General Fund Balance at 31 March	17,355,441		

The General Fund Balance is made up of reserves which have been earmarked for specific purposes(see note 9) and those which are as yet unallocated.

	Earmarked Reserves £	Unallocated General Fund Balances £	Total General FundBalance £
Balance as at 1 April 2022	14,080,669	4,698,910	18,779,579
Movement in Earmarked Reserves	(1,344,673)	0	(1,344,673)
Movement in Unallocated General Fund Balances	0	(79,465)	(79,465)
Balance as at 31 March 2023	12,735,996	4,619,445	17,355,441

The balance includes £1,516,792 in an Earmarked Reserve specifically set aside to meet the Collection Fund Deficit

7a. Notes to the Expenditure and Funding Analysis

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2022/23

Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments £	Other Differences £	Total Adjustments £
Housing, Community and Environmental Services	78,108	306,549	(1,044)	383,613
Neighbourhood Services and Assets	1,469,545	413,955	29,576	1,913,076
Finance, People and Performance	37,461	263,677	432,810	733,948
Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support	580,208	511,673	575,742	1,667,623
Leader	0	149,277	530	149,807
Planning Delivery, Enforcement and Corporate Transformation	251,919	329,352	2,462	583,733
Net Cost of Services	2,417,241	1,974,483	1,040,076	5,431,800
Other income and expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(643,049)	943,000	(3,896,374)	(3,596,423)
Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	1,774,192	2,917,483	(2,856,298)	1,835,377

Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis 2021/22 (Restated)

Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments £	Other Differences £	Total Adjustments £
Housing, Community and Environmental Services	17,282	356,129	719	374,130
Neighbourhood Services and Assets	1,336,796	508,638	8,098	1,853,532
Finance, People and Performance	35,282	355,060	(71,468)	318,874
Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support	143,826	541,681	6,129	691,636
Leader	0	204,905	1,505	206,410
Planning Delivery, Enforcement and Corporate Transformation	305,240	398,024	678	703,943
Net Cost of Services	1,838,426	2,364,437	(54,339)	4,148,524
Other income and expenditure from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	1,953,478	937,000	(6,616,617)	(7,633,096)
Difference between General Fund surplus or deficit and Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(115,052)	(3,301,437)	(6,670,956)	(3,484,572)

Adjustments for Capital Purposes

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

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

Net Change for the Pensions Adjustments

Net change for the removal of pension contributions and the addition of IAS19 Employee Benefits related expenditure and income:

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

Other Differences

Other differences between amounts debited/credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and amounts payable/receivable to be recognised under statute:

- For Financing and investment income and expenditure – the other differences column recognises adjustments to the General Fund for the accrual of compensated absences (holiday pay). Other items such as investment property, interest payable and receivable, and trading operations are reallocated between this line and services.
- The charge under Taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure represents the difference between what is chargeable under statutory regulations for council tax and NNDR that was projected to be received at the start of the year, and the income recognised under generally accepted accounting practices in the Code. This is a timing difference as any difference will be brought forward in future surpluses or deficits on the Collection Fund.

7b. Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature

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

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Expenditure		
Employee benefits expenses	16,442,316	15,587,269
Other services expenses	16,718,950	19,145,055
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	3,003,428	2,530,083
Interest payments	1,425,389	1,311,602
Precepts and levies	3,957,970	3,802,855
Total Expenditure	41,548,053	42,376,864
Income		
Fees, charges and other service income	(5,059,795)	(4,709,125)
Interest and investment income	(570,070)	(233,313)
Income from council tax	(10,008,720)	(9,658,888)
Net of Non Domestic Rates income	(3,034,242)	(1,224,382)
Government Grants and Contributions	(18,595,032)	(24,292,405)
Gain on disposal of assets	(49,383)	(197,250)
Surplus on Trading Operations	(971,296)	(453,636)
Total Income	(38,288,538)	(40,832,499)
(Surplus)/Deficit on the Provision of Services	3,259,515	1,544,365

Income received from services on a segmental basis is analysed in the following table:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 Restated £
Housing, Community and Environmental Services	(789,274)	(449,910)
Neighbourhood Services and Assets	(2,233,756)	(2,083,634)
Finance, People and Performance	(297,164)	(273,043)
Health, Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Business Support	(2,301,030)	(1,517,486)
Leader	(248,599)	(321,634)
Planning Delivery, Enforcement and Corporate Transformation	(518,413)	(756,526)
Total Revenue from External Customers	(6,388,236)	(5,402,233)

8. Adjustments Between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis Under Regulations

This note details the adjustments that are made to the total comprehensive income and expenditure recognised by the Council in the year in accordance with proper accounting practice to the resources that are specified by statutory provisions as being available to the Council to meet future capital and revenue expenditure. The following sets out a description of the reserves that the adjustments are made against.

General Fund Balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all of the receipts of an authority are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the authority are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. These rules can also specify the financial year in which liabilities and payments should impact on the General Fund Balance, which is not necessarily in accordance with proper accounting practice. The General Fund Balance therefore summarises the resources that the 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 Account (Reserve) holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the Council has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies, but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure. The balance is restricted by grant terms as to the capital expenditure against which it can be applied and/or the financial year in which this can take place.

Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve

The Collection Fund Reserve holds the surplus of Business Rates Section 31 grant and Tax Income Guarantee payment which is to be used to offset the Collection Fund Deficit. The legislation that governs Collection Fund accounting means the related deficit as a result of the loss of Business Rates income in-year will not be charged to the councils General Fund until 2023/24. The reserve balance will then be used to mitigate against this deficit.

2022/23	General Fund Balance	Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied
	£	£	£	£
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>				
Section 31 grants surplus and Tax Income guarantee transferred to the Collection Fund Reserve	2,753,563	(2,753,563)	0	0
Pensions costs (transferred to/from the Pensions Reserve)	2,917,483	0	0	0
Council tax and NNDR (transfers to/from Collection Fund Adjustment Account)	(3,104,106)	0	0	0
Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve)	(1,228)	0	0	0
Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account)	2,729,982	0	0	63,391
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	5,295,694	(2,753,563)	0	63,391
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources				
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	(49,862)	0	49,862	0
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account)	(389,373)	0	0	0
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(267,519)	0	0	0
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(706,754)	0	49,862	0
Adjustments to Capital Resources				
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	0	(135,837)	0
Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure	0	0	0	(406,098)
Repayment of Capital Loans (Transfer to Capital Adjustment Account)	0	0	0	0
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	0	0	(135,837)	(107,766)
Total Adjustments	4,588,940	(2,753,563)	(85,975)	(342,707)

2021/22	General Fund Balance	Collection Fund Earmarked Reserve	Capital Receipts Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied
	£	£	£	£
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>				
Section 31 grants surplus and Tax Income guarantee transferred to the Collection Fund Reserve	(6,598,121)	6,598,121	0	0
Pensions costs (transferred to/from the Pensions Reserve)	3,301,437	0	0	0
Council tax and NNDR (transfers to/from Collection Fund Adjustment Account)	(6,534,316)	0	0	0
Holiday pay (transferred to the Accumulated Absences Reserve)	2,450	0	0	0
Reversal of entries included in the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in relation to capital expenditure (these items are charged to the Capital Adjustment Account)	9,244,732	0		110,547
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	(583,818)	6,598,121	0	110,547
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources				
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds from revenue to the Capital Receipts Reserve	(1,322,250)	0	1,322,250	0
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from the Capital Adjustment Account)	(1,145,597)	0	0	0
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances (transfer to the Capital Adjustment Account)	(432,907)	0	0	0
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	(2,900,754)	0	1,322,250	0
Adjustments to Capital Resources				
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure	0	0	(285,984)	0
Application of capital grants to finance capital expenditure	0	0	0	(107,766)
Repayment of Capital Loans (Transfer to Capital Adjustment Account)	0	0	0	0
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	0	0	(285,984)	(107,766)
Total Adjustments	(3,484,572)	6,598,121	1,036,266	2,781

9. Movement in Earmarked Reserves

This note sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund Balance in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund expenditure in 2022/23.

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Transfers In 2021/22	Transfers Out 2021/22	Balance at 31 March 2022	Transfers In 2022/23	Transfers Out 2022/23	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Leisure Centre Renewals Fund	(79,364)	0	17,004	(62,361)	(11,246)	0	(73,607)
Computer Room Environment	(128,018)	(140,000)	12,611	(255,407)	0	114,567	(140,840)
Licensing Reserve	(27,868)	0	0	(27,868)	0	0	(27,868)
Insurance Reserve Fund	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)	0	0	(100,000)
Blaby Plan Priorities Reserve	(563,607)	(200,000)	310,940	(452,667)	0	86,843	(365,824)
General Reserve Fund	(1,697,764)	0	0	(1,697,764)	0	85,454	(1,612,310)
Ongoing Projects Reserve	(2,179,548)	(2,697,123)	1,953,608	(2,923,063)	(3,599,422)	2,759,644	(3,762,841)
Elections Reserve	(92,463)	(29,481)	0	(121,944)	(20,000)	0	(141,944)
Choice Based Lettings Reserve	(952)	0	0	(952)	0	0	(952)
New Homes Bonus Reserve	(41,327)	0	0	(41,327)	0	0	(41,327)
COVID Support Reserve	0	(700,000)	0	(700,000)	0	0	(700,000)
Economic Development Initiatives	(50,000)	0	0	(50,000)	0	0	(50,000)
Provision - ERIE Sinking Fund	(41,717)	0	7,063	(34,654)	0	7,877	(26,777)
Community Rights Reserve	(48,724)	0	0	(48,724)	0	0	(48,724)
Hardship Reserve	(250,000)	(75,000)	0	(325,000)	0	0	(325,000)
Parish New Homes Bonus Reserve	(881)	0	0	(881)	0	0	(881)
NNDR Income Reserve	(1,702,174)	0	0	(1,702,174)	(751,752)	0	(2,453,926)
Flexible Working Reserve	(94,678)	(100,000)	32,000	(162,678)	0	0	(162,678)
Local Plan Reserve	(483,595)	0	0	(483,595)	(40,000)	67,289	(456,306)

	Balance at 1 April 2021	Transfers In 2021/22	Transfers Out 2021/22	Balance at 31 March 2022	Transfers In 2022/23	Transfers Out 2022/23	Balance at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Lottery Reserve	(20,712)	(5,855)	5,435	(21,132)	(5,334)	0	(26,466)
IT System Replacement Reserve	(71,315)	0	16,900	(54,415)	0	14,600	(39,815)
Property Fund Reserve	(50,656)	(37,806)	0	(88,462)	(40,000)	0	(128,462)
Tax Income Guarantee Reserve	(1,379,731)	0	1,379,731	0	0	0	0
S31 Grant Reserve	(9,488,745)	0	5,218,390	(4,270,355)	0	2,753,563	(1,516,792)
Huncote Major Reserve	0	(500,000)	76,567	(423,433)	(150,000)	72,590	(500,843)
Court Fees Income Reserve	0	(31,813)	0	(31,813)	0	0	(31,813)
Total	(18,593,838)	(4,517,079)	9,030,248	(14,080,669)	(4,617,754)	5,962,427	(12,735,996)
Collection Fund –timing difference				4,270,355			1,516,792
Useable Earmarked Reserves				(9,810,314)			(11,219,204)

Earmarked Reserve	Purpose
Leisure Centre Renewals Fund	Periodic replacement of major plant and equipment.
I.T. Reserve Fund	Maintained to meet the costs of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure issues, including plant and equipment.
Licensing Reserve	Licensing software developments and service improvements.
Insurance Reserve	Unforeseen claims liabilities in relation to self-funded public liability insurance policy.
On-Going Projects Reserve	Expenditure commitments from non-repeating budgets where delayed delivery results in deferral to a subsequent year.
General Reserve Fund	To offset the anticipated future reduction in grant funding from central Government, and to fund spend to save initiatives.
Blaby District Plan Priorities Reserve	A reserve for future expenditure in support of our district plan priorities.
Elections Reserve	To cover the cost of future District Council elections.
Choice Based Lettings Reserve	Support for setting up and development of new lettings system.
New Homes Bonus Reserve	Grant set aside to fund specific housing projects.
Covid Support Reserve	Set aside to mitigate the ongoing impact on services and key income that arose from the Covid-19 pandemic.
Economic Development Initiatives Reserve	To cover future economic development related projects.
ERIE Sinking Fund	To recognise the Service Charge income held in relation to future maintenance requirements at Enderby Road Industrial Estate.
Community Rights Reserve	Set aside monies to cover potential future costs associated with the Community Right to Challenge and/or Community Right to Bid initiatives.
Hardship Reserve	Set aside to mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on residents and businesses.
Parish New Homes Bonus Reserve	To hold the share of New Homes Bonus Grant awarded to parish councils/meetings which do not maintain their own bank account.
NNDR Income Reserve	Set aside to mitigate the potential risks and uncertainties in funding associated with the business rate retention scheme.
Agile Working Reserve	Set aside monies to cover potential future costs of introducing mobile and flexible working processes, a major corporate project.
Local Plan Reserve	To cover non-recurring expenditure linked to the delivery of the Council's Local Plan.

Earmarked Reserve	Purpose
Lottery Reserve	To ring-fence the Council's share of proceeds from the Blaby Lottery, which will be used to support the Community Grants Programme.
IT System Replacement Reserve	Set aside to offset the cost of implementation of new IT systems, including additional maintenance and licensing costs.
Property Fund Reserve	To hold the interest earned from the Lothbury Property Fund to mitigate potential future fluctuations in the fund value.
Tax Income Guarantee Reserve	To hold the one-off compensatory Tax Income Guarantee payment to be used to offset the Collection Fund deficit that arose as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
S31 Grant Reserve	To hold the Council's share of Section 31 Grant, which will be used
Huncote Major Reserve	To allow immediate emergency mitigation works to be undertaken to make the Huncote Leisure Centre site safe following increased levels of Methane Gas.
Court Fees Income Reserve	Court costs reimbursed by HM Courts

10. Other Operating Expenditure

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Parish Council Precepts	3,957,970	3,802,855
(Gains)/losses on the disposal of non-current assets	(49,383)	(198,250)
Total	3,908,587	3,604,605

11. Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Interest payable and similar charges	482,389	374,602
Net interest on the net defined benefit liability	943,000	937,000
Interest receivable and similar income	(819,105)	(94,223)
Expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value	2,356	21,343
Income on investment properties	(32,026)	(9,627)
Movement in value of Property Fund	249,036	(139,090)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit on Trading Operations	(971,296)	(453,636)
Total	(145,646)	636,369

12. Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income and Expenditure

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Council tax income	(10,008,720)	(9,658,889)
Non domestic rates	(3,034,242)	(1,224,382)
Non ring-fenced government grants	(4,879,673)	(6,394,930)
Capital grants and contributions	(78,664)	(301,863)
Total	(18,001,299)	(17,580,064)

13. Property, Plant and Equipment

Movement on Balances

Movement on Balances in 2022/23	Other Land and Buildings £	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £	Infrastructure Assets £	Community Assets £	Surplus Assets £	Assets under Construction £	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £
Cost or Valuation							
At 1 April 2022	27,339,850	8,544,136	482,312	2,098,959	230,000	0	38,695,257
Additions	238,656	564,137	0	236,961	0	53,411	1,093,165
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(68,681)	0	0	0	(37,954)	0	(106,635)
Revaluation increases (decreases) recognised in the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	(225,985)	0	0	0	0	0	(225,985)
Derecognition – disposals	0	(27,775)	0	0	0	0	(27,775)
Transfers between asset groups	(48,954)	0	0	0	48,954	0	0
Assets reclassified to/from held for sale	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
At 31 March 2023	27,234,886	9,080,498	482,312	2,335,920	241,000	53,411	39,428,027
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment							
At 1 April 2022	(154,859)	(4,943,242)	(412,084)	(106,698)	0	0	(5,616,883)
Depreciation charge	(1,146,939)	(939,459)	(30,085)	(65,424)	0	0	(2,181,907)
Derecognition – disposals	0	27,299	0	0	0	0	27,299
Other movements in depreciation and impairment	1,138,134	0	0	0	0	0	1,138,134
At 31 March 2023	(163,664)	(5,855,402)	(442,169)	(172,122)	0	0	(6,633,357)
Net Book Value							
At 31 March 2023	27,071,222	3,225,096	40,143	2,163,798	241,000	53,411	27,071,222
At 31 March 2022	27,184,991	3,600,894	70,228	1,992,261	230,000	0	33,078,374

Movement on Balances in 2021/22	Other Land and Buildings £	Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment £	Infrastructure Assets £	Community Assets £	Surplus Assets £	Assets under Construction £	Total Property, Plant and Equipment £
Cost or Valuation							
At 1 April 2021	27,475,350	8,051,700	482,312	1,926,529	241,600	0	38,177,491
Additions	44,313	636,853	0	189,525	0	0	870,691
Revaluation increases/(decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	540,975	0	0	0	(11,600)	0	529,375
Revaluation increases (decreases) recognised in the surplus/deficit on the provision of services	(424,288)	0	0	0	0	0	(424,288)
Derecognition – disposals	0	(144,417)	0	0	0	0	(144,417)
Transfers between asset groups	(45,000)	0	0	0	0	0	(45,000)
Assets reclassified to/from held for sale	(251,500)	0	0	(17,095)	0	0	(268,593)
At 31 March 2022	27,339,850	8,544,136	482,312	2,098,959	230,000	0	38,695,257
Accumulated Depreciation and Impairment							
At 1 April 2021	(149,374)	(4,208,272)	(379,754)	(63,098)	0	0	(4,800,498)
Depreciation charge	(997,134)	(879,387)	(32,330)	(43,600)	0	0	(1,952,451)
Derecognition – disposals	0	144,417	0	0	0	0	144,417
Other movements in depreciation and impairment	991,650	0	0	0	0	0	991,650
At 31 March 2022	(154,859)	(4,943,242)	(412,084)	(106,698)	0	0	(5,616,883)
Net Book Value							
At 31 March 2022	27,184,991	3,600,894	70,228	1,992,261	230,000	0	33,078,374
At 31 March 2021	27,325,976	3,843,428	102,558	1,863,431	241,600	0	33,376,993

Depreciation

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

- Other Land and Buildings – 1 to 50 years
- Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment – 1 to 20 years
- Infrastructure – 1 to 15 years
- Community Assets – 1 to 50 years

Assets under construction are not depreciated until brought into use.

Capital Commitments

At 31 March 2023, the Council has entered into a number of contracts for the enhancement of Property, Plant and Equipment in 2022/23 and future years budgeted to cost £1,289,330. Similar commitments on 31 March 2022 were £2,847,013.

The major commitments are –

Capital Commitments	£
Units 10 & 11, Enderby Road Industrial Estate Refurbishment	360,139
Disabled Facilities and Housing Support Grants	291,014
Fleet Vehicle Replacements	252,790
Contributions towards Affordable Housing Schemes at Whetstone & Blaby	151,500
Contribution towards Parish led projects	137,954
Replacement HR and Payroll System	39,455
Other	56,478
	1,289,330

Effects of Changes in Estimates

The Council has reviewed its assumptions with regard to the useful economic life of its non-current assets but has concluded that no material changes are required to its accounting estimates.

Revaluations

The Council's valuation programme ensures that all Property, Plant and Equipment required to be measured at fair value is formally revalued at least every five years, although any material changes to valuations are adjusted in the interim period.

Land and buildings are valued by an independent external valuer and subject to annual desktop reviews. A desktop valuation was undertaken as at 31 March 2023 by Mr K. Shirer BA (Hons) MRICS, of the District Valuation Office. The valuations of land and buildings were carried out in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. For non-specialised operational assets, fair value equates to existing use value, and for specialised operational assets fair value is estimated using a depreciated replacement cost approach.

Vehicles, plant, and equipment are valued internally by reference to current replacement costs provided by suppliers and estimated disposal values (open market value in existing use). Assets not yet re-valued are shown at depreciated value based on historical cost but are not considered to be materially under or overvalued. The Council is not aware of any material change in value and these valuations have not been updated.

Surplus assets are measured at fair value, representing highest and best use value from a market participant's perspective.

	Land and Buildings £	Vehicles, Plant and Equipment £	Infrastructure Assets £	Community Assets £	Surplus Assets £	Assets Under Construction £	Total £
Carried at historical cost	94,098	3,225,096	40,143	2,163,798	0	53,411	5,576,546
Valued at fair value as at 31 March 2023	26,977,124	0	0	0	241,000	0	27,218,124
Total	27,071,222	3,225,096	40,143	2,163,798	241,000	0	32,794,670

14. Heritage Assets

A heritage asset is defined by the Code as an asset with “historical, artistic, scientific, technological, geophysical or environmental qualities that is held and maintained principally for its contribution to knowledge and culture”.

The Council currently has only one asset that meets the definition of a heritage asset, and that is the Ice House situated in Bouskell Park, Blaby. Most of the Ice House is underground and part has been dated back to medieval times. It is a grade 2 listed building and is considered to be of historical interest. The Council secured external funding to enable it to undertake structural works which have now been completed. These works have enabled visitors to access the Ice House and learn its history.

The Ice House had not previously been reported in the Balance Sheet, as the Council held no information as to its cost or value. It was considered the cost of obtaining such information outweighed the benefit to the users of the financial statements. Since the completion of the renovation project, the asset is now held at the depreciated value of the project total. At the 31 March 2023, this stands at £83,388.

15. Investment Properties

The Council owns just one investment property, the Old Bank, Narborough. Works were undertaken to redevelop the property into flats which the Council lets out at market rent.

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.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Rental income from investment property	32,025	9,627
Dilapidations	0	0
Operating expenses arising from investment property	(13,442)	(14,760)
Net gain/(loss) from fair value adjustments	10,513	(8,687)
Net gain/(loss)	29,096	(13,820)

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance as at 1 April	475,000	170,000
Additions and Transfers In	7,380	331,513
Net gain/(loss) from fair value adjustments	32,620	(26,513)
Balance as at 31 March	515,000	475,000

16. Intangible Assets

The Council accounts for its software as intangible assets, to the extent that the software is not an integral part of a particular IT system and accounted for as part of the hardware item of Property, Plant and Equipment. The intangible assets include purchased licences, but the Council has no internally generated software.

All software is given a finite useful life, based on assessments of the period that the software is expected to be of use to the Council. The Council has no Intangible Assets that it has assessed as having an indefinite useful life.

The useful lives assigned to the major software suites used by the Council are:

Useful Life	Intangible Asset
10 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northgate Revenues and Benefits System
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Relationship Management/Electronic Document and Records Management System (CRM/EDRM) Xpress Elections Software Real Asset Management (Asset Register System) Idox/CAPS Planning System Bottomline BACS Submission Software COA Solutions eFinancials (Financial Management System)

The movement on Intangible Asset balances during the year is as follows:

Movement on Intangible Asset Balances	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross carrying amount Accumulated amortisation 	240,365 (201,458)	232,328 (189,686)
Net carrying amount at 1 April	38,907	42,642
Additions	38,700	12,537
Disposals	(1,400)	(4,500)
Amortisation for the period	(17,781)	(16,272)
Write back amortisations on disposals	1,400	4,500
Net carrying amount at 31 March	59,826	38,907
Comprising:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross carrying amount Accumulated amortisation 	277,665 (217,839)	240,365 (201,458)
	59,826	38,907

There have been no changes in accounting estimates (for example, residual values, useful lives, amortisation method) for Intangible Assets that have had an effect on the current period or that are expected to have an effect in subsequent financial years. Software assets are valued at historic cost.

17. Financial Instruments

Categories of Financial Instruments

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

Financial Assets	Non-Current 31/03/23 £	Current 31/03/23 £	Non-Current 31/03/22 £	Current 31/03/22 £
Investments at amortised cost	0	25,589,465	0	35,656,491
Investments at Fair Value through Profit or Loss	844,874	0	1,093,910	0
Debtors carried at contract amounts	106,629	1,985,535	106,629	1,339,536
Total Financial Assets	951,503	27,575,000	1,200,539	36,996,027

Financial Liabilities	Non-Current 31/03/23 £	Current 31/03/23 £	Non-Current 31/03/22 £	Current 31/03/22 £
Borrowings at amortised cost	5,713,439	(241,279)	(7,929,939)	(244,385)
Other Long Term Liabilities at amortised cost	(454,891)	0	(455,157)	0
Creditors carried at contract amounts	0	(7,745,580)	0	(8,221,370)
Total Financial Liabilities	(6,168,330)	(7,986,859)	8,385,096	(8,465,755)

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses in 2022/23	Financial Liabilities measured at amortised cost £	Financial Assets loans and receivables £	Financial Assets Fair Value through profit or loss £	Total £
Interest expense – financial liabilities measured at amortised cost	(482,389)	0	0	(482,389)
Interest revenue – financial assets measured at amortised cost	0	778,213	0	778,213
Interest revenue – financial assets measured at Fair Value through Profit or Loss	0	0	40,892	40,892
Losses on Revaluation of Property Fund	0	0	155,126	155,126
Net gain/(loss) for the year	(482,389)	778,213	196,018	491,842

Fair Value of Assets and Liabilities

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

- For loans from the PWLB and other loans payable, new loan rates from the PWLB have been applied to provide the fair value under PWLB debt redemption procedures
- For loans receivable prevailing benchmark rates have been used to provide the fair value
- No early repayment or impairment is recognised
- Where an instrument will mature in the next 12 months, the carrying amount is assumed to be approximate to fair value
- The fair value of trade and other receivables is taken to be the invoiced or billed amount

The fair values calculated are as follows:

	Carrying Amount 31 March 2023 £	Fair Value 31 March 2023 £	Carrying Amount 31 March 2022 £	Fair Value 31 March 2022 £
PWLB Debt	5,954,452	4,051,594	6,166,890	5,811,430
Non PWLB Debt	0	0	2007,192	2004,688
Short Term Creditors	7,745,580	7,745,580	8,221,370	8,221,370
Short Term Finance Lease Liability	266	266	242	242
Long Term Finance Lease Liability	454,891	454,891	455,157	455,157
Total Financial Liabilities	14,155,189	12,252,331	16,850,851	16,492,887

The fair value of Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and market loans of £4,051,594 measures the economic effect of the terms agreed with the PWLB, and other lenders compared with estimates of the terms that would be offered for market transactions undertaken at the Balance Sheet date. The difference between the carrying amount and the fair value measures the additional interest that the authority will pay over the remaining terms of the loans under the agreements with the PWLB and other lenders, against what would be paid if the loans were at prevailing market rates.

However, the authority has a continuing ability to borrow at concessionary rates from the PWLB rather than from the markets. A supplementary measure of the additional interest that the authority will pay as a result of its PWLB commitments for fixed rate loans is to compare the terms of these loans with the new borrowing rates available from the PWLB. If a value is calculated on this basis, the carrying amount of £5,954,452 would be valued at £4,051,594. But, if the authority were to seek to avoid the projected loss by repaying the loans to the PWLB, the PWLB would raise a penalty charge for early redemption in addition to charging a premium for the additional interest that will not now be paid. The exit price for the PWLB loans, including the penalty charge, would be £3,283,024.

	Carrying Amount 31 March 2023 £	Fair Value 31 March 2023 £	Carrying Amount 31 March 2022 £	Fair Value 31 March 2022 £
Money Market Loans less than 1 Year	26,434,339	26,434,339	36,750,401	36,750,401
Short Term Debtors	538,148	538,148	1,339,536	1,339,536
Long Term Debtors	106,629	106,629	106,629	106,629
Total Financial Assets	27,079,116	27,079,116,	38,196,566	38,196,566

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

The Council's long-term debtors include mortgage advances and renovation loans in excess of twelve months. The balances are increased by payments/loans advanced during the financial year and reduced as repayments are made.

18. Debtors

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Central government bodies	576,041	2,223,866
Other local authorities	3,392,081	2,955,621
NHS Bodies	49,971	11,393
Other entities and individuals	1,575,048	2,653,013
Total	5,593,141	7,843,893

Each line item in the table above is presented net of impairment (that is, any allowance for non-collection). The impairment allowance for short term debtors (including council tax and non-domestic rate income) as at 31 March 2023 is £1,428,631 (£1,525,522 at 31 March 2022).

19. Cash and Cash Equivalents

The balance of cash and cash equivalents is made up of the following elements:

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Cash held by the Council	356	426
Bank current accounts	612,170	1,860,096
Deposits in Money Market Funds	8,099,951	12,003,267
Short-term deposits with banks and building societies	13,050,786	10,083,067
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	21,763,263	23,946,856

20. Assets Held for Sale

As at 31 March 2023, the Council had the following assets held for sale. The sites are:

- Stamford Street, Glenfield
- Station Road, Glenfield
- Trinity Road, Whetstone
- College Road, Whetstone
- Church Lane / High Street, Whetstone

	Current 2022/23 £	Current 2021/22 £
Balance as at 1 April	205,006	1,125,000
Assets newly classified as Held for Sale	0	268,595
Revaluation Losses	0	53,503
Disposals	(2)	(1,125,000)
Impairment losses	0	(117,092)
Balance as at 31 March	205,004	205,006

21. Creditors

Creditors	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Central government bodies	(3,688,973)	(10,202,332)
Other local authorities	(3,067,001)	(3,450,158)
NHS bodies	(1,373,133)	(1,748,337)
Other entities and individuals	(10,013,667)	(13,847,749)
Total	(18,142,774)	(29,248,576)

Included within Central government bodies as at 31 March 2022 is £2,149,368 relating to the balance of Section 31 Grant which is owed back to the Government. A sum of £6,302,743 is included within other entities and individuals and relates to collection fund creditors.

22. Provisions

The Council maintains an Insurance Reserve Fund to meet its own liability in relation to claims which may be made against the Council, not currently notified, which would not be fully met within the terms and conditions of its insurance policies. The principal policy to which this applies is the Council's public liability policy under which the Council is required to meet the first £12,500 costs of any claim. Movements in the Insurance Reserve Fund are included within note 9.

A provision has also been made in respect of potential claims liabilities arising under the above policies, based on Insurers' assessment of claims notified, limited to the amount of claim excess. Although the timing of outcomes is uncertain, claims may be paid either fully or in part, or may be repudiated, and so the cost cannot be estimated with certainty. The level of provision required is reviewed annually.

The Council also holds a provision to cover potential liabilities in relation to the Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) Scheme of Arrangement. In November 2012 it was announced that a levy of 15% would be applied to the total value of insurance claims paid through MMI since 1993 (less £50,000). For Blaby, this amounts to £295,000 in settled claims, less £50,000. Due to the uncertain position in respect of the most volatile classes of claim, such as mesothelioma, the scheme administrator increased the levy by 10% to 25%. Whilst the Council currently has no outstanding claims reserves with MMI, the provision level has been maintained at the same level to allow for the possibility of new liabilities arising out of past events, e.g., mesothelioma cases.

The Council also provides for losses that may arise due to appeals made by businesses against their rateable value. The timing of the outflows in the event of a successful appeal is entirely dependent upon the Valuation Office Agency, with many appeals not settled for several years after they are submitted. The table below reflects the Council's 40% share of the cost of potential appeals, in accordance with the business rates retention scheme.

	Insurance Claims Provision £	MMI Scheme of Arrangement £	NNDR Appeals Provision £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2022	(50,870)	(180,377)	(1,872,000)	(2,103,247)
Additional provision made in year	(13,550)	0	(380,000)	(393,550)
Provisions used in year	120	0	442,000	442,120
Balance as at 31 March 2023	(64,300)	(180,377)	(1,810,000)	(2,054,677)

23. Unusable Reserves

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Revaluation Reserve	(11,467,188)	(11,289,106)
Capital Adjustment Account	(7,727,916)	(8,649,679)
Pensions Reserve	3,007,000	33,978,000
Collection Fund Adjustment Account	1,415,024	4,519,130
Accumulated Absences Account	78,710	79,939
Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	155,126	(93,910)
Total	(14,539,244)	18,544,734

Revaluation Reserve

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

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

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

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April	(11,289,106)	(11,894,241)
Upward revaluation of assets	(1,513,465)	(4,658,904)
Downward revaluation of assets	675,332	2,516,040
Impairment Losses	(195)	568,115
Surplus or Deficit on revaluation of non-current assets not posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(838,328)	(1,157,749)
Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	423,748	328,290
Accumulated gains/(losses) on assets sold or scrapped	0	984,971
Reversal of impairment charge from prior year	236,498	866,623
Balance at 31 March	(11,467,188)	(11,289,106)

Capital Adjustment Account

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

The Account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties.

The Account also contains revaluation gains accumulated on Property, Plant and Equipment before 1 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.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April	(8,649,679)	(8,260,411)
Reversal of items relating to capital expenditure debited or credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement:		
• Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	2,181,907	1,952,451
• Impairment loss on Assets Held for Sale	(236,303)	(298,508)
• Amortisation of intangible assets	17,781	16,272
• Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	1,192,447	977,120
• Amounts of non-current assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	479	140,029
	3,156,311	2,787,364
Adjusting amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(423,748)	(328,290)
Net amount written out of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	2,732,563	2,459,074
Capital financing applied in the year:		
• Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(135,837)	(285,983)
• Capital grants and contributions credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement that have been applied to capital financing	(611,973)	(876,087)
• Application of grants to capital financing from the Capital Grants Unapplied Account	(406,098)	(107,766)
• Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balance.	(389,373)	(1,145,597)
• Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund balance.	(267,519)	(432,907)
	(1,810,800)	(2,848,340)
Repayment of private sector housing loan	0	0
Balance at 31 March	(7,727,916)	(8,649,679)

Pensions Reserve

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

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April	33,978,000	45,686,000
Re-measurements of the net defined benefit liability	(33,892,000)	(15,009,437)
Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits debited or credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	6,008,000	5,703,000
Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(3,147,000)	(2,401,563)
Balance at 31 March	3,007,000	33,978,000

Collection Fund Adjustment Account

The Collection Fund Adjustment Account manages the differences arising from the recognition of council tax and non-domestic rates income in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as it falls due from council taxpayers and business rates payers compared with the statutory arrangements for paying across amounts to the General Fund from the Collection Fund.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April	4,519,129	11,053,446
Amount by which council tax income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	12,700	(40,549)
Amount by which non-domestic rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from non-domestic rates income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	(3,116,808)	(6,493,768)
Balance at 31 March	1,415,024	4,519,129

During 2020/21 In response to COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, the Government gave a retail relief to certain business sectors. This resulted in an extraordinary deficit on the Collection Fund which local authorities were permitted to spread across three financial years. To recompense local authorities, the Government paid Section 31 Grant and this grant has been transferred to an earmarked reserve to help offset the deficit. On 31st March 2023 the balance held in reserve was £1,516,792.

Accumulated Absences Account

The Accumulated Absences Account absorbs the differences that would otherwise arise on the General Fund Balance from accruing for compensated absences earned but not taken in the year, for example, annual leave entitlement carried forward at forward 31 March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund Balance is neutralised by transfers to or from the Account.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April	79,939	77,489
Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of preceding year	(79,939)	(77,489)
Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	78,710	79,939
Balance at 31 March	78,710	79,939

Financial Instruments Adjustments Account

The Financial Instruments Adjustments Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for income and expenses relating to the Council's Property Fund investment and for bearing losses or benefiting from gains per statutory provisions.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Balance at 1 April	(93,910)	45,180
Amount by which finance costs charged to the CIES are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	249,036	(139,090)
Balance at 31 March	155,126	(93,910)

24. Cash Flow Statement – Operating Activities

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Interest received	(762,721)	(108,289)
Interest paid	490,179	375,282

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

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Proceeds from Short Term and long-term Investments	(13,284,099)	(12,000,000)
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	49,862	1,322,250
Capital grants and contributions received	675,364	986,634
	(12,558,873)	(9,691,116)

25. Cash Flow Statement – Investing Activities

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Purchase of property, plant and equipment, and intangible assets	1,199,610	1,161,204
Purchase of short term and long term investments	7,035,063	15,139,090
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	0	(1,346,048)
Other receipts from investing activities	(993,410)	(707,618)
	7,241,263	14,246,628

26. Cash Flow Statement – Financing Activities

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Cash payments for the reduction of finance lease liabilities	242	220
Repayments of short and long term borrowing	2,211,816	207,266
Other payments/receipts for financing activities	(6,162,893)	(11,257,304)
	(3,950,835)	(11,049,818)

27. Reconciliation of Liabilities Arising from Financing Activities

	1 April 2022	Financing Cash Flows	Non-Cash Changes Acquisition	Non-Cash Changes Other	31 March 2023
Long Term Borrowing	(5,929,939)	216,500	0	0	(5,713,439)
Short Term Borrowing	(2,244,143)	2,002,532	0	598	(241,013)
Lease Liabilities	(455,399)	242	0	0	(455,157)
Total Liabilities from Financing Activities	(8,629,481)	207,602	0	584	(6,409,609)

28. Agency Arrangements

Blaby District Council is the lead authority for Lightbulb which brings together the various services involved in the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants under one umbrella, including Occupational Therapists employed by Leicestershire County Council. As lead authority, Blaby employs Housing Support Co-ordinators, Technical Officers and Administrative Officers on behalf of most of the districts across Leicestershire, as well as running the Central Hub that oversees the delivery of services through Lightbulb. The district councils and the County Council contribute towards the cost of running the Central Hub, as well as reimbursing Blaby for the running costs associated with the various district localities. This ensures that Blaby's financial position remains cost neutral in terms of the services it provides to its partners. Expenditure and income is included within the Community Services line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

As part of the Lightbulb service, Blaby also manages, administers and pays for Disabled Facilities Grants on behalf of Harborough District Council, Melton Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council, and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Under this arrangement the partner authorities have agreed to transfer their capital grant funding to Blaby in return for Blaby paying the disabled facilities grants on their behalf. Blaby also has responsibility for the procurement and administration of stairlift installations on behalf of the above authorities as well as Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Charnwood Borough Council. This function was previously performed by Leicestershire County Council, prior to 2018/19.

The table below provides a summary of the expenditure and income for the year.

2022/23	Harborough District Council £	Melton Borough Council £	NW Leics. District Council £	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council £	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council £	Charnwood Borough Council £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2022	(254,616)	(482,374)	(1,870,713)	(763,710)	(13,000)	0	(3,384,413)
Income received	(374,222)	(131,567)	(547,432)	(247,089)	(139,545)	(237,765)	(1,677,620)
Other contributions	(20,809)	(2,915)	(19,659)	0	0	0	(43,383)
Grant expenditure	564,658	280,476	351,980	553,129	148,277	237,765	2,136,285
Balance as at 31 March 2023	(84,989)	(336,380)	(2,085,824)	(457,670)	(4,268)	0	(2,969,131)

Comparative figures for 2021/22 are shown in the table below.

2021/22	Harborough District Council £	Melton Borough Council £	NW Leics. District Council £	Oadby and Wigston Borough Council £	Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council £	Charnwood Borough Council £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2021	(368,186)	(477,223)	(1,642,424)	(799,748)	(13,000)	0	(3,300,581)
Income received	(401,264)	(233,609)	(649,473)	(349,131)	(139,381)	(231,830)	(2,004,688)
Other contributions	(19,628)	(4,548)	(19,699)	0	0	0	(43,874)
Grant expenditure	534,463	233,006	440,883	385,168	139,381	231,830	1,964,730
Balance as at 31 March 2022	(254,616)	(482,374)	(1,870,713)	(763,710)	(13,000)	0	(3,384,413)

The balances carried forward are included within debtors or creditors in the Balance Sheet.

29. Members Allowances

Allowances are paid to elected members in accordance with the Council's Members' Allowance scheme.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Basic Allowances	220,305	214,285
Special Responsibility Allowances	89,694	85,421
Travel and Other Expenses	1,128	239
	311,127	299,945

30. Officer Remuneration

The Accounts and Audit Regulations require authorities to disclose details of senior officers' remuneration. In cases where the individual's salary exceeds £150,000 per annum (or pro rata to that amount) then the individual's name shall be disclosed. There were no senior officers of Blaby District Council whose salary exceeded £150,000 per annum in either 2022/23 or the preceding year. Where the salary exceeds £50,000 per annum (or pro rata to that amount), the authority is required to provide a disclosure by job title.

Position	Year	Salary, Fees, Allowances £	Expenses Allowances £	Compensation for loss of office £	Pension Contribution £	Total £
Chief Executive	2022/23	111,034	1,239	0	20,928	133,201
	2021/22	46,119	516	0	9,450	56,085
Executive Director (S151)	2022/23	92,526	1,239	0	17,395	111,160
	2021/22	93,054	1,239	0	17,494	111,787
Executive Director	2022/23	92,526	1,239	0	17,395	111,160
	2021/22	90,601	1,239	0	17,033	108,873
Corporate Services Group Manager	2022/23	61,348	1,109	0	11,655	74,112
	2021/22	44,307	723	0	8,330	53,360
Business, Partnerships and Health Improvement Group Manager	2022/23	76,491	1,239	0	14,164	91,894
	2021/22	74,560	1,239	0	14,017	89,816
Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	2022/23	75,342	1,239	0	14,164	90,745
	2021/22	73,417	0	0	13,802	88,458
Planning and Strategic Growth Group Manager	2022/23	75,342	1,239	0	1,180	77,761
	2021/22	73,417	1,239	0	0	74,656
Strategic HR Manager	2022/23	28,627	826	10,735	5,382	45,570
	2021/22	41,574	1,239	0	7,666	50,479
Environmental Health, Housing and Community Services Group Manager	2022/23	69,194	1,239	0	12,527	82,960
	2021/22	55,454	1,126	0	10,425	67,005
Finance Group Manager	2022/23	62,147	635	0	11,684	74,465
	2021/22	58,600	0	0	11,017	69,617
Transformation Group Manager	2022/23	20,430	400	0	3,841	67,005
Interim Strategic HR Manager	2022/23	8,077	162	0	1,518	9,758

The Chief Executive commenced in post on 1st November 2021. The annualised salary for 2021/22 was £101,527.

The Corporate Services Group Manager was appointed to the role on 9th May 2022; the annualised salary for 2022/23 was £62,687.

The previous Corporate Services Group Manager left the Council on 31 October 2021. The annualised salary was £73,417.

The Strategic HR Manager left the Council on 30th November 2022 and worked 26.25 hours per week. The annualised salary for the post in 2022/23 was £60,525 (£58,600 in 2021/22).

The Interim Strategic HR Manager joined the Council on 13th February 2023. The annualised salary was £60,525.

The former Strategic Finance Manager became the Finance Group Manager on 1st July 2022. The annualised salary for 2022/23 was £62,687.

The Transformation Group Manager joined the Council on 5th December 2022 (annualised salary £62,687).

In accordance with Regulation 7(3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 the Council is also required to disclose the number of other employees whose remuneration is in excess of £50,000 per annum, starting at that level and increasing in multiples of £5,000. There are three employees in this category in 2022/23 as follows.

Remuneration Band	No. of Employees 2022/23	No. of Employees 2021/22
£50,000 - £54,999	2	1
£55,000 - £59,999	1	0

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

Exit Package Cost Band (including special payments)	Number of Compulsory Redundancies 2022/23	Number of Compulsory Redundancies 2021/22	Number of Other Departures Agreed 2022/23	Number of Other Departures Agreed 2021/22	Total Number of Exit Packages by Cost Band 2022/23	Total Number of Exit Packages by Cost Band 2021/22	Total Cost of Exit Packages in each Band 2022/23	Total Cost of Exit Packages in each Band 2021/22
£0 - £20,000	0	1	2	1	2	2	£2,498	£15,715
£20,001 – £40,000	0	0	1	0	1	0	£32,209	£0
Total	0	1	3	1	3	2	£34,707	£15,715

31. External Audit Costs

The Council has incurred the following costs in relation to the audit of the Statement of Accounts and certification of grant claims provided by the Council's external auditors, Ernst and Young:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Fees payable to the external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor	83,600	47,850
Fees payable to the external auditors for the certification of grant claims and returns	18,500	15,000
Total	102,100	62,850

Fees payable to the external auditors, in the table above, allows for estimated additional costs in excess of the scale fee agreed for both 2021/22 and 2022/23. The final amounts will not be known until the audits for those periods are concluded.

Fees in respect of the certification of grant claims includes the additional sum of £3,500 which was under-accrued in respect of 2020/21.

32. Grant Income

The Council credited the following grants and contributions to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement in 2022/23:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Credited to Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income		
Non Domestic Rates Contribution	(3,034,242)	(1,224,382)
New Homes Bonus Grant	(1,020,820)	(1,607,070)
Section 31 Grants – Business Rates	(2,818,854)	(925,646)
Lower Tier Services Grant	(867,225)	(786,461)
Services Grant	(153,747)	0
Revenue Support Grant	(323)	0
Other Non-Ring-fenced Government Grants	(18,704)	(3,075,753)
Section 106 Contributions	(78,664)	(303,664)
Total	(7,992,579)	(7,922,976)
<u>Credited to Services</u>		
Housing Benefit Subsidy	(8,922,267)	(9,336,440)
Other DWP Grants	(42,019)	(42,106)
NNDR Cost of Collection Allowance	(102,129)	(101,284)
Disabled Facilities Grant	(1,291,146)	(1,054,171)
Council Tax Support Grant	(105,761)	(126,160)
DEFRA Air Quality Monitoring Grants	(729,419)	(93,800)
Government contributions towards the cost of Elections	950	(91,459)
Covid 19 Grant	(32,070)	(3,512,158)
Redmond Review Grant	(15,955)	(18,764)
The Welcome Back Fund	(1)	(96,778)

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
New Burdens Grant – Transparency	(8,103)	(8,103)
New Burdens Grant – Pavement Licenses	(7,564)	(13,539)
New Burdens Grant – Land Registry	0	(24,000)
New Burdens Grant – Benefits Test and Trace	0	(166,800)
New Burdens Grant - NNDR	(63,453)	(130,680)
New Burdens Grant – Local Elections	(16,040)	0
New Burdens – Council Tax Energy Rebate	(34,288)	0
Home Office Grant – Syrian and Afghan Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme	(105,022)	(67,738)
Home Office Grant – Ukrainian Refugee Scheme	(75,866)	0
Biodiversity Net Gain Grant	(26,807)	(10,047)
Neighbourhood Planning Grant	(40,000)	(980)
Whetstone Garden Village	0	(135,000)
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	(276,695)	0
Council Tax Energy Rebate – Discretionary Scheme	(111,750)	0
Changing Places Grant – Public Conveniences	(69,801)	0
Other Grants	(276,770)	(732,539)
Leicestershire and Rutland Sport Commissioning Programme	(84,406)	(124,248)
Better Care Fund – Hospital Housing Enabler	(152,503)	(180,000)
Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust – Hospital Housing Enabler	(149,000)	(125,122)
Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group – Hospital Housing Enabler	(196,310)	(164,000)
Children's Support Contributions – Other Local Authorities	(76,248)	(38,333)
Major Schemes Funding	(26,684)	(26,225)
Early Years Physical Activity	(49,201)	(21,460)
Local Authority Delivery Scheme	(132,435)	(132,435)
Kickstart Government Gateway and BDC placements	(24,878)	(121,719)
Other Contribution	(393,055)	(961,222)
Total	(13,636,696)	(17,657,311)

The Council sometimes receives grants and contributions that are not immediately recognised as income as they have conditions attached to them that will require the monies to be returned to the giver. The balances at the year-end are as follows:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Grants Receipts in Advance (Capital Grants)		
Disabled Facilities Grant	(42,390)	0
Section 106 Contributions	(674,717)	(674,717)
Total	(992,764)	(674,717)

Revenue grants and contributions which do not have conditions attached to their use are transferred to an earmarked reserve pending use in the following financial year.

33. Related Party Transactions

The Council is required to disclose material transactions with related parties - bodies or individuals that have 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, provides 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 (for example council tax bills, housing benefits). Grants received from government departments are set out in Note 7b, Expenditure and Income Analysed by Nature. Grant receipts outstanding at 31 March 2023 are shown in Note 32.

Other Local Authorities

The Council administers, manages, and pays for disabled facilities grants on behalf of certain other Leicestershire districts. Further details are contained within Note 28, Agency Arrangements.

Members and Senior Officers

Members of the Council have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of members' allowances paid in 2022/23 is shown in Note 29. Members are appointed to represent the Council on various outside bodies, some of which give or receive funding to/from the Council. Members and senior officers are required to complete an annual return in which they must declare any related party transactions in which they have been involved during the financial year. This exercise highlighted no material transactions requiring disclosure in 2022/23.

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 assets are used by the Council, the expenditure results in an increase in the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed and is analysed in the second part of this note.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Opening Capital Financing Requirement	13,965,132	14,666,611
Capital Investment		
Property, Plant and Equipment	1,100,546	1,157,205
Intangible Assets	38,700	12,537
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	1,192,447	977,120
Sources of Finance		
Capital receipts applied	(135,837)	(285,984)
Government grants and other contributions	(1,018,071)	(107,766)
Sums set aside from revenue:		
• Direct revenue contributions	(267,519)	(1,308,994)
• Minimum revenue provision	(389,373)	(1,145,597)
Closing Capital Financing Requirement	14,486,025	13,965,132
Explanation of movements in year		
Increase/(decrease) in underlying need for borrowing:	521,135	(701,258)
- unsupported by Government financial assistance		
Assets acquired under finance leases	(242)	(220)
Increase/(decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	520,893	(701,478)

35. Leases

Authority as Lessee

Finance Leases - the Council has acquired buildings at Enderby Road Industrial Estate, Whetstone under finance leases. This was subject to a desktop revaluation at 31 March 2023 as part of the Council's annual asset revaluation exercise. The assets acquired under this lease are carried as Property, Plant and Equipment in the Balance Sheet at the following net amounts.

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Other Land and Buildings	2,849,790	2,413,824
Total	2,849,790	2,413,824

The Council is committed to making minimum payments under this lease comprising settlement of the long- term liability for the interest in the property acquired by the Council and finance costs that will be payable by the Council in future years while the liability remains outstanding. The minimum lease payments are made up of the following amounts:

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Finance lease liabilities (net present value of minimum lease payments)		
• Current	266	242
• Non-current	454,891	455,157
Finance costs payable in future years	2,017,072	2,062,612
Minimum lease payments	2,472,229	2,518,011

The minimum lease payments will be payable over the following periods:

	Minimum Lease Payments 31/03/23 £	Minimum Lease Payments 31/03/22 £	Finance Lease Liabilities 31/03/23 £	Finance Lease Liabilities 31/03/22 £
Not later than one year	45,782	45,782	266	242
Later than one year and not later than five years	183,128	183,128	1,360	1,236
Later than five years	2,243,319	2,289,101	453,531	453,921
	2,472,229	2,518,011	455,157	455,399

The minimum lease payments do not include rents that are contingent on events taking place after the lease was entered into, such as adjustments following rent reviews. In 2022/23 contingent rents amounting to £184,438 were payable by the Council (2021/22 £153,718).

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

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Not later than one year	35,675	33,166
Later than one year and not later than five years	90,132	90,175
Later than five years	1,689,074	1,708,574
	1,814,881	1,831,915

Authority as Lessor

Finance Leases – the Council does not lease any property, plant, or equipment to a third party under the terms of a finance lease.

Operating Leases – the Council leases units at the Enderby Road Industrial Estate, Whetstone to various local businesses and received rental income of £273,854 in 2022/23 (£350,995 in 2021/22).

The Council has undertaken work to convert the Old Bank, Narborough into 4 apartments for private rent. In 2022/23 it received rental income of £32,025 (£9,627 in 2021/22 – part year).

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

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Not later than one year	35,675	33,166
Later than one year and not later than five years	90,132	90,175
Later than five years	1,689,074	1,708,574
	1,814,881	1,831,915

36. Defined Benefit Pension Schemes

Participation in Pensions Schemes

As part of the terms and conditions of employment of its officers, 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 authority participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered locally by Leicestershire County Council - this is a funded defined benefit final salary scheme, meaning that the Council and employees pay contributions into a fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the pension's liabilities with investment assets.

Transactions Relating to Post-Employment Benefits

The Council recognises the cost of retirement benefits in the reported cost of services when they are earned by employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid as pensions. However, the charge the Council is required to make against council tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real cost of post-employment/retirement benefits is reversed out of the

General Fund via the Movement in Reserves Statement. The following transactions have been made in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement and the General Fund Balance via the Movement in Reserves Statement during the year:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		
Cost of Services		
• Current Service Cost	4,619,000	4,766,000
• Past Service Cost/(Gain)	506,000	0
• (Gain)/Loss from Settlements	0	0
Financing and Investment Income and Expenditure		
• Net Interest Expense	943,000	937,000
Total Post-Employment Benefits charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	5,703,000	5,703,000
Other Post-Employment Benefits Charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement		
Re-measurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:	1,416,000	(6,243,000)
• Return on plan assets (excluding the amount included in the net interest expense)		
• Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in demographic assumptions	(693,000)	(589,000)
• Actuarial gains and losses arising on changes in financial assumptions	(44,263,000)	(8,346,000)
• Other experience gains and losses	9,651,000	137,000
Total Post-Employment Benefits charged to Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(27,824,000)	(9,338,000)
Movement in Reserves Statement		
• Reversal of net charges made to the Surplus or Deficit for the Provision of Services for post-employment benefits in accordance with the Code	(6,068,000)	(5,703,000)
Actual amount charged against the General Fund Balance for pensions in the year:		
• Employer's contributions payable to the scheme	3,098,446	2,352,852
• Retirement benefits payable to pensioners	52,071	48,711

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 plans is as follows:

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(79,100,000)	(109,495,000)
Fair value of plan assets	76,093,000	75,517,000
Net liability arising from defined benefit obligation	(3,007,000)	(33,978,000)

Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of Scheme Assets

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Opening fair value of scheme assets	75,517,000	67,166,000
Interest income	2,059,000	1,350,000
Re-measurement gain/(loss):		
• The return on plan assets, excluding the amount included in net interest expense	(3,056,000)	6,243,000
Contributions from employer	3,147,000	2,370,000
Contributions from employees into the scheme	664,000	591,000
Benefits paid	(2,238,000)	(2,203,000)
Closing fair value of scheme assets	76,093,000	75,517,000

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

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Opening balance at 1 April	109,495,000	112,852,000
Current service cost	4,619,000	4,766,000
Interest cost	3,002,000	2,287,000
Contributions from scheme participants	664,000	591,000
Re-measurement (gains) and losses:		
• Actuarial (gains)/losses arising from changes in financial assumptions	(44,263,000)	(8,346,000)
• Actuarial (gains)/losses arising from changes in demographic assumptions	(693,000)	(589,000)
• Other	8,008,000	137,000
Past service cost	506,000	0
Benefits paid	(2,238,000)	(2,203,000)
Closing balance at 31 March	79,100,000	109,495,000

	Quoted prices in active markets 2022/23 £	Quoted prices not in active markets 2022/23 £	Total 2022/23 £	Quoted prices in active markets 2021/22 £	Quoted prices not in active markets 2021/22 £	Total 2021/22 £
Equity securities	634,500	0	634,500	630,000	0	630,000
Debt securities:						
• UK Government	3,810,900	9,000	3,819,900	3,782,100	8,900	3,791,000
• Other	142,700	0	142,700	141,600	0	141,600
Private equity	0	5,088,800	5,088,800	0	5,050,200	5,050,200
Real estate:						
• UK property	0	5,854,500	5,854,500	0	5,810,100	5,810,100
Investment funds and unit trusts:						
• Equities	21,805,700	13,229,200	35,034,900	21,640,400	13,129,100	34,769,500
• Bonds	0	0	0	0	0	0
• Hedge funds	0	0	0	0	1,895,100	1,895,100
• Commodities	0	1,909,500	1,909,500	0	1,895,100	1,895,100
• Infrastructure	0	3,978,400	3,978,400	0	3,948,300	3,948,300
• Other	6,469,500	9,160,100	15,629,600	6,420,500	9,090,800	15,511,300
Derivatives	157,900	0	157,900	156,700	0	156,700
Cash and cash equivalents	3,842,300	0	3,842,300	3,813,200	0	3,813,200
	36,863,500	39,229,500	76,093,000	36,584,500	38,932,500	75,517,000

Local Government Pension Scheme assets comprised:

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels and so on. Both the Local Government Pension Scheme and discretionary benefits liabilities have been assessed by Hymans Robertson, an independent firm of actuaries, with estimates for the Local Government Pension Scheme being based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2022. The significant assumptions used by the actuary have been:

	Local Government Pension Scheme 2022/23	Local Government Pension Scheme 2021/22	Discretionary Benefits 2022/23	Discretionary Benefits 2021/22
Mortality Assumptions:				
Longevity at 65 for current pension:				
• Men	21.4 years	21.5 years	21.4 years	21.5 years
• Women	24.5 years	22.4 years	24.5 years	22.4 years
Longevity at 65 for future pensioners:				
• Men	22.1 years	22.4 years	22.1 years	22.4 years
• Women	26.1 years	25.7 years	26.1 years	25.7 years

Rates of Inflation	2.95%	3.20%	2.95%	3.20%
Rates of Increase in Salaries	3.45%	3.70%	3.45%	3.70%
Rates of Increase in Pensions	2.95%	3.20%	2.95%	3.20%
Rates for Discounting Scheme Liabilities	4.75%	2.70%	4.75%	2.70%

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

Impact on the Defined Benefit Obligation in the Scheme	Increase in Assumption £	Decrease in Assumption £
Rate of increase in salaries (increase or decrease by 0.1%)	187,000	(187,000)
1 year increase in member life expectancy	3,164,000	(3,164,000)
Rate of increase in pensions (increase or decrease by 0.1%)	1,295,000	(1,295,000)
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities (increase or decrease by 0.1%)	(1,461,000)	1,461,000

Pension Fund Risk Management Strategy

The pension fund's primary long-term risk is that the fund's assets will fall short of its liabilities (that is the promised benefits payable to members of the scheme). Therefore, the aim of investment risk management is to minimise the risk of an overall reduction in the value of the fund and to maximise the opportunity for gains across the whole fund portfolio. The fund achieves this through asset diversification to reduce exposure to market risk (price risk, currency risk and interest rate risk) and credit risk to an acceptable level. In addition, the fund manages its liquidity risk to ensure that there is sufficient liquidity to meet the fund's required cash flows. These investment risks are managed as part of the overall pension fund risk management programme. Responsibility for the fund's risk management strategy rests with the Pension Fund Management Board and is monitored annually or more frequently if required.

Impact on the Council's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. The County Council has agreed a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve a funding level of 100% over the next 20 years. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation is due to be completed on 31 March 2025.

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

The Council anticipated to pay £2,913,000 expected contributions to the scheme in 2023/24.

As at the date of the most recent valuation, the duration of the funded obligations is 19 years.

37. Contingent Assets and Liabilities

Contingent Assets

- The Council is not aware of any contingent assets in existence at 31st March 2023.

Contingent Liabilities

- As at 31 March 2023, the Council had 2 employment tribunals ongoing. To protect the privacy of the individuals concerned no further details can be provided at present.
- There are also 2 judicial reviews outstanding at the end of the financial year, one in relation to planning permission, and the other related to an outstanding council debt.

38. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments

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 commitments to make payments.
- Re-financing risk – the possibility that the Council might be requiring to renew a financial instrument on maturity at disadvantageous interest 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 movements.

Overall Procedure for Managing Risk

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. The procedures for risk management are set out through a legal framework based on the Local Government Act 2003 and associated regulations. These require the Council to comply with the CIPFA Prudential Code, the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management in the Public Services, and investment guidance issued through the Act. Overall, these procedures require the Council to manage risk in the following ways:

- By formally adopting the requirements of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice.
- By the adoption of a Treasury Policy Statement and treasury management clauses within its financial regulations, standing orders and constitution.
- By approving annually in advance prudential and treasury indicators for the following three years limiting:
 - The Council's overall borrowing
 - Its maximum and minimum exposures to fixed and variable rates
 - Its maximum and minimum exposures for the maturity structure of its debt
 - Its maximum annual exposure to investments maturing beyond a year.
- By approving an investment strategy for the forthcoming year setting out its criteria for both investing and selecting investment counterparties in compliance with the Government guidance.

These are required to be reported and approved at or before the Council's annual Council Tax setting budget or before the start of the year to which they relate. These items are reported with the annual treasury management strategy which outlines the detailed approach to managing risk in relation to the Council's financial instrument exposure. Actual performance is also reported after each year, as is a mid-year update.

The annual treasury management strategy which incorporates the prudential indicators was approved by Council on 21st February 2022 and is available on the Council website. The key issues within the strategy were:

- The Authorised Limit for 2022/23 was set at £18,000,000. This is the maximum limit of external borrowings or other long term liabilities.
- The Operational Boundary was expected to be £16,200,000. This is the expected level of debt and other long-term liabilities during the year.
- The maximum and minimum exposures to the maturity structure of debt are detailed in the strategy.

Risk management is carried out by a central treasury team, under policies approved by the Council in the annual treasury management strategy. The Council provides written principles for overall risk management, as well as written policies (Treasury Management Practices – TMPs) covering specific areas, such as interest rate risk, credit risk, and the investment of surplus cash. These TMPs are a requirement of the Code of Practice and are reviewed periodically.

Credit Risk

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

This risk is minimised through the Annual Investment Strategy, which requires that deposits are not made with financial institutions unless they meet identified minimum credit criteria in accordance with the Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poors credit rating 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. Additional selection criteria are also applied after the initial criteria are applied.

The Council uses the credit worthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service uses a sophisticated modelling approach with credit ratings from all three rating agencies named above, forming the core element. However, it does not rely solely on the current credit ratings of counterparties but also uses the following data:

- Credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies.
- Credit default swap (CDS) spreads to give an early warning of likely changes in credit ratings.
- Sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

Details of the Investment Strategy can be found on the Council's website.

Customers for goods and services are assessed, taking into account their financial position, past experience and other factors, with individual credit limits being set in accordance with internal ratings in accordance with parameters set by the Council.

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in financial institutions cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to each individual institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of irrecoverability applies to all of the Council's deposits, but there was no evidence at 31 March 2023 that this was likely to occur.

No credit limits were exceeded 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 customers and amounts that are due, but not impaired, can be analysed by age as follows:

	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Less than three months	209,616	470,413
Three to six months	80,116	42,194
Six months to one year	126,037	83,167
More than one year	1,083,609	1,318,927
	1,499,378	1,914,701

Collateral – During the reporting period the Council held no collateral as security.

Liquidity Risk

The Council manages its liquidity position through the risk management procedures above (the setting and approval of prudential indicators and the approval of the treasury and investment strategy reports), as well as through a comprehensive cash flow management system, as required by the CIPFA Code of Practice. This seeks to ensure that cash is available when needed.

The Council has ready access to borrowings from the money markets to cover any day-to-day cash flow need, and the Public Works Loans Board and money markets for access to longer term funds. The Council is also required to provide a balanced budget through the Local Government Finance Act 1992, which ensures sufficient monies are raised to cover annual expenditure. There is no significant risk that it will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments under financial instruments.

Refinancing and Maturity Risk

The Council maintains a significant debt and investment portfolio. Whilst the cash flow procedures above are considered against the refinancing risk procedures, longer-term risk to the Council relates to managing the exposure to replacing financial instruments as they mature. This risk relates to both the maturing of longer-term financial liabilities and longer term financial assets.

The approved treasury indicator limits for the maturity structure of debt and the limits placed on investments placed for greater than one year in duration are the key parameters used to address this risk. The Council approved treasury and investment strategies address the main risks and the central treasury team address the operational risks within the approved parameters. This includes:

- Monitoring the maturity profile of financial liabilities and amending the profile through either new borrowing or the rescheduling of the existing debt; and

- Monitoring the maturity profile of investments to ensure sufficient liquidity is available for the Council's day to day cash flow needs, and the spread of longer term investments provide stability of maturities and returns in relation to the longer term cash flow needs

The maturity analysis of financial liabilities is as follows, with the maximum and minimum limits for fixed interest rates maturing in each period (approved by Council as part of the Treasury Management Strategy on 21st February 2022):

	Approved Minimum Limits	Approved Maximum Limits	31 March 2023 £	31 March 2022 £
Less than one year	0%	100%	216,500	2,211,841
Between one and two years	0%	100%	855,837	216,500
Between two and five years	0%	100%	857,601	1,713,439
Between five and ten years	0%	100%	0	0
Over ten years	0%	100%	4,000,000	4,000,000
			5,929,937	8,141,780

Market Risk

Interest rate risk - The Council is exposed to risk in terms of its exposure to interest rate movements on its borrowings and investments. Movements in interest rates have a complex impact on the 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 would have the following effects:

- Borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise,
- Borrowings at fixed rates – the fair value of the borrowing will fall (no impact on revenue balances),
- Investments at variable rates – the interest income credited to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services will rise, and
- Investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall (no impact on revenue balances).

Borrowings are not carried at fair value, so nominal gains and losses on fixed rate borrowings would not impact on the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services or Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowings and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services and affect the General Fund Balance. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments that have a quoted market price will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

The Council has a number of strategies for managing interest rate risk. The Annual Treasury Management Strategy draws together the Council's prudential and treasury indicators and its expected treasury operations, including an expectation of interest rate movements. From this Strategy a treasury indicator is set which provides maximum limits for fixed and variable interest rate exposure. The central treasury team will monitor market and forecast interest rates within the year to adjust exposures appropriately. For instance, during periods of falling interest rates, and where economic circumstances make it favourable, fixed rate investments may be taken for longer periods to secure better long term returns, similarly the drawing of longer term fixed rates borrowing would be postponed.

Price Risk

The Council does not generally invest in equity shares or marketable bonds.

The Council invested £1m in the Lothbury Property Trust on 2 December 2019, and the price of shares in the property fund can vary. At the start of financial year 2022/23 the value of the fund had risen to £1,093,910. However, as at 31 March 2022 the fund had fallen to £844,874 as a result of the impact of the cost of living crisis on property prices.

Any movements in price will not impact on the General Fund Balance as regulations are in force to ameliorate the impact of fair value movements.

SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

The Collection Fund

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

	Note	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
INCOME			
Council tax	2	(71,234,181)	(68,484,512)
Non-domestic rates	3	(51,143,481)	(41,959,884)
Contributions towards previous year's estimated Collection Fund deficit:		(300,146)	(510,991)
- Non-domestic rates		(6,920,498)	(21,861,266)
Total Income		(129,598,306)	(132,816,653)
EXPENDITURE			
Precepts and demands from major preceptors and the authority – council tax	4	71,210,606	68,414,363
Shares of non-domestic rating income to major preceptors and the authority		25,139,408	24,843,195
Payment of the central share of non-domestic rating income to be paid to central government by the billing authority		25,139,408	24,843,195
Transitional protection payments – non-domestic rates		276,095	675,518
Impairment of debts/appeals for council tax:			
- write-offs and uncollectable amounts		233,063	165,255
- allowance for impairment		189,085	136,202
Impairment of debts/appeals for non-domestic rates:			
- write-offs and uncollectable amounts		51,822	24,884
- allowance for impairment		(286,740)	240,771
- allowance for appeals		(155,000)	(3,050,000)
Charge to General Fund for allowable collection costs for non-domestic rates		102,129	101,284
Total Expenditure		121,899,876	116,394,667
Movement on Collection Fund Balance – (surplus)/deficit for the year		(7,698,430)	(16,421,986)

	Note	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Opening Collection Fund Balance:			
- Council tax		730,652	1,010,334
- Non-domestic rates		11,035,639	27,177,942
		11,766,291	28,188,276
Closing Collection Fund Balance:			
- Council tax		829,079	730,652
- Non-domestic rates		3,238,782	11,035,639
		4,067,861	11,766,291
Analysis of Movement on Collection Fund Balance:			
- Council tax		98,427	(279,683)
- Non-domestic rates		(7,796,857)	(16,142,303)
		(7,698,430)	(16,421,986)

Notes to the Collection Fund

General Information

The Collection Fund is an agent's statement that reflects the Council's transactions, as a billing authority, in relation to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates from taxpayers, and its distribution to local government bodies and the Government. Billing authorities have a statutory obligation to maintain a Collection Fund as a separate account to the General Fund. The administrative costs associated with the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates are, however, charged to the General Fund.

Collection Fund surpluses or deficits in relation to Council Tax are credited or charged to the relevant precepting bodies in the subsequent financial year, in proportion to the precepts levied by those organisations. For Blaby, the precepting bodies are Leicestershire County Council, The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire (OPCC) and the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority.

The current Business Rates Retention Scheme was introduced for local government in April 2013. The main aim of this scheme is to give local authorities a greater incentive to encourage business growth. However, it brings with it a greater financial risk in terms of non-collection and the volatility of the Business rates base. The scheme allows the Council to retain 40% of the total rates received, with the remainder going to the Government (50%), the County Council (9%), and the Fire Authority (1%). Surpluses or deficits are credited or charged to the relevant precepting bodies in the subsequent financial year in line with their respective proportions.

Council Tax

Council Tax is based upon the value of residential properties which have been classified into nine valuation bands (A to H) for this specific purpose. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund for the forthcoming year and dividing this by the Council Tax Base. The Council Tax Base represents the estimated number of Band D equivalents dwellings in the district.

The calculation of the Council Tax base for 2022/23 is set out in the table below:

	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	TOTAL
Properties	0.00	4,986.00	15,401.00	9,918.00	10,025.00	6,749.00	1,620.00	528.00	37.00	43,873.00
Exemptions	0.00	-148.74	-163.16	-109.66	-53.25	-23.00	-3.00	-8.00	0.00	-508.81
Disabled Relief	18.00	63.00	6.00	-25.00	-13.00	-29.00	-6.00	-8.00	-6.00	0.00
Discounts	-2.32	-717.97	-1,297.70	-650.71	-264.27	-159.69	-58.27	-19.93	-2.56	-3,173.42
Council Tax Support	0.00	-997.80	-1,027.50	-398.05	-152.00	-63.39	-15.30	-4.56	0.00	-2,658.60
Effective Properties	15.68	3,184.49	12,918.64	8,841.58	6,266.48	4,251.92	1,537.43	487.51	28.44	37,532.17
Ratio	0.56	0.67	0.78	0.89	1.00	1.22	1.44	1.67	2.00	
Band D Equivalents	8.72	2,122.99	10,047.84	7,859.18	6,266.49	5,196.80	2,220.72	812.53	56.88	34,592.15

Table Notes: *Band A with Disabled Relief. Expected in year collection rate = 99.00% Tax Base = 34,246.23.

Income received from Council Tax-payers in 2022/23 was £71,234,181 (£68,484,512 in 2021/22).

National Non-Domestic Rates

National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) is another name for Business Rates. The Council collects NNDR from Business Rate payers within the district based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) multiplied by a uniform business rate set nationally by the Government. The following table provides details of the total rateable value and the multipliers for 2022/23 compared with the previous financial year.

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Total Non-Domestic Rateable Value at 31 March	115,063,407	110,825,307
National Non-Domestic Multipliers for Year: Standard Rate	0.5120	0.5120
National Non-Domestic Multipliers for Year: Small Business Rate	0.4990	0.4990

The Business Rates shares payable are estimated in advance of the financial year and are drawn from the Collection Fund in the year.

	2022/23	2021/22
	£	£
Central Government	25,139,408	24,843,195
Blaby District Council	20,111,526	19,874,556
Leicestershire County Council	4,525,094	4,471,775
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority	502,788	496,864
	50,278,816	49,686,390

Upon the introduction of the Business Rates Retention scheme, the Government set a baseline level for each local authority identifying the expected level of retained business rates, and a top-up or tariff amount to ensure that all authorities receive their baseline amount. Tariffs payable from authorities to the Government are used to finance the top-ups for authorities who do not achieve their targeted baseline funding. In 2022/23, Blaby paid a tariff of £14,528,846 into the Leicestershire Pool (also £14,528,846 in 2021/22). Total income received from Business Rates payers in 2022/23 was £51,143.481 (£41,959,884 in 2021/22).

In addition to the tariff, a 50% levy is payable on any growth above the baseline funding level. The levy payable by Blaby to the Leicestershire Business Rates Pool in 2022/23 was £2.864.482 (£1,921,932 in 2021/22).

Precepts and Demands on the Collection Fund – Council Tax

Details of the precepting authorities are set out below together with the respective precept amount.

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
Leicestershire County Council	49,758,413	47,934,303
Leicestershire Police Authority	8,843,411	8,434,145
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority	2,544,152	2,354,274
Blaby District Council (including Parish Councils)	10,064,631	9,691,642
	71,210,607	68,414,364

Collection Fund (Surplus)/Deficit

The Council Tax Collection Fund deficit as at 31 March 2023 is £829,079 (£730,652 as at 31 March 2022). The Council Tax deficit is apportioned between the Council and the three major precepting authorities as shown in the table below.

	31/03/2023 £	31/03/2022 £
Leicestershire County Council	579,557	511,123
Leicestershire Police Authority	102,242	88,699
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority	29,706	25,956
Blaby District Council	117,574	104,874
	829,079	730,652

The deficit in respect of non-domestic rating income is £3,238,782 as at 31 March 2023 (£11,035,639 as at 31 March 2022). The deficit is apportioned between the Council, Central Government, and major precepting authorities as follows:

	31/03/2023 £	31/03/2022 £
Central Government	1,619,395	5,517,823
Leicestershire County Council	291,489	993,207
Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Combined Fire Authority	32,386	110,355
Blaby District Council	1,295,512	4,414,254
	3,238,782	11,035,639

Glossary of Financial Terms

Accruals

The accruals concept requires that the cost or benefit of a transaction is shown in the period to which the goods or services are received or provided, rather than when the cash is received or paid.

Acquired Operations

Operations comprise services and divisions of service as defined in CIPFA's Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP). Acquired operations are those operations of the local authority that are acquired in the period.

Actuarial Gains and Losses

For a defined benefit pension scheme, the changes in actuarial deficits or surpluses that arise because:

- a) events have not coincided with the actuarial assumptions made for the last valuation (experience gains and losses) or
- b) Actuarial assumptions have changed.

Amortisation

The term used to describe the charge made for the cost of using intangible fixed assets. The charge for the year will represent the amount of economic benefits consumed (that is wear and tear).

Assets Held for Sale

Non-current assets which meet the relevant criteria to be classified as held for sale.

Capital Adjustment Account

This is a capital reserve largely comprising of resource applied to capital financing and is not available to the Council to support new investment.

Capital Charge

A charge to service revenue accounts to reflect the costs of fixed assets used in the provision of service.

Capital Expenditure

Expenditure on the acquisition of a fixed asset or expenditure which adds to, and not merely maintains, the value of an existing fixed asset.

Capital Grant

A grant that is intended to fund capital expenditure.

Capital Grants Unapplied Account

A capital reserve reflecting the value of capital grants received where there are no conditions outstanding, and where expenditure on the associated asset has not yet been incurred.

Collection Fund Adjustment Account

A revenue reserve representing the difference between the council tax income received by a local authority and the amount attributable to that authority.

Community Assets

Assets held in perpetuity for the benefit of residents of the district, and which may have restrictions on their disposal. Examples of community assets are parks and historic buildings.

Consistency

The concept that the accounting treatment of like items within an accounting period and from one period to the next is the same.

Contingent Liability

Potential costs that the Council may incur in the future because of something that happened in the past, but there is no certainty that a cost will occur.

Current Service Cost (Pensions)

The increase in the present value of a defined benefit scheme's liabilities expected to arise from employee service in the current period.

Curtailment

For a defined benefit scheme, an event that reduces the expected years of future service of present employees or reduces for a number of employees the accrual of defined benefits for some or all of their future service. Curtailments include:

- a) termination of employees' services earlier than expected, for example as a result of closing a factory or discontinuing a segment of a business, and
- b) termination of, or amendment to the terms of, a defined benefit scheme so that some or all future service by current employees will no longer qualify for benefits or will qualify only for reduced benefits.

Defined Benefit Scheme

A pension scheme sometimes known as a final salary scheme. A pension or other retirement benefit scheme where the scheme rules define the benefits independently of the contributions payable, and the benefits are not directly related to the investment of the scheme. The scheme may be funded or unfunded (including notionally funded).

Depreciation

Depreciation is the measure of the wearing out, consumption, or other reduction in the useful life of a fixed asset, whether arising from use, passage of time or obsolescence through technological or other changes.

Derecognition

The process upon which assets are no longer deemed to belong to the authority either by sale, destruction, or other form of disposal.

Discontinued Operations

Operations comprise services and divisions of service as defined in CIPFA's Standard Classification of Income and Expenditure. An operation should be classified as discontinued if all of the following statements are approved:

- (a) the termination of the operation is completed either in the period or before the earlier of three months after the commencement of the subsequent period and the date on which the financial statements are approved,
- (b) the activities related to the operation have ceased permanently,
- (c) the termination of the operation has a material effect on the nature and focus of the local authority's operations and represents a material reduction in its provision of services resulting either from its withdrawal from a particular activity (whether a service or division of service or its provision in a specific geographical area) or from a material reduction in net expenditure in the local authority's continuing operations,
- (d) assets, liabilities, income and expenditure of operations and activities are clearly distinguishable physically, operationally and for financial reporting purposes.

Operations not satisfying all these conditions are classified as continuing.

Discounted Cash Flow

A method of analysing future cash flows, by removing the impact time has on the value of money and producing an equivalent current value.

Discretionary Benefits

Retirement benefits which the employer has no legal, contractual or constructive obligation to award, and which are awarded under the authority's discretionary powers, such as The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations 1996, the Local Government (Discretionary Payments and Injury Benefits) (Scotland) Regulations 1998, or The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001.

Exceptional Items

Material items which derive from events or transactions that fall within the ordinary activities of the authority and which need to be disclosed separately by virtue of their size or incidence to give fair presentation of the accounts.

Expected Rate of Return on Assets

For a funded defined benefit scheme, the average rate of return, including both income and changes in fair value but net of scheme expenses, expected over the remaining life of the related obligation on the actual assets held by the scheme.

Fair Value

The fair value of a fixed asset is the price at which an asset could be exchanged in an arm's length transaction less, where applicable, any grants receivable towards the purchase or use of the asset.

Finance Costs

Reflects the element of annual payment for leased assets which relates to the interest payable on the loan liability.

Finance Lease

A finance lease transfers substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of a fixed asset to the lessee. Such a transfer of risks and rewards may be presumed to occur if at the inception of the lease the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any initial payment, amounts to substantially all the fair value of the leased asset.

Financial Assets

A right to future economic benefits controlled by the authority.

Financial Liabilities

An obligation to transfer economic benefits controlled by the authority.

Going Concern

The concept that the authority will remain in operational existence for the foreseeable future, in particular that the revenue accounts and balance sheet assume no intention to curtail significantly the scale of operations.

Government Grants

Assistance by Government and intra-government agencies and similar bodies, whether local, national, or international, in the form of cash or transfers of assets to an authority in return for past or future compliance with certain conditions relating to the activities of the Authority.

Impairment

Impairment is a reduction in the valuation of a fixed asset or goodwill below its balance sheet value and occurs where something adverse has happened either to the asset itself or to the economic environment in which the asset is operated.

Infrastructure Assets

Fixed assets that are inalienable, expenditure on which is recoverable only by continued use of the asset created. Examples of infrastructure assets are highways and footpaths.

Intangible Assets

Non-current assets which do not have physical form, such as software.

Interest Cost (Pensions)

For a defined benefit scheme, the expected increase during the period in the present value of the scheme liabilities because the benefits are one period closer to settlement.

Inventories

Fair value of current assets purchased which have not yet been consumed.

Investment Property

Assets held solely for the purpose of rental generation or for increasing the value pre-sale (capital appreciation).

Loans and Receivables

Financial assets which are not quoted in an active market and have either a fixed or determinable payment.

Long Term Contract

A contract entered into for the design, manufacture or construction of a single substantial asset or the provision of a service (or a combination of assets or services which together constitute a single project), where the time substantially to complete the contract is such that the contract activity falls into different accounting periods. Some contracts with a shorter duration than one year should be accounted for as contracts if they are sufficiently material to the activity of the period.

Materiality

Materiality is an expression of the relative significance or importance of a particular matter in the context of the financial statements as a whole.

Minimum Revenue Provision

A minimum amount, set by legislation, which the Council must charge to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, for debt redemption or for the discharge of other credit liabilities (for example a finance lease).

Non-Current Assets

Assets that yield benefits to the Council for a period of more than one year, such as land, buildings, and vehicles.

Non-Distributed Costs

These are overheads for which no user now benefits and should not be apportioned to services.

Operating Lease

An operating lease is a lease other than a finance lease, and where an asset is used only for a small proportion of its economic life.

Past Service Cost

For a defined benefit scheme, the increase in the present value of the scheme liabilities related to employee service in prior periods arising in the current period as a result of the introduction of, or improvement to, retirement benefits.

Post Balance Sheet Events

Those events, both favourable and unfavourable, which occur between the balance sheet date and the date on which the Statement of Accounts is authorised, by the responsible financial officer, for issue.

Prior Period Adjustment

These are material adjustments to the accounts for a prior period, arising from changes in accounting policies or from the correction of fundamental errors. This does not include normal recurring corrections or adjustments of accounting estimates made in prior periods.

Projected Unit Method

This is an accrued benefits valuation method in which the scheme liabilities make allowance for projected earnings. An accrued benefits valuation method is a valuation method in which the scheme liabilities at the valuation date relate to:

- a) the benefits for pensioners and deferred pensioners (that is, individuals who have ceased to be active members but are entitled to benefits payable at a later date) and their dependants, allowing where appropriate for future increases, and
- b) the accrued benefits for members in service on the valuation date. The accrued benefits are the benefits for service up to a given point in time, whether vested rights or not. Guidance on the projected unit method is given in the Guidance Note GN36 issued by the Faculty and Institute of Actuaries

Provisions

Potential costs that the Council may incur in the future because of something that happened in the past, which are likely or certain to be incurred and a reliable estimate can be made of the costs.

Prudence

The concept that revenue is not anticipated but is recognised only when realised in the form either of cash or of other assets the ultimate cash realisation of which can be assessed with reasonable certainty.

Retirement Benefits

All forms of consideration given by an employer in exchange for services rendered by employees that are payable after the completion of employment. Retirement benefits do not include termination benefits payable as a result of either (i) an employer's decision to terminate an employee's employment before the normal retirement date or (ii) an employee's decision to accept voluntary redundancy in exchange for those benefits, because these are not given in exchange for services rendered by employees.

Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital Under Statute

This is expenditure that is classified as capital although it does not result in the creation of a fixed asset (for example, improvement grants).

Scheme Liabilities

The liabilities of a defined benefit scheme for outgoings due after the valuation date. Scheme liabilities measured using the projected unit method, reflect the benefits that the employer is committed to provide for service up to the valuation date.

Service Reporting Code of Practice (SeRCOP)

Establishes proper practice with regard to consistent financial reporting, which allows direct comparisons to be made with the financial information published by other local authorities.

Settlement

An irrevocable action that relieves the employer (or the defined benefit scheme) of the primary responsibility for a pension obligation and eliminates significant risks relating to the obligation and the assets used to affect the settlement. Settlements include:

- a) a lump-sum cash payment to scheme members in exchange for their rights to receive specified pension benefits,
- b) the purchase of an irrevocable annuity contract sufficient to cover vested benefits, and
- c) the transfer of scheme assets and liabilities relating to a group of employees leaving the scheme.

Straight Line Basis

The method of calculating depreciation by way of charging services with the same amount each year over the life of an asset.

Total Cost

The total cost of a service or activity includes all costs which relate to the provision of the service (directly or bought in) or to the undertaking of the activity. Gross total cost includes employee costs, expenditure relating to premises and transport, supplies, and services, third party payments, transfer payments, support services and capital charges. This includes an appropriate share of all support services and overheads, which need to be apportioned.

Useful Life

The useful life of a fixed asset is the period over which the local authority will derive benefits from that asset.

Vested Rights

In relation to a defined benefit scheme, these are:

- a) for active members, benefits to which they would unconditionally be entitled on leaving the scheme,
- b) for deferred pensioners, their preserved benefits,

c) for pensioners, pensions to which they are entitled.

Vested rights include where appropriate the related benefits for spouses or other dependants

Appendix A: ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT – 2022/2023

Scope of Responsibility

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

In discharging this overall responsibility, Blaby District Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

Blaby District Council has approved a Local Code of Corporate Governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. A copy of the authority's code is on our web-site or can be obtained from the Finance Division at the Council Offices in Narborough. This statement explains how Blaby District Council has complied with the Code and also meets the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the preparation and approval of an Annual Governance Statement.

Significant Events

Covid-19 Pandemic Recovery

During the pandemic it was necessary for the Council to ensure governance arrangements were appropriate given the changed manner of working and to continue to respond to the demands of our community. The impact during 2022/23 year had diminished, however the Council continued to manage the lasting impacts, develop and benefit from the changes in working practice that had arisen.

Measures taken by the Council included:

- Ability for office based staff to work remotely was supported with further investment into IT equipment.
- The agile manner in which staff now work was formalised in a 'Way we Work' document.
- Member meetings were held through a combination of virtual and face to face meetings.
- Contractual arrangements with leisure providers were revised taking into account the changed position following the pandemic.

Our methods of working have developed into a hybrid of a combination of remote and face to face working and governance arrangements continued to be in place with officers and members communicating through virtual means in addition to face to face contact where required.

The Council's ability to work in partnership has been evident throughout with enhanced engagement with partners through the Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Local Resilience Forum and this has continued as the recovery phase progressed and other significant events developed.

Further reference is made within this document regarding measures specifically taken relating to the pandemic or lasting implications where appropriate.

Emergency Situation relating to Huncote Leisure Centre Site

In November 2021 during routine work to install landfill gas mitigation equipment contractors found elevated levels of landfill gas onsite. As a result, a decision was taken to close the site as a precautionary measure.

An emergency situation was declared by Blaby District Council and the situation has been ongoing since that date and continued into 2022/23.

Measures taken by the Council have included:

- Initial closure of the site until levels of landfill gas emission reduced and further equipment installed to allow extraction and venting of the emissions in the longer term.
- Communication with local residents, the Parish Council, partners and users of the site to ensure understanding and compliance with the site closure.
- Taking the decision to provide a sum of £500,000 from the General Fund balances for any works necessary to make the site safe. An additional £100,000 was added to this in April 22.
- Assessment of the site uses and the opening of the Leisure Centre, car park and adjoining parish field in October 2022

As at the end of March 2023 parts of the site remain closed until the remaining works necessary are carried out in order to allow the re-opening of the field and footpaths to the rear of the centre.

Emergency Situation Ukraine Crisis and UK Support Programme

With the Russian invasion of the Ukraine in February 2022 potential support measures offered by the UK began to be released during March 2022. Blaby responded to this engaging with partners through the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Resilience Forum to put plans in place to support the UK schemes.

Blaby took measures along with partners to:

- Carry out the assessment of sponsors' homes to ensure they were safe for their Ukrainian guests.
- Ensure that our Housing Team had capacity to deal with homeless families who arrived under the Family Visa scheme.
- Employ a dedicated officer to signpost and assist refugees

Cost of Living Crisis

The Council monitored the development of the cost of living crisis and put in place measures to help mitigate the impact on our residents. In September 2022 the Council released a Position Statement on the Council's Response to the Cost of Living Crisis which detailed the measures put in place, these were:

- Appointment of a Cost-of-Living Support Officer to ensure our residents could access all the support they were entitled to.
- Working closely with all partners including Leicestershire County Council, Citizens Advice Bureau and Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to maximise available support.
- Communicating through a wide range of channels all the available advice, guidance and support.

- Utilising our Hardship Fund, Hardship Reserve Fund and Council Tax Support Fund to provide any needed support as well as signposting to the County Council Household Support Fund.
- Continuing to support our community Food Banks in complying with best practice guidance where possible, providing assistance where appropriate and facilitating the sharing of local information through quarterly forums.
- Providing cost-of-living grants which our community groups can apply for to support them in covering their rising costs.
- Hosting Job Fairs to highlight job opportunities and to help residents into employment.

The Council continues to look for opportunities to support those in our district during the ongoing cost of living crisis.

The purpose of the governance framework

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

The systems of internal control are a significant part of that framework and are designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. They 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 systems of internal control are based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Blaby District Council's policies, aims and objectives; to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The governance framework has been in place at Blaby District Council for the year ended 31 March 2023 and will continue to be in place up to the date of approval of the Statement of Accounts.

The Governance Framework

The Authority's vision is set out in the Blaby District Plan which was developed with officers, Members and stakeholders in the district. The control environment encompasses the strategies, policies, plans, procedures, processes, structures, attitudes, and behaviours required to deliver good governance to all.

Communicating the Authority's Vision

The Blaby District Plan was adopted by Council on the 19 January 2021 and has set our Vision, Values and Priorities for the District spanning 2021-2024. Our priorities are grouped under the three key themes based on the District being "a great place to live, work and visit".

This document encompasses our ambitions and, with partners, how we will deliver these to the community. It recognises the need for actions and support that is required to aid the recovery of our district following the pandemic. The Blaby Plan comprises of our Corporate Plan, our Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and our People Strategy. It is not just a list of things we want to achieve but also details how we have planned all our resources, both financial and staffing to deliver these.

Alongside the new Blaby District Plan, priorities for the People Strategy and MTFS have been developed. An updated MTFS was produced alongside the annual budget setting process to ensure attention was drawn to the possible financial risk and impact associated with the changes to Business Rates and the Fair Funding Review.

Translating the vision into objectives for the authority and its partnerships

The Council's objectives reflect the overall vision and are detailed in a series of critical activities which are regularly planned. It had been recognised that in some areas it is not always evident how these formed part of individual goals for staff and this was an area identified for improvement through enhancement of the staff PDA process and linkages into the vision and the Blaby District Plan and development of the Performance Framework. During this year a new system to record and track both the corporate plan and service plans has been developed. The following section lists the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance framework with a commentary setting out how the Council's arrangements comply with each of the principles in the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework - Delivering Good Governance in Local Government as follows:

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

The Council has adopted the national Code of Conduct for Members supported by the Audit and Standards Committee which monitors issues in relation to standards of behaviour. The Audit Committee and the Standards Committee were brought together as one Committee in May 2019. It was renamed the Audit and Governance Committee in May 2022. The Code of Conduct for Members was approved by Council in December 2021 and was adopted as of 1 April 2022.

There is a separate officer code of conduct.

The roles and responsibilities of the Cabinet Executive, the Non-executive members, the Scrutiny Commission and the Senior Leadership Team are set out in the Council's Constitution which provides a comprehensive framework for the management of the authority's business. This is supported by a formal Scheme of Delegation, based on a delegation by exception principle. A Member/Officer protocol ensures effective and appropriate communication between the paid establishment and elected Members. The Cabinet Executive has previously approved a recommendation from the Member Development Steering Group to adopt a comprehensive "Members Roles and Responsibilities" paper which sets out role profiles and the required skills and knowledge for the various roles Members fulfil in discharging their responsibilities.

Council policies are produced in accordance with the principles set out in the Constitution and recommended for approval following review by the Senior Leadership Team. Decision making which falls within the policy and budgetary framework rests with the Cabinet Executive whilst those decisions falling outside the framework are reserved to full Council. The call-in procedure enables the Scrutiny Commission to review decisions made by the Cabinet Executive. Day to day decision making is carried out by appropriate officers in accordance with the Scheme of Delegated Powers (which is based on a delegation by exception principle) and in accordance with the Financial Regulations. These arrangements all contribute to the economic, efficient and effective operation of the Council. The whole suite of standing orders, financial regulations and scheme of delegation are reviewed and updated as required through regular reports to Council.

Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the monitoring officer function

The “Monitoring Officer” function was carried out by the same individual throughout the year. Initially this was on an interim basis with the individual holding the post of Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Governance Manager, having responsibility for legal matters. This arrangement was made permanent at the Council meeting of 24th May 2022 following the individual being appointed as the Corporate Services Group Manager. The Monitoring Officer position reported to the post holder of the Executive Director position throughout the year, however, the Monitoring Officer meets directly with the Chief Executive on a monthly basis and has ability to report directly to him/her any concerns he/she may have as Monitoring Officer.

Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the Head of Paid Service function

The “Head of Paid Service” role is undertaken by the Council’s Chief Executive. The Executive Director (Section 151 Officer) has responsibility for all HR matters and this position reports to the Chief Executive position.

Undertaking the core functions of an Audit Committee, as identified in CIPFA’s Audit Committees – Practical Guidance for Local Authorities

The Council has an established Audit Committee (the Audit and Governance Committee) whose remit and functions are based on the guidance set out in a CIPFA publication which identifies best practice in relation to roles and responsibilities. The Committee meets quarterly and receives regular reports from both the Section 151 Officer, Finance Group Manager and the Audit Manager. Arrangements are in place for the Audit Manager to report independently to the Audit Committee should he/she feel it appropriate to do so.

Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful

The Council ensures compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations through various channels. Two statutory officers (the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer) have responsibility for ensuring that the Council does not act in an ultra vires manner, supported by the Finance Group Manager and the Council Tax, Income and Debt Manager who facilitate the management and mitigation of risk and the Audit Manager who provides assurance on matters of internal financial control. The Human Resources function, through the use of Performance Development Appraisals, assesses (and provides a means of improving) competencies to ensure that officers are equipped to discharge their duties in accordance with the requirements of the Council.

Whistle-blowing and receiving and investigating complaints from the public

The Council has in place and promotes appropriate whistle blowing policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated where required. A revised Whistle Blowing (Raising Concerns) policy was reviewed and updated in September 2021. Staff are aware of the Whistle Blowing policy and it has been highlighted in Blaby Matters. There is also a well-established and responsive complaints procedure to deal with both informal and formal complaints from its customers and the residents of the District. Regular information relating to performance in respect of complaints (and compliments) is presented to the Senior Leadership Team.

Principle B. Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

The Blaby District Plan sets out the Authority's vision, values and priorities, the resources that the Council has to deliver these (within the MTFS) and how we support our officers to deliver the plan within our People Strategy. Objectives are set that link with the priorities and these are monitored through the year by the Senior Leadership Team within the Project Management reporting structure. The authority works closely with other local public bodies, community and voluntary groups via a partnership approach to ensure effective delivery of its services.

We have an active voluntary forum through which the Authority provides support to those in our community whilst engaging with them to understand how we can improve our services. Engagement with our voluntary community and new/temporary volunteers increased during the pandemic and we have taken measures to ensure we retain connection with these groups.

Customer satisfaction with services is monitored through local and service specific surveys, and electronic means to provide feedback on a range of activities and issues.

The Council produces regular e-newsletters for residents and businesses within the District which, in addition to providing information and advice, seeks to receive the views of the residents on a wide range of issues. During the pandemic the Council moved to electronic means of communication with more regular updates to our residents and this has continued. Targeted service priority consultation exercises are undertaken to inform the future allocation of resources. The Council carries out a bi-annual Residents Survey which includes consultation on potential Council Tax increases and satisfaction levels for a range of Council services. This was carried out in January 2022 with 1804 responses received. A survey, specifically related to the budget and Council Tax increases was carried out in January 2023 with 1,115 responses received with 61% being supportive of a 2.99% increase in Council Tax.

In January 2020 a consultation was carried out asking for resident's views on the priorities to be included within the new Blaby District Plan. 756 responses were received with over 80% of residents agreeing with the proposed priorities. These results went on to inform the Blaby District Plan 2021/2024.

The Council works closely with its 24 Parish Councils. Officers attend a Parish Liaison Group, which has representatives from all other districts and Leicestershire County Council. We regularly send information through to our parishes in relation to funding opportunities.

The Council has established effective Business Breakfast meetings and holds regular meetings with the head teachers of the Academies in the district. It has a Youth Council which has played an active role, this year, in raising awareness about the green agenda, hate crime and vaping; a particular concern that they identified.

The Council held a Youth Conference in February 2023 which was an opportunity for young people to have their say with elected members regarding issues most important to them. The event also provides an insight into what the Youth Council does and the opportunity to take part in a debate as well as attracting new members to join our Youth Council. This year the young attendees created some fantastic material such as hate crime masks and videos, vaping posters and Green Agenda pledges which are being used to form campaigns moving forward. Many also wrote letters to our local MP's about what should be done to reduce vaping among young people.

Engagement with some of our academies and primary schools in the district continued, working with them to explore career opportunities, with a number of events spanning a range of sectors including, construction, tourism, logistics and hospitality.

In order to demonstrate its openness the Authority also publishes:

- A Forward Plan 28 days before the Cabinet Executive meets and provides:
 - a) The public with details of all key, non key and budget and policy framework decisions to be taken by Members over a minimum period of four months ahead
 - b) An aide-memoire for the Council's informal board of senior Members and officers to identify future issues for further discussion
 - c) The Scrutiny Commission with information to consider areas where it may wish to seek involvement in policy development
 - Its pay policy
 - Council, Cabinet and Committee Reports
 - Payments over £250

In order to keep the public informed the Authority proactively prepares appropriate press releases. The Council has an award-winning website which is user friendly and well-designed and the frequent use of social media channels of communication have enabled the Council to reach more of our residents effectively. During this year an independent review of the Council's communication function was carried out to provide insight and highlight any improvements that could be made. The Council's Communication Strategy will be updated in the coming year following the development of the new Blaby District Plan.

Scrutiny of the Council's budget for 2022/23 took place over three meetings in January 2022. These meetings were open to all Members and attendance levels were high.

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

Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other group working as identified by the Audit Commission's report on the governance of partnerships, and reflecting these in the authority's overall governance arrangements.

The Council participates in a range of joint working arrangements with other bodies, some of which are more significant than others. For those that deliver services to our customers there are service level agreements or contractual arrangements in place to ensure delivery and protect reputational risk. Should there be corporate risks based on partnership arrangements these will be detailed within the corporate risk register. The Council is particularly mindful of the financial and reputational risks that can arise through entering into joint working and collaborative arrangements, including the potential for a detrimental reputation impact on the Council should the partnership fail. It therefore actively supports and encourages an "open book" approach wherever possible.

Enhancing the accountability for service delivery and effectiveness of other public service providers

In 2022/23 work commenced to develop a Community Health and Wellbeing Plan (CHWP) with a working group being formed with membership from Blaby DC, Public Health, Leicestershire County Council, and NHS partners. This has now developed into the Blaby Community Health and Wellbeing Partnership. This Partnership has carried out a needs assessment and worked with stakeholders to prioritise actions arising. The Partnership will continue to oversee the development of action plans, support the delivery of the final CHWP and monitor progress.

Social Prescribing is part of the NHS long-Term Plan to make personalised care business as usual across the health and care system. Social prescribing works for a wide range of people and issues, including people with one or more long term conditions, who need support with their mental health, who are lonely or isolated or who have complex social needs which affect their wellbeing. In Blaby we have a unique set up with our Primary Care Networks which sees Blaby District Council staff seconded into these roles. This arrangement continued for both the North Blaby PCN and the South Blaby and Lutterworth PCN until 31 March 2023.

The Council is a member of the Leicestershire Housing Services Partnership which is made up of local authorities, registered providers and third sector organisations who work to deliver a joint action plan aimed at improving outcomes. One of the positive outcomes from this group has been the success of the bids for the Rough Sleepers Initiative Programme and the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme which have helped to improve options for homeless households across the County at a time of increased homelessness presentations.

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Chief Housing Officers Group forms part of the Housing Services Partnership and is cognisant of the wider housing impacts and as a partnership are concentrating on:

- Understanding the housing impact of increase levels of household unemployment and financial instability
- Identifying and then meeting (wherever possible) the wider support and complex needs of housing customers
- Effectively supporting staff to maintain positive mental wellbeing and health as well as identifying appropriate training and career opportunities
- Working in partnership with key agencies to improve the housing offer to customers for example health, probation, adult social care
- Working collectively to address increased levels of homelessness and maximising opportunities for funding to deliver appropriate accommodation.
- Supporting initiatives such as the Staying Healthy partnership by enabling safe and healthy homes and preventing homelessness wherever possible

The Chief Housing Officers Group has continued to work well with partners and in particular in relation to the increase in homelessness presentations which have remained high across the County but also in relation to other key housing areas including, Children and Young People, Community Safety, Strategic Housing as well as being reactive to emergency occurrences e.g. accommodating families from the Afghanistan resettlement schemes and the Lithuanian Refugees. Blaby has also led on initiatives such as the bids for the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme which have been successful in providing self-contained accommodation for Rough Sleepers or those threatened with Rough Sleeping.

The Council leads on the Lightbulb programme; a transformational project designed to improve and transform housing related support services across the County as well as improving hospital discharge services. Lightbulb has won 3 major accolades: -

- Winning the Local Government Chronicle award for best Public/Public Partnership
- Named the best collaborative working initiative by the Association for Public Service Excellence
- Highly commended at the Home Improvement Agency Awards

In 2022/23 the average time taken for completion of works is at 19 weeks, which is below the locally set 20 week KPI. There continues to be complications within the construction industry; we work hard to mitigate these including using frameworks and procurement and working with local providers.

In 2022/23, there was 2,450 referrals made to the Housing Support Coordinators. This resulted in 6,871 onward referrals for things to make their homes safer, such as smoke alarms. There have been more complex referrals and urgent discharge cases. From the Housing MOTs services were delivered at an average of 27 days duration, which is below the 42 day average of service delivery pre Lightbulb.

Also, in 2022/23 there were 50 applications to the Home Support Grant and 32 applications to the Hospital Discharge Grant. The commissioned pilots via lightbulb continue and provide invaluable insight into needs of residents and the benefits of prevention work. There are a number of schemes being piloted.

- Safe Spaces Project which supports individuals whose property is hoarded.
- The Home Gadgets project which sees technology supplied to help individuals with Dementia or health conditions remain as independent as possible in their own home.
- Housing Occupational therapists – looking at streamlining the hospital discharge process and adaptations.
- Green grant – support to ensure properties are efficient and help future proof for health and cost of living.

Lightbulb continues to seek ways of improving our resident's wellbeing and will be reviewing all pilots during 23/24.

The Council formally merged the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) of both Blaby and Hinckley and Bosworth in April 2016. Together the CSP's across Leicestershire work with the Police, Fire, Probation Services, County Council and Clinical Commissioning Groups to develop and implement strategies to protect local communities from crime and to help people feel safe. Local approaches to deal with issues including antisocial behaviour, drug or alcohol misuse and re-offending are also developed through the joint working.

The Council has over recent years invested considerably to promote the economic development of the district. We have, this year seen the continuation of how our proactive approach to good business development in our district and working in partnership with local business has generated growth, with the Fosse West development being completed and units opened.

The Council leads a Building Control Partnership on behalf of five other local authorities including Harborough, Oadby and Wigston, Hinckley and Bosworth, Melton and Rutland County Council. A governance structure has been set up which includes a Management Board that meets quarterly to review performance of the service, income generation and make decisions on future priorities. Initially the partnership was delivered through a shared service agreement however, in November 2021 a decision was made by Council to operate the Building Control Partnership under delegated authority and this structure has been in place since April 22.

Through a delegation of statutory responsibility, Blaby provides a Local Land Charge service for both Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. Through this arrangement Blaby maintains local land charges registers, processes official searches and provides access to the local land charges register under the Environmental Information Regulations for personal searches.

This arrangement has provided resilience in service across all authorities the service being highly commended at the Local Land Charges awards 2019 and shortlisted by Land Data in 2021 and 2022 for Team of the Year.

From April 2023 Blaby District Council is collaborating with neighbouring authority Oadby and Wigston Borough Council to expand its sport, physical activity and community health and well-being work. Blaby District Council will undertake work on behalf of Oadby & Wigston Borough Council for Physical Activity and Community Health & Wellbeing. Economies of scale are expected to be achieved by commissioning external providers to run classes across both districts. Alongside this the development of the two Community Health & Wellbeing plans will also provide the opportunity to tackle jointly any gaps in provision or where we have the same health inequalities.

The Council continues to work closely with the academies in our District and meetings cover a wide breadth of matters including: creating workplace opportunities in Blaby District and gaining benefit from developments under construction in our district; workplace health initiatives and creating linkages in our community to promote community safety. This meeting has also facilitated closer relationships being developed with the academies and both the police, local community groups and officers from children's support services at Leicestershire County Council.

Principle D – Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcome

The Blaby District Plan sets out our ambitions for the Council and sits alongside our Medium-Term Financial Strategy and our People Strategy and these detail how we have planned all our resources, both financial and staffing to deliver these.

The Council's service and financial planning process ensures that resource redirection and allocation is aligned to the priorities emanating from the Blaby District Plan. The Council has in place Contract Standing Orders and Financial Regulations designed to ensure that the Council achieves value for money in discharging its procurement requirements.

The system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information, financial regulations, administrative procedures, management supervision and a system of delegation and accountability.

Development and maintenance of the system is undertaken by the Senior Leadership Team within the Council and its effectiveness is reviewed by either external or internal audit. In particular, the arrangements include:

- The MediumTerm Financial Strategy is now part of the Blaby District Plan but includes a Financial Summary spanning future years which is revised annually.
- A 5 Year Capital Programme including asset investment.
- An effective system of budgetary control.
- The preparation and review of regular and timely financial reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts.
- Clearly defined capital appraisal, funding and expenditure controls.
- Formal project management disciplines where appropriate
- Performance management reports

The Council continues to embed a "project board" approach to implementing change and transformation. A focus has been placed on project management and the regular monitoring of project delivery with the SLT meeting monthly to review progress and the Council invested in additional resource during this year to enhance this focus. Ultimately this is led by the Chief Executive and will continue to ensure focus is placed on continuing improvement and learning. Members are fully engaged in this process with both a Cabinet Executive portfolio holder having specific responsibility for driving and monitoring the change process. The Scrutiny Commission, through its working groups are actively involved in examining the detail of processes and change reviews.

Principle E – Developing the entity’s capacity including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.

Members who joined the Council in 2019/20 underwent a comprehensive induction programme and this has continued to be built upon throughout the member’s term, with various training sessions to ensure they are fully equipped to fulfil their roles. As the Council prepared for district elections in May 2023 a number of prospective member events were delivered to assist and encourage members of the public to stand for district and parish seats and a full induction programme has been developed to deliver to new Members following the district elections which is built upon in preparation for future use.

Identifying the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training

The Council fully supports the requirements to ensure that both Members and senior officers have the necessary skill sets to fulfil their strategic role in the organisation. The Council continues to invest in development for officers and managers. All people managers continue to be supported to understand staff wellbeing and manager participation in HR workshops continued virtually and some face to face training has resumed. During the year training on commercial behaviours and development of a business case were delivered and also awareness & training sessions held on subjects such as Safeguarding, raising awareness of ADHD, Dyslexia and autism. A group of officers also attended the East Midlands Challenge Event giving them an insight into issues faced when in strategic roles. During the year 3 apprenticeships were supported with two degree level apprenticeships continuing into the next year. We collaborated with local Councils on an ILM Manager Development programme, with 5 Managers on the first cohort, positive feedback on the skills gained and more cohorts to follow.

The Council delivers specific Member training around planning, local government finance, good governance and the risks and responsibilities that go with their individual roles. This year in particular there has been some training regarding good scrutiny following some improvements identified in the Peer Review which took place at the start of the year. We undertake a full induction programme for new Members and those starting mid-term.

The Council continues to adhere to the principles of the East Midlands Councils Elected Member Development Charter. The Charter provides a set of national standards for authorities to achieve, ensuring elected Members are equipped to have the knowledge and skills to be effective community leaders.

Principle F – Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public management

The Council has invested in putting in place a new clear and coherent framework for managing and monitoring performance. The full benefit of this will be seen in the forthcoming year, however extensive work has been put in place to develop a much improved performance system utilising a system called Pentana. This has recently gone live and in coming months will see access for both officers and members to access performance data.

A Six Monthly Performance Report is presented to Council which provides a summary of progress and performance against the priorities within the Blaby District Plan. This report encompasses a whole Council approach focused on the three priorities; A Place to Live, A Place to Work, A Place to Visit, and it is recognised that all services contribute to the successful delivery of the Council’s Plan.

It also includes a selection of statutory indicators and the most up to date comparable data for all English District Councils. This report is also presented at Scrutiny Commission meetings. The responsibility for Performance Management sits with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Performance. All Cabinet members provide challenge through our reporting channels.

During this year the Council used the InPhase system to record performance indicators and officers had access to the InPhase performance data in order that monitoring could be carried out across services. InPhase has been replaced for the forthcoming year with the Pentana system, which will be used to report both performance, risk and projects.

The Council has in place a Risk Management Policy and Strategy to ensure that the management of risk, is embedded within the organisation at both the strategic and operational level with both Members and senior officers having specific roles and responsibilities identified. A Corporate Risk Management Group, headed by the Chief Executive and supported by the performance team provides leadership, whilst the post of Finance Group Manager has specific responsibility to co-ordinate the management of risk across the Council. Both Members and officers are trained so that they are equipped to manage risk in a way appropriate to their duties. Risk assessments are a pre-requisite for all capital project appraisals and form an integral element of Project Plans. The Council utilised a software package (InPhase) in 2022/23 to assist with the management and monitoring of both performance and risks. This included a risk tracking facility to continuously monitor the Council's corporate exposure to areas classified as high risk. Members of the Audit Committee received regular risk monitoring reports. The InPhase system has been replaced by Pentana and will be utilised in 2023/24 onwards.

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

Ensuring the Authority's Financial Management Arrangements Conform with the Governance Requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government

The CIPFA Statement was originally published in March 2009 in respect of the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in public services as a whole and was considered by the Council's Cabinet Executive in July of that year. The following year a further version was produced which was specifically directed towards Chief Financial Officers serving in local government. The five underlying principles however remained the same. The Council's financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements as set out in the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2016).

During this year, the Executive Director (S151 Officer) held the position of S151 Officer.

Ensuring the authority's assurance arrangements addresses the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2019)

The Council's internal reporting arrangements are designed to ensure the independence of the internal audit function. Appropriate resources are made available to provide an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve the Council's operations. It brings a systemic disciplined approach to evaluating and improving the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes. The Audit Manager reports directly to the Council's Audit and Standards Committee on all matters appertaining to audit outcomes.

Review of Effectiveness

Blaby District Council undertakes, on an annual basis, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by a) the work of the senior managers within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, b) the Audit Manager's annual report and c) by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.

Part of this process is to carry out an assurance review which identifies examples of assurances in respect of those governance arrangements which are key to mitigate against significant risks to the achievement of the corporate objectives of the Council. Whilst a number of actions were identified through this process they don't relate specifically to governance matters but illustrate the Council's commitment to continuous improvement. The actions are listed in the table below for completeness. The comprehensive detail of the assurance review completed will be presented as an appendix to the Annual Governance Report which will be considered by Cabinet Executive in July 2023.

Core Principal 1: A. Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law

Supporting Principle 1 : Behaving with Integrity

Action – To develop revised PDA documentation to enhance the process and to ensure they are carried out for all staff.

Core Principal B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principle 2 : Engaging comprehensively with institutional

Action – Update the Communication Strategy following development of New Blaby District Plan.

Supporting Principle 3 : Engaging stakeholders effectively, including individual citizens and service users

Action – Build on the outcomes taken from the review of the Communications function to strengthen the proactive promotion of the Council.

Action – Update the Communication Strategy following development of New Blaby District Plan.

Core Principal C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits

Supporting Principle 1 : Defining outcomes

Action – Develop the long term Vision for the District and develop the Blaby District Plan for future years.

Action – Embed the new business planning, data intelligence and risk management process that has been implemented during 2022/23 utilising the Pentana system.

Supporting Principle 2 : Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits

Action – Briefing for all members, new and returning regarding Council finance incorporating Fair Funding and Business Rates.

Core Principal D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes

Supporting Principle 2 : Planning interventions

Action – Embed the new business planning, data intelligence and risk management process utilising the Pentana system to report KPI's.

Action – Service Planning and Budget setting to be aligned to ensure resources are in place.

Supporting Principle 3 : Optimising achievement of intended outcomes

Action – Budget setting and monitoring to be further developed to ensure that budget is tailored and trimmed.

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

Supporting Principle 1 : Developing the entity's capacity

Action - Investigate the use of benchmarking information to enhance the performance framework and support decision making.

Action – Continue to develop workforce policy updates and development and retention initiatives to assist recruitment and retention of staff.

Supporting Principle 2 : Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals

Action – To develop revised PDA documentation to enhance the process and to ensure they are carried out for all staff.

Core Principal F : Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Supporting Principle 1 : Managing risk

Action – Utilise the new Pentana system to record risks and ensure lower level risks are managed across the organisation.

Action – Update the Risk Management Strategy in 2023.

Supporting Principle 2 : Managing Performance

Action – monitor the use of the new Corporate performance framework and reporting system to ensure the authority has an overall view of performance. Investigate the use of benchmarking information to enhance the performance framework further.

Supporting Principle 3 : Robust internal control

Action – Consideration of the CIPFA Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2022) to ensure compliance with best practice for the Council's Audit & Governance Committee.

Supporting Principle 5 : Strong public financial management

Action – Provide training for budget managers to ensure they understand their budget and can re-forecast accurately during the year.

There were no actions from previous years that had not been addressed, however some actions will continue to be built upon in 2023/24.

Review of Compliance with Financial Management Code 2022/23

The Council carried out a review of compliance with the FM Code in advance of 2022/23. It was considered by the Audit and Standards Committee in July 2021 and the action plan arising from the review approved by Cabinet Executive in September. The document was made available to the public. Whilst the Authority was found to be compliant with many aspects of the FM Code, there were a number of areas that were partially compliant. An action plan was developed and all areas addressed to ensure compliance.

Role of the Council

The extent of the role of full Council in reviewing and monitoring effectiveness of internal control is set out in Article 4 of the Council's constitution. Article 4 provides that the Council is responsible for setting the policy and budgetary framework.

It is the responsibility of the statutory officers to report to Council on any issues concerning the review of the effectiveness of internal control arrangements where such cases fall outside the delegated power of other decision making bodies of the Council. There have been no issues arising during 2022/23 which have required the full Council to exercise its role.

The Constitution of the Council is subject to a continuous review process and a delegation by exception scheme forms an integral part of the arrangements. The Constitution underwent a revision in 2016/17 and the new version, which was actively reviewed by Members, was approved by Council on 24 May 2016. Amendments to the Constitution are brought before Council throughout the year as part of the continuous review process and annually to ensure it is fit for purpose.

The Council formally reviews its Financial Regulations on a regular basis albeit ongoing updates are implemented as part of the regular reviews of the Constitution.

Role of Cabinet Executive

The role of the Cabinet Executive is to receive, consider and approve the Annual Governance Statement and to monitor the implementation of any Action Plans arising out of the review of its governance arrangements.

Role of Audit Committee

A formal Audit Committee, constituted on the basis of the guidance issued by the

Chartered Institute of Public Finance, including the adoption of a “Statement of Purpose”, was established in 2008.

The Audit Committee (The Audit and Corporate Governance Committee) meets on a quarterly basis. It has responsibility for considering the findings of the annual review of the effectiveness of the internal audit function in addition to receiving regular monitoring reports from the Audit Manager. The annual external audit plan is also approved by the Audit Committee.

Role of Scrutiny Committee

The Council has a well established Scrutiny Commission supported by working panels who are assigned specific projects to be undertaken. The Commission can “call in” a decision which has been made by the Cabinet Executive but not yet implemented, to enable them to consider whether the decision is appropriate.

Risk Management

The Corporate Risk Group regularly reviews the Risk Management Strategy to ensure its continued relevance to the Council. The reviews also assess performance against the aims and objectives of the Risk Management Strategy.

The Finance Group Manager provides regular progress reports to the Corporate Risk Group and the Senior Leadership Team bringing to their attention any significant risks which have been identified. The Corporate Risk Group/Senior Leadership Team also:

- Reviews the Council's strategic/operational risk registers and associated action plans
- Ensures that the appropriate management action is taken to minimise/eliminate risk

Audit and Corporate Governance Committee review the Strategic Risk Register and mitigating actions regularly. They also have responsibility for reviewing and recommending the Risk Management Strategy at regular intervals.

Role of Internal Audit

Internal Audit is provided in accordance with the statutory responsibility under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Accounts and Audit Regulations and the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. It is managed on a day to day basis by the Audit Manager who reports to the Executive Director. There is however also an indirect reporting line to the Executive Director (Section 151 Officer) in relation to matters of a technical or professional nature.

Internal Audit objectively examines, evaluates and reports on the adequacy of internal controls and governance as a contribution to the proper, economic and effective use of resources. During 2022/23 this responsibility was carried out following an approved risk based annual audit plan. The Audit Manager produces quarterly progress monitoring reports against the plan to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

The internal reporting process for audit work requires a report of each audit to be submitted to the relevant Group/Corporate Manager and/or Service Manager. The report includes recommendations for improvements that are included within an action plan and require agreement or rejection by the relevant managers. The process also includes regular reviews of recommendations to ensure that they are acted upon. A summary of all audits carried out, including a grading rating which reflects the effectiveness of the controls in place and an analysis of the recommendations is submitted to each quarterly Audit and Corporate Governance Committee meeting.

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS), introduced on 1 April 2013, and revised in April 2016 and again in 2017, require an external assessment of compliance with the Standards to be carried out at least once every five years.

The assessment was carried out in November 2020 and found that the internal audit function at Blaby District Council conforms with the PSIAS and there were no areas of non-compliance identified. The final report was presented to the Audit and Standards Committee on 1 February 2021 along with an action plan containing minor action points which the Audit Manager is implementing to improve overall compliance with the Standards.

The Shared Service Audit Manager provides an independent opinion on the internal control environment to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee which then feeds into the Annual Governance Statement process. For the 12 months ended 31 March 2023, based upon the work undertaken by Internal Audit during the year and additional information provided by relevant managers on their responses to audit recommendations, the Audit Manager has formed the opinion that she is able to give **reasonable assurance** on the Council's overall internal control arrangements. To be consistent with our Internal Audit opinion definitions, this means that there is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the areas audited. This is a positive assurance opinion overall which will be detailed in the report of the Audit Manager's 'Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/2023' which will be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 13th July 2023.

All but two internal audit reports issued during 2022/23 were issued with either substantial or reasonable assurance opinions. Both reports were issued with limited assurance opinions and recommendations made within the audits have already been addressed or plans have been put in place to ensure they are addressed. A small number of high priority recommendations were made in respect of all the audit reviews undertaken. These relate to specific systems and/or service areas with the majority of these recommendations already implemented and others in progress. It is not therefore considered necessary to include them in the Annual Governance Statement.

Other Explicit Review/Assurance Mechanisms

The Corporate Services Group Manager (the “Monitoring Officer”) has a duty to monitor and review the operation of the Constitution to ensure its aims and principles are given full effect. The Constitution underwent a revision in 2016/17 and the new version, which was actively reviewed by Members, was approved by Council on 24 May 2016.

Statements of Assurance are received from senior officers regarding internal control issues in line with the guidance set out in “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”.

In November 2021 the Council invited the LGA to carry out a Finance Health Check which gave a view of the robustness of the Council’s financial arrangements. The report, received in December 2021, concluded that the Council is well managed financially and has consistently spent within its budget. The report went on to provide a number of recommendations all of which were either completed or have been incorporated into our financial considerations on an ongoing basis.

The Council has continued the engagement with the LGA Peer Review process; the first review being in 2015 followed by a further review in 2018. Both reviews were very positive, described Blaby District Council as “a great council which is performing well with no major concerns. There are many examples of good services and projects with a strong focus on doing the right thing for Blaby’s residents and customers at all levels of the organisation.”

A more recent Peer Review (now referred to as a Corporate Peer Challenge) was performed in March 2022 and was again very positive with the report summarising that “Blaby District Council (BDC) is a well-run local authority; it has a sound financial position, strong leadership, particularly through its Leader and Chief Executive, and committed staff. There is real ownership by members and officers, and everyone wants to do their best for Blaby as a council, place and for its communities.”

The final report was reported to Council in July 2022 alongside an action plan that has been put in place to address recommendations made for improvement. The LGA Peer Challenge team returned to the Council in December 2022 to review the Council’s progress reporting that “Blaby DC is clearly committed to addressing all the CPC’s recommendations and has made excellent progress in doing so. This is all the more impressive, given that the council, like others, is responding to the ongoing challenging, economic environment.”

Statement of Leader and Chief Executive

We have been advised on the implications of the result of the review of the effectiveness of the governance framework carried out by members of the Senior Leadership Team and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework.

Significant governance issues

Whilst there are no significant governance issues to report, nevertheless the Council continues to seek to enhance and strengthen our governance arrangements where improvements can be identified. We will monitor progress made as part of our next annual review.

Signed _____
Leader of the Council
July 2023

Signed _____
Chief Executive
July 2023

Blaby District Council

Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting	13 July 2023
Title of Report	CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 - Update
Report Author	Shared Service Audit Manager

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 To update Members on the initial meeting of the CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities Working Group, as agreed at Audit Committee on 17 April 2023.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Audit and Corporate Governance notes the report.
- 2.2 That the proposed Action Plan be agreed.
- 2.3 Agrees the Person Specification/ Job Description for the co-opted Independent Members and the advertising of the posts.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 To ensure that the committee meets its statutory responsibilities for governance and internal control arrangements, financial management, financial reporting and internal control.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

In May 2022, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) published a revised and updated edition of the document *Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022*. In addition to the statement CIPFA also released guidance documentation in October 2022 – *Audit committees: practical guidance for local authorities and police*.

A report was presented to Audit & Corporate Governance Committee on 17 April 2023 proposing the initial steps to the implementation of the position statement.

4.1 Significant Issues

None.

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

5.1 No costs or opportunities for savings in the context of this report. There may be associated training costs for members.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1 There are no risks relating to this report.

7. Other options considered

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Other significant issues

8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1 – CIPFA Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 - Update.

10. Background paper(s)

Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022 (appendix A)

Audit committees: practical guidance for local authorities and police (to be circulated)

11. Report author's contact details

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Kerry.beavis@blaby.gov.uk

CIPFA's POSITION STATEMENT: AUDIT COMMITTEES IN LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE 2022

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At its meeting on 17 April 2023, the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee considered the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) updated Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022, see appendix A for the statement.
- 1.2 The Committee were advised that the Guidance continued to include a strong focus on the factors that supported improvement in the working of audit committees. This included the knowledge and skills that Audit & Corporate Governance Committee members require and an emphasis on where the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee can add value. It also provided practical support in evaluating the existing Committee and planning any improvements identified.
- 1.3 Two recommendations were made and approved in regard to the way in which Blaby District Council's Audit & Corporate Governance Committee could work towards complying with the position statement. This included carrying out a knowledge and skills assessment and training needs analysis, and to agree the process for the recruitment of co-opted independent members to the committee.

2. SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 2.1 The knowledge and skills questionnaire was distributed to all Audit & Corporate Governance Committee members for completion, to identify gaps in knowledge and skills. A distinction is made between core areas of knowledge that all Audit & Corporate Governance Committee members should seek to acquire and a range of specialisms that can add value to the Committee.
- 2.2 A small working group was formed, consisting of three councillors, Cllr's Holdridge, Dewinter and Jackson, supported the Strategic Director (S151 officer), the audit manager and the senior democratic services & scrutiny officer. The group reviewed the outcomes of the self-assessment, discussed the requirement for two co-opted independent member and the requirement to meet the position statement to the best of the Committee's ability.

3. KEY FINDINGS AND OUTCOMES

- 3.1 Prior to the first meeting of the working group the knowledge and skills questionnaire was completed by four members of the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee. The level of responses received is broadly considered representative of the views of the Committee as a whole.
- 3.2 A summary of responses received are attached at Appendix B.

3.3 The main areas identified for training as part of the member induction process and on an ongoing basis are:

- Organisational Knowledge
- Audit Committee Role and Functions
- Governance
- Internal Audit
- Financial Management and Financial Reporting
- External Audit
- Risk Management
- Counter Fraud
- Values of good governance
- Treasury Management

3.4 It was agreed at the working group that further and ongoing training is required to support members with their responsibilities within the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee.

3.5 It was agreed to appoint co-opted independent members to the committee to assist with any knowledge and skills gaps, a person specification/ job description was developed and is included at Appendix C for approval by the committee.

3.6 A proposed action plan is detailed at Appendix D to meet the requirements of the Position Statement and ensure the effectiveness of the Committee.

APPENDIX A

The Chartered Institute of
Public Finance & Accountancy



CIPFA's Position Statement: Audit Committees in Local Authorities and Police 2022

Scope

This position statement includes all principal local authorities in the UK, corporate joint committees in Wales, the audit committees for PCCs and chief constables in England and Wales, PCCFRAs and the audit committees of fire and rescue authorities in England and Wales.

The statement sets out the purpose, model, core functions and membership of the audit committee. Where specific legislation exists (the Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016), it should supplement the requirements of that legislation.

Status of the position statement

The statement represents CIPFA's view on the audit committee practice and principles that local government bodies in the UK should adopt. It has been prepared in consultation with sector representatives.

CIPFA expects that all local government bodies should make their best efforts to adopt the principles, aiming for effective audit committee arrangements. This will enable those bodies to meet their statutory responsibilities for governance and internal control arrangements, financial management, financial reporting and internal audit.

The 2022 edition of the position statement replaces the 2018 edition.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and the Home Office support this guidance.

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CIPFA's Position Statement 2022: Audit committees in local authorities and police

Purpose of the audit committee

Audit committees are a key component of an authority's governance framework. Their purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and control arrangements. The committee's role in ensuring that there is sufficient assurance over governance risk and control gives greater confidence to all those charged with governance that those arrangements are effective.

In a local authority the full council is the body charged with governance. The audit committee may be delegated some governance responsibilities but will be accountable to full council. In policing, the police and crime commissioner (PCC) and chief constable are both corporations sole, and thus are the individuals charged with governance.

The committee has oversight of both internal and external audit together with the financial and governance reports, helping to ensure that there are adequate arrangements in place for both internal challenge and public accountability.

Independent and effective model

The audit committee should be established so that it is independent of executive decision making and able to provide objective oversight. It is an advisory committee that has sufficient importance in the authority so that its recommendations and opinions carry weight and have influence with the leadership team and those charged with governance.

The committee should:

- be directly accountable to the authority's governing body or the PCC and chief constable
- in local authorities, be independent of both the executive and the scrutiny functions
- in police bodies, be independent of the executive or operational responsibilities of the PCC or chief constable
- have rights of access to and constructive engagement with other committees/functions, for example scrutiny and service committees, corporate risk management boards and other strategic groups
- have rights to request reports and seek assurances from relevant officers
- be of an appropriate size to operate as a cadre of experienced, trained committee members. Large committees should be avoided.

The audit committees of the PCC and chief constable should follow the requirements set out in the Home Office Financial Management Code of Practice and be made up of co-opted independent members.

The audit committees of local authorities should include co-opted independent members in accordance with the appropriate legislation.

Where there is no legislative direction to include co-opted independent members, CIPFA recommends that each authority audit committee should include at least two co-opted independent members to provide appropriate technical expertise.

Core functions

The core functions of the audit committee are to provide oversight of a range of core governance and accountability arrangements, responses to the recommendations of assurance providers and helping to ensure robust arrangements are maintained.

The specific responsibilities include:

Maintenance of governance, risk and control arrangements

- Support a comprehensive understanding of governance across the organisation and among all those charged with governance, fulfilling the principles of good governance.
- Consider the effectiveness of the authority's risk management arrangements. It should understand the risk profile of the organisation and seek assurances that active arrangements are in place on risk-related issues, for both the body and its collaborative arrangements.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the system of internal control, including arrangements for financial management, ensuring value for money, supporting standards and ethics and managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption.

Financial and governance reporting

- Be satisfied that the authority's accountability statements, including the annual governance statement, properly reflect the risk environment, and any actions required to improve it, and demonstrate how governance supports the achievement of the authority's objectives.
- Support the maintenance of effective arrangements for financial reporting and review the statutory statements of account and any reports that accompany them.

Establishing appropriate and effective arrangements for audit and assurance

- Consider the arrangements in place to secure adequate assurance across the body's full range of operations and collaborations with other entities.
- In relation to the authority's internal audit functions:
 - oversee its independence, objectivity, performance and conformance to professional standards
 - support effective arrangements for internal audit
 - promote the effective use of internal audit within the assurance framework.

- Consider the opinion, reports and recommendations of external audit and inspection agencies and their implications for governance, risk management or control, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit.
- Contribute to the operation of efficient and effective external audit arrangements, supporting the independence of auditors and promoting audit quality.
- Support effective relationships between all providers of assurance, audits and inspections, and the organisation, encouraging openness to challenge, review and accountability.

Audit committee membership

To provide the level of expertise and understanding required of the committee, and to have an appropriate level of influence within the authority, the members of the committee will need to be of high calibre. When selecting elected representatives to be on the committee or when co-opting independent members, aptitude should be considered alongside relevant knowledge, skills and experience.

Characteristics of audit committee membership:

- A membership that is trained to fulfil their role so that members are objective, have an inquiring and independent approach, and are knowledgeable.
- A membership that promotes good governance principles, identifying ways that better governance arrangement can help achieve the organisation's objectives.
- A strong, independently minded chair, displaying a depth of knowledge, skills, and interest. There are many personal skills needed to be an effective chair, but key to these are:
 - promoting apolitical open discussion
 - managing meetings to cover all business and encouraging a candid approach from all participants
 - maintaining the focus of the committee on matters of greatest priority.
- Willingness to operate in an apolitical manner.
- Unbiased attitudes – treating auditors, the executive and management fairly.
- The ability to challenge the executive and senior managers when required.
- Knowledge, expertise and interest in the work of the committee.

While expertise in the areas within the remit of the committee is very helpful, the attitude of committee members and willingness to have appropriate training are of equal importance.

The appointment of co-opted independent members on the committee should consider the overall knowledge and expertise of the existing members.

Engagement and outputs

The audit committee should be established and supported to enable it to address the full range of responsibilities within its terms of reference and to generate planned outputs.

To discharge its responsibilities effectively, the committee should:

- meet regularly, at least four times a year, and have a clear policy on those items to be considered in private and those to be considered in public
- be able to meet privately and separately with the external auditor and with the head of internal audit
- include, as regular attendees, the chief finance officer(s), the chief executive, the head of internal audit and the appointed external auditor; other attendees may include the monitoring officer and the head of resources (where such a post exists). These officers should also be able to access the committee members, or the chair, as required
- have the right to call on any other officers or agencies of the authority as required; police audit committees should recognise the independence of the chief constable in relation to operational policing matters
- support transparency, reporting regularly on its work to those charged with governance
- report annually on how the committee has complied with the position statement, discharged its responsibilities, and include an assessment of its performance. The report should be available to the public.

Impact

As a non-executive body, the influence of the audit committee depends not only on the effective performance of its role, but also on its engagement with the leadership team and those charged with governance.

The committee should evaluate its impact and identify areas for improvement.

AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS – KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FRAMEWORK

APPENDIX B

Core Areas of Knowledge

Knowledge Area	Details of core knowledge required	How the audit committee member is able to apply the knowledge	Overall assessment of skills/knowledge (1-5, 1 being minimal and 5 being strong)				
			1	2	3	4	5
Organisational knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An overview of the authority's governance structures and decision-making processes. Knowledge of the organisational objectives and major functions of the authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This knowledge will be core to most of the audit committee's activities, including the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) review, internal and external audit reports, and risk registers. 	3	-	1	-	1
Audit committee role and functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An understanding of the audit committee's role and place within the governance structures. Familiarity with the committee's terms of reference and accountability arrangements. Knowledge of the purpose and role of the audit committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This knowledge will enable the audit committee to prioritise its work to ensure it discharges its responsibilities under its terms of reference and to avoid overlapping the work of others. It will help the committee undertake a self-assessment and prepare its annual report. 	2	2	-	-	1
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of the seven principles as outlined in Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (CIPFA/Solace, 2016). The requirements of the AGS. How the principles of governance are implemented locally as set out in the local code of governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The committee will review the local code of governance and consider how governance arrangements align to the principles in the Framework. The committee will plan the assurances it is to receive to adequately support the AGS. The committee will review the AGS and consider how the authority is meeting the principles of good governance. The committee will receive audit reports and information on risks relating to governance. 	2	2	-	-	1
Internal audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An awareness of the key principles of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the Local Government Application Note (LGAN). Knowledge of the arrangements for delivery of the internal audit service in the authority and the charter. How the role of the head of internal audit is fulfilled. Details of the most recent external assessment and level of conformance with the standards. Internal audit's strategy, plan, and most recent annual opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The audit committee has oversight of the internal audit function and will monitor its adherence to professional internal audit standards. The audit committee will review the assurances from internal audit work and will review the risk-based audit plan. The committee will also receive the annual report, including an opinion and information on conformance with professional standards. In relying on the work of internal audit, the committee will need to be confident that professional standards are being followed. The audit committee chair is likely to be interviewed as part of the external quality assessment, and the committee will receive the outcome of the assessment and action plan. 	3	-	1	-	1

APPENDIX 1

Financial management and financial reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of the financial statements that a local authority must produce and the principles it must follow to produce them. • An understanding of good financial management practice as set out in the CIPFA Financial Management Code (FM Code) and the level of compliance with it. • Knowledge of how the organisation meets the requirements of the role of the Chief Finance Officer (CFO) as required by The Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (CIPFA, 2016). • An overview of the principal financial risks the authority faces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the financial statements prior to publication, asking questions. • Receiving the external audit report and opinion on the financial audit. • Reviewing both external and internal audit recommendations relating to financial management and controls. • The audit committee should consider compliance with the FM Code and the role of the CFO and how this is met when reviewing the AGS. 	2	2	-	-	1
External audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the role and functions of the external auditor and who currently undertakes this role. • Knowledge of the key reports and assurances that external audit will provide. • Familiarity with the auditor's most recent plan and the opinion reports. • Knowledge about arrangements for the appointment of auditors and quality management undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The audit committee will meet with the external auditor regularly and receive their reports and opinions. • Monitoring external audit recommendations and maximising the benefit from the audit process. • The audit committee should monitor the relationship between the external auditor and the authority and support the delivery of an effective service. 	2	1	1	-	1
Risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the principles of risk management, including how it supports good governance and decision making. • Knowledge of the risk management policy and strategy of the organisation. • Understanding of risk governance arrangements, including the role of members and of the audit committee. • Knowledge of the current risk maturity of the organisation and any key areas of improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In reviewing the AGS, the committee will consider the robustness of the authority's risk management arrangements. • Awareness of the major risks the authority faces is necessary to support the review of several audit committee agenda items, including the risk-based internal audit plan, external audit plans and the explanatory foreword of the accounts. Typically, risk registers will be used to inform the committee. The committee should also review reports and action plans to develop the application of risk management practice 	1	2	1	1	-
Counter fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the main areas of fraud and corruption risk that the organisation is exposed to. • Knowledge of the principles of good fraud risk management practice in accordance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014). • Knowledge of the organisation's arrangements for tackling fraud. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of fraud risks and good fraud risk management practice will be helpful when the committee reviews the organisation's fraud strategy and receives reports on the effectiveness of that strategy. • An assessment of arrangements should support the AGS, and knowledge of good fraud risk management practice will support the audit committee member in reviewing that assessment. 	2	2	-	1	-
Values of good governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Seven Principles of Public Life. • Knowledge of the authority's key arrangements to uphold ethical standards for both members and staff (eg code of conduct). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The audit committee member will draw on this knowledge when reviewing governance issues and the AGS. 	3	1	-	-	1

APPENDIX 1

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the whistleblowing arrangements in the authority. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of the effectiveness of whistleblowing will be considered as part of the AGS. The audit committee member should know to whom concerns should be reported. 					
Treasury management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Scrutiny of Treasury Management is an assessment tool for reviewing the arrangements for undertaking scrutiny of treasury management. The key knowledge areas identified are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – regulatory requirements – treasury risks – the organisation's treasury management strategy – the organisation's policies and procedures in relation to treasury management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core knowledge on treasury management is essential for the committee undertaking the role of scrutiny. 	2	2	-	1	-

Core Skills

Skills	Key Elements	How the audit committee member is able to apply the skill	Overall assessment of skills/knowledge (1-5, 1 being minimal and 5 being strong)				
			1	2	3	4	5
Strategic thinking and understanding of materiality	Able to focus on material issues and the overall position rather than being side tracked by detail.	When reviewing audit reports, findings will include areas of higher risk or materiality to the organisation but may also highlight more minor errors or control failures. The audit committee member will need to pitch their review at an appropriate level to avoid spending too much time on detail.	-	-	1	1	3
Questioning and constructive challenge	Able to frame questions that draw out relevant facts and explanations, challenging performance and seeking explanations while avoiding hostility or grandstanding.	The audit committee will review reports and recommendations to address weaknesses in internal control. The audit committee member will seek to understand the reasons for weaknesses and ensure a solution is found.	-	-	1	1	3
Focus on improvement	Ensuring there is a clear plan of action and allocation of responsibility.	The audit committee's outcome will be to secure improvements to the governance, risk management or control of the organisation, including clearly defined actions and responsibilities. Where errors or control failures have occurred, the audit committee should seek assurances that appropriate action has been taken.	-	-	1	2	2
Able to balance practicality against theory	Able to understand the practical implications of recommendations to understand how they might work in practice.	The audit committee should seek assurances that planned actions are practical and realistic.	-	-	1	2	2
Clear communication skills and focus on the needs of users	Support the use of plain English in communications, avoiding jargon, acronyms, etc	The audit committee will seek to ensure that external documents such as the AGS and the narrative report in the accounts are well written for a non-expert audience.	-	-	-	1	4
Objectivity	Evaluate information based on evidence presented, avoiding bias or subjectivity.	The audit committee will receive assurance reports and review risk registers. There may be differences of opinion about the significance of risk and the appropriate control responses, and the committee member will need to weigh up differing views.	-	-	1	1	3
Meeting management skills	Chair the meetings effectively: summarise issues raised, ensure all participants can contribute, and focus on the outcome and actions from the meeting.	These skills are essential for the audit committee chair to help ensure that meetings stay on track and address the items on the agenda. The skills are desirable for all other members.	-	-	-	3	2



APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT MEMBERS FOR AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Blaby District Council is committed to the highest standards of corporate governance, and our Audit & Corporate Governance Committee is a key part of ensuring that we meet those standards. The Council is currently looking to appoint an independent co-opted member of the Committee, to become a part of its work in promoting excellence in governance, risk management, financial reporting and counter fraud.

Independent Members will be expected to actively participate in meetings of the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee and demonstrate independence, integrity, objectivity and impartiality in their decision-making. As part of this rewarding role, they will support the Council's Audit & Corporate Governance Committee in providing independent assurance to the members of Blaby District Council, and its wider citizens and stakeholders.

Independent Members are non-voting members of the Committee, who assist in overseeing internal and external audit arrangements, reviewing and scrutinising financial statements, and reviewing and assessing the governance, risk management and control of the authority.

The terms of reference for the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee can be found in the Council's Constitution which is published on our website.

About you

The Audit & Corporate Governance Committee is seeking an independent member with a wide range of skills and experience. The ideal candidate would have a strong knowledge of one or more of financial management, governance and control, possibly with a background in audit or finance in public services or the not-for-profit sector.

The Independent Member will be appointed for a two-year period with option to extend for a further two years. We have a preference for candidates who have either lived or worked within the District or have a connection to the District.

Successful candidates will be expected to attend approximately five Committee meetings per year, which take place at the council offices, Desford Road, Leicester LE9 2EP. They will also need to commit sufficient time to read Committee papers in advance of these

meetings, liaise with the Chair and to undertake occasional training alongside the other Committee members.

Independence

A person can only be an independent person if that person:

- Is not a member, co-opted member or officer of the authority, or has been within the last 5 years;
- Is not a member, co-opted member or officer of a parish council of which the authority is the principal authority, or has been within the last 5 years;
- Is not a relative or close friend, of a person within (a) and (b);
- Has submitted an application form in response to an advert for the position at the authority;
- In addition to be eligible for appointment, a person must not be disqualified from holding office as a Member of the Council. Accordingly, any person who is recommended for appointment will be required to confirm that he/she is not disqualified.

The regulations say that a 'relative' means:

- a) the other person's spouse or civil partner;
- b) living with the other person as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners;
- c) a grandparent of the other person;
- d) a lineal descendant of a grandparent of the other person;
- e) a parent, sibling or child of a person within paragraph (a) or (b);
- f) the spouse or civil partner of a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e), or
- g) living with a person within paragraph (c), (d) or (e) as husband and wife or as if they were civil partners.

Selection Criteria

The ideal candidate for the position will:

1. Be willing and able to commit the necessary time to the role;
2. Have up to date skills, knowledge and experience within at least one of the fields covered within Audit & Corporate Governance Committee, i.e. internal audit, risk management, governance, accounting, anti-fraud and corruption;
3. Have good interpersonal skills, including good communication skills both written and oral and the ability to co-operate with others in a committee setting.
4. Have independence of mind, objectivity and impartiality.
5. Contribute proactive, proportionate, independent thought and listen to, and balance, advice;
6. Have a commitment to the general principles governing the conduct of Councillors generally and work to high behavioural standards, demonstrating honesty, probity and integrity;
7. Not be a serving local government officer or councillor;
8. Have no personal, legal or contractual relationship with Blaby District Council (including employees or Members or former staff), or any other relationship / activity which might represent a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest.

Desirable additional criteria are:

1. A suitable professional or management qualification (in internal audit, risk management, governance, accounting or other relevant discipline)
2. An understanding of the complexity of issues surrounding audit, risk management, governance and finance in local government.

3. An understanding of the Council's vision, priorities and objectives
4. An ability to understand complex situations and reports, as well as the statutory background to those reports, and ask appropriate questions of officers.
5. Have a broad range of experience, possibly in public, private, voluntary or charitable sector employment or service including self-employed, employed and voluntary positions.
6. Promotes the work of Audit & Corporate Governance Committee and areas falling under its terms of reference;
7. Have a connection with Blaby District, e.g. resident, workplace, own a business etc.

Remuneration

Co-opted independent members do not receive an allowance but are entitled to claim for reasonable travelling and subsistence expenses in undertaking their role.

Means of assessment

Application form and by interview.

If you are interested in becoming an Independent Member of the Audit & Corporate Governance Committee, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please apply by completing the application form, outlining why you are interested in this opportunity and how your skills and experience relate to the role to: XXXXXXXXX

Selection of candidates will be strictly in accordance with the selection criteria and desirable additional criteria outlined in this pack and will be based on the information contained in your application only, as supported by references. It is suggested therefore that you include information on how you meet the criteria.

Your application will be acknowledged, and you will be advised as to whether you have been selected for interview or not in due course.

Please note that interviews for the role will be held on the XXXXXXXX at XXXXXXXXX

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT AS AN INDEPENDENT MEMBER
OF THE AUDIT & CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

1 PERSONAL DETAILS
TITLE:
FULL NAME:
HOME ADDRESS:
CONTACT TELEPHONE NO:
EMAIL:
2 Have you ever been a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of Blaby District Council or a Councillor, co-opted member or officer of a parish or town council which falls within Blaby District Council?
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give the date on which you ceased to be a Member or employee.</i>
3 Are you related to, or a close friend of, a member or employee of Blaby District Council?
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below</i>
4 Are you or have you ever been a Councillor or officer of any other local authority?
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below.</i>
5 Are you, or have you been a member of a political party?
YES/NO
<i>If the answer to this question is yes, please give details below</i>
6 Please indicate whether there is any matter concerning your own conduct which, if it were generally known, might affect public confidence in your ability to contribute to the work of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.
YES/NO
<i>If your answer to this question is yes, please give details below.</i>
7 Please confirm that you are able to meet the attendance requirements of the role i.e. attending early evening meetings in person at the designated Council venue.
YES/NO

8 Please say why you wish to be considered for the post of Independent Member and what you could offer the Council. Give brief details of your experience (e.g. employment / business / professional /voluntary/ public service) and qualifications, and any other matter which you consider relevant to your suitability for appointment.

Please also explain how you meet the person specification outlined in this application pack.

References: Please give the name, address, and telephone number of two referees who are not related to you and are not members of a town or parish council within Blaby District and who are able to comment on your suitability for appointment. (Your referees will be contacted without further notice to you unless you indicate to the contrary).	
Referee 1	
Name:	
Address	
Contact Email / Number:	
Referee 2	
Name:	
Address	
Contact Email / Number	
Data Protection Act Information from this form will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. In signing it you agree to this data being held and processed and if appointed to the position you also agree to further personal information, including sensitive data (e.g. bank details) being held and processed by Blaby District Council in accordance with the Act.	
DECLARATION	
I wish to be considered for appointment as an Independent Member of the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee and confirm that, if appointed, I will undertake to observe the code of conduct for councillors and co-opted members of Blaby District Council, as adopted by the Council.	
The information which I have given is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief.	
NAME	
DATE	

Please return the completed application form to:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

SUMMARY ACTION PLAN

Ref	Action	Assigned to	Timescale
1	Interviews for co-opted independent members.	Chair, one other cllr of the committee (to be agreed) and one officer of the authority (to be agreed).	September 2023
2	Training plan to be developed to ensure all committee members have a reasonable level of knowledge in the relevant areas.	Working Group	September 2023
3	Review of the Self-Assessment of Good Practice to then consider areas of weakness and improvements required to meet the key principles as set out in the Position Statement.	Working Group	September 2023
4	Review of the annual work plan of the audit committee and align where necessary to the position statement.	Working Group	September 2023
5	Approval of the appointment of the co-opted independent members.	Audit & Corporate Governance Committee	October 2023
6	The Audit Committee produce an annual report on how they complied with the position statement, discharged its responsibilities, and include an assessment of its performance.	Working Group with input from all committee members – ownership of the report to be confirmed.	To be completed for agreement by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee at the April 2024 meeting

Table 1

Potential Training Topics
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewing and approving the Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement;• Reviewing the findings of both Internal and External examinations and ensuring that appropriate action is taken to remedy weaknesses identifies;• Monitoring the effective development and operation of risk management;• Reviewing and monitoring governance arrangements/ Good Governance Framework.• Fraud Awareness

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Blaby District Council

Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting 13 July 2023
Title of Report Internal Audit Annual Report 2022-23
Report Author Shared Service Audit Manager

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The report presents the Internal Audit Annual Report for 2022/23 for the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee notes this report and comments as appropriate.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 To comply with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that the Chief Audit Executive must deliver an annual internal audit opinion on the overall adequacy and efficiency of the Council's framework of governance, risk management and control. This report should be used to inform the Annual Governance Statement.

4.2 Relevant Consultations

Executive Director (S151 Officer) has been consulted with.

4.3 Significant Issues

None

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

- 5.1 No costs or opportunities for savings in the context of this report.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1 There are no risks relating to this report.

7. Other options considered

7.1 Not applicable

8. Other significant issues

8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Annual Report 2022-23

10. Background paper(s)

Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

11. Report author's contact details

Kerry Beavis Shared Service Audit Manager
Kerry.beavis@blaby.gov.uk



INTERNAL AUDIT SHARED SERVICE

Blaby District Council

Internal Audit Annual Report 2022/23

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is the annual report of the Chief Audit Executive (Audit Manager) as required by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS). It covers the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 for Blaby District Council.
- 1.2 This report includes the Audit Manager's annual opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's framework of governance, risk management and control.
- 1.3 This report also includes:
- A summary of internal audit work carried out during 2022/23 which supports the opinion.
 - Issues relevant to the preparation of the Annual Governance Statement.
 - Internal Audit's Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme (QAIP).
 - A statement on conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

2. CHIEF AUDIT EXECUTIVE (AUDIT MANAGER) OPINION 2022/23

- 2.1 In line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards Internal Audit have worked flexibly throughout the year whilst still ensuring a sufficient level of audit coverage to allow me to give an opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control (the control environment). In giving this opinion it should be noted that assurance cannot be absolute.
- 2.2 For the 12 months ended 31 March 2023, I am able to give **reasonable assurance** on the overall control environment. To be consistent with our Internal Audit opinion definitions, this means that there is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the areas audited. This is a positive assurance opinion overall.
- 2.3 My opinion is based on the following:
- All internal audit work undertaken during the year, this includes advisory work as well as assurance, and supports the view on internal control arrangements.
 - Follow up audit work in respect of audit recommendations.
 - My knowledge of the Council's governance and risk management structure and processes.
- 2.4 There have been no impairments to the independence of internal auditors during the year.

3. SUMMARY OF INTERNAL AUDIT WORK DURING 2022/23

- 3.1 The risk based internal audit plan for 2022/23 was presented and approved by the Audit and Standards Committee on 27 April 2022. The plan was developed to provide assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls across a range of financial and organisational areas that were identified as part of the risk-based planning process. Progress against the plan has been reported to Audit and Standards Committee throughout the year as part of the quarterly Internal Audit progress reports.
- 3.2 A summary of the audit opinions given in 2022/23 is detailed in Table 1 below. The opinion for individual audits is included in Appendix A for information, along with a comparison of the work delivered against the audit plan.

Table 1

Opinion	Definition	Number
Substantial	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited	3
Reasonable	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited	10
Limited	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.	2
No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited	-
Total number of audit reports		15

- 3.3 Internal Audit follow up progress against recommendations in line with the timescales agreed at the time of issuing reports. The Audit and Standards Committee is updated on the Council's progress against the recommendations as part of the quarterly Internal Audit progress reports, as well as giving details of ongoing or overdue recommendations. A summary of the recommendation tracking results for 2022/23 is included at Appendix B.

4. ISSUES RELEVANT TO THE PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

- 4.1 Two audit reports have been issued with limited assurance during 2022/13. These should be considered when preparing the Annual Governance Statement:
- Corporate Policy Management
The main areas identified for improvement were around the corporate policy review and publication processes, in particular the updating of HR policies and officer acceptance of these policies.
 - Environmental Health – Houses in Multiple Occupation
The main areas identified for improvement were around the retention of key documents and the supervisory checking process. It must be noted that these were addressed immediately and recommendations have been fully implemented.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (QAIP) FOR INTERNAL AUDIT

- 5.1 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require the QAIP to include internal and external assessments (see Appendix C for more detail).
- 5.2 The internal assessments applicable to 2022/23 include the following:
- The Audit Manager planned all audit engagements and carried out documented reviews of working papers and draft reports prior to issue.
 - Monthly performance review meetings attended by the Audit Manager and the Strategic Directors.
 - Customer satisfaction surveys were sent out to all managers who had an audit in their service area. Four returns for 2022/23 all with overall positive feedback.
 - Update of the Charter in September 2022.
 - Quarterly progress reports to senior management and Audit and Standards Committee which include monitoring of activity and performance.
- 5.3 The PSIAS require external assessments to be conducted at least once every five years. In December 2020 the shared internal audit service had an external quality assessment, and the full report was presented to Audit and Standards Committee on 1 February 2021.
- 5.4 It was the assessor's opinion that Internal Audit at Blaby, Charnwood, and North West Leicestershire Councils **conforms with the PSIAS**.
- 5.5 In addition to delivering the annual audit plan and opinion, Internal Audit have added value in the following ways:

- Supporting and undertaking elements of the pre and post payment assurance checks for the Covid-19 Business Grants.
- Providing ad-hoc advice throughout the year to a wide range of services to help ensure that internal controls are maintained or strengthened.
- Delivering a successful shared service to Blaby District Council and Charnwood Borough Council from 1st April 2020. This adds value to all Councils as the audit team shares learning, expertise and best practice.

6. **CONFORMANCE WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR INTERNAL AUDIT STANDARDS**

- 6.1 The external assessment conducted in December 2020 concluded that there were no significant gaps in compliance.
- 6.2 I can confirm that during 2022/23 the Internal Audit Shared Service conformed to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Appendix A

RESULTS OF INDIVIDUAL AUDIT ASSIGNMENTS AGAINST THE 2022/23 AUDIT PLAN

Audit Area	Type	Planned Days	Actual Days	Status	Assurance Level	Recommendations				Comments
						C	H	M	L	
Workforce Planning	Audit	8	-	Cancelled						Cancelled – this will now be an advisory piece of work during 2023/24.
Policy Management	Audit	12	12	Completed	Limited	-	7	3	-	
Fleet Management	Audit	10	11	Completed	Substantial	-	-	2	-	
Disabled Facilities Grant Determinations	Grant	4	3.5	Completed	N/A					
Building Control	Advisory	2	-	As required						
Leisure Centres Fees & Charges	Audit	8	3	Completed	Substantial	-	-	-	-	
Leisure Centres Contract	Advisory	3	2.5	As required						
Lightbulb	Advisory	2	0.5	As required						
Environmental Permits	Audit	8	16	Completed	Reasonable	-	8	5	-	
Environmental Health - HMO's	Audit	10	10.5	Completed	Limited	-	3	3	-	
Car Parking	Advisory	2	-	As required						
Revenue & Benefits - new system	Advisory	2	-	As required						
Contaminated Land	Audit	6	6	Completed	Reasonable	-	2	-	-	
Key Financial Systems as detailed below										
Benefits	Audit	3	3.5	Completed	Substantial	-	-	1	-	
Council Tax	Audit	4	3.5	Completed	Reasonable	-	1	-	-	
NNDR	Audit	10	8.5	Completed	Reasonable	-	1	-	1	
Income Collection	Audit	4	3	Completed	Reasonable	-	1	-	-	
Creditors	Audit	10	8	Completed	Reasonable	-	-	2	1	
Debtors	Audit	4	3	Completed	Reasonable	-	-	1	-	

Main Accounting	Audit	10	6.5	Completed	Reasonable	-	3	1	-	
HR & Payroll	Audit	4	4	Completed	Reasonable	-	2	7	-	
Treasury Management	Audit	4	3	Completed	Reasonable	-	1	-	-	
Business Grant assurance work, inc NFI	Advisory	10	2	As required						
Service Planning including Performance Management	Audit	10	0.5	Cancelled						Cancelled due to system implementation. Carried to 2023/24 plan
Service Planning including Performance Management	Advisory	2	-	As required						
ICT Partnership	Advisory	2	1	As required						
Business Continuity	Audit	8	7	Completed	Reasonable	-	1	5	1	
LAD 2 – Green Homes Grant	Certification		2.5	Completed	N/A					Addition to the plan.

Recommendations key – see Appendix B.

Appendix B

SUMMARY OF INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOW UP 2022/23

Internal Audit follow up progress against critical, high and medium priority recommendations in line with the timescales agreed at the time of issuing reports. Any overdue recommendations are highlighted to Audit Committee. The table below shows the progress against recommendations made by Internal Audit during 2022/23.

Recommendation Priority	Recommendations Made	Recommendations Implemented	Recommendations Outstanding (In Progress or Not Yet Due)
Critical	-	-	-
High	30	15	15
Medium	30	20	10
Total	60	35	25

Level	Definition
Critical	Recommendations which are of a very serious nature and could have a critical impact on the Council, for example to address a breach in law or regulation that could result in material fines/consequences.
High	Recommendations which are fundamental to the system and require urgent attention to avoid exposure to significant risks.
Medium	Recommendations which, although not fundamental to the system, provide scope for improvements to be made.
Low/Advisory	Recommendations concerning issues which are considered to be of a minor nature, but which nevertheless need to be addressed. Issues concerning potential opportunities for management to improve the operational efficiency and/or effectiveness of the system.

Appendix C

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME 2022-23

Activity	PSIAS	Result/comments	Frequency
External Quality Assessment	1310	December 2020 Assessment - no significant gaps in compliance.	Every 5 years.
Annual Declaration of Interests	1130	Forms completed in April 2022, this includes Code of Ethics and Principles.	Annual
Customer satisfaction surveys	1311	Four returns during 2022/23. All positive overall.	After each audit
Performance indicators reported in progress reports	1311	Performance indicators included in all quarterly reports to senior management and Audit and Corporate Governance Committee.	Quarterly
Improvement actions/continuous improvement	1311	An internal action plan produced for 2022/23 detailing improvement actions which included rolling review of the internal audit service to ensure compliance with standards.	Ongoing
Review of all audit engagements and reports	1311, 2340	All audit engagements and reports are reviewed by another auditor to ensure compliance with PSIAS in terms of meeting audit objectives and quality.	Every audit
Monthly performance reporting and meetings	1311	Monthly performance meetings with both Executive Directors.	Monthly
Annual review of internal audit charter	1000	Shared Service Charter updated with only minor amendments and reported to Audit & Corporate Governance Committee in October 2022. Annual review takes place in September each year.	Annual
Performance and development review process for staff and training and development records.	1200	All review meetings with team have taken place and the training and development recorded within system for all training and development identified and completed. Officers recording their CPD in line with their professional body requirements do not need to duplicate records.	Bi- annual review meetings

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Blaby District Council

Audit & Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting	13 July 2023
Title of Report	Internal Audit Progress Report 2023/24 Q1
Report Author	Shared Service Audit Manager

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the progress against the Internal Audit plan for 2023/24 and to highlight incidences of any significant control failings or weaknesses that have been identified between 1 April 2023 and 30 June 2023 (Q1).

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the Internal Audit progress report and comment as appropriate.

3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended

- 3.1 To keep the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee informed of progress and recent Internal Audit findings and recommendations, in line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards requirements.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee to approve the audit plan and monitor progress against it. They should receive periodic reports on the work of internal audit.

The Audit and Corporate Governance approved the 2023/24 audit plan on 17 April 2023. This is the first progress report for 2023/24.

4.2 Progress Report

The Internal Audit Progress Report for the period from 01 April 2023 to 30 June 2023 (Q1) is attached at Appendix 1.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

The Senior Leadership Team were presented with the report at their meeting on 13 June 2023.

4.4 Significant Issues

None.

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

5.1 No costs or opportunities for savings in the context of this report.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

6.1 There are no risks relating to this report.

7. Other options considered

7.1 Not applicable.

8. Other significant issues

8.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

9. Appendix

9.1 Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Progress Report 2023/24 Q1.

10. Background paper(s)

Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

11. Report author's contact details

Kerry Beavis Shared Service Audit Manager
Kerry.beavis@blaby.gov.uk



INTERNAL AUDIT SHARED SERVICE

Blaby District Council

Internal Audit Progress Report 2023/24 Q1

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Internal Audit is provided through a shared service arrangement led by North West Leicestershire District Council and delivered to Blaby District Council and Charnwood Borough Council. The assurances received through the Internal Audit programme are a key element of the assurance framework required to inform the Annual Governance Statement. The purpose of this report is to highlight progress against the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan up to 30 June 2023.

2 Internal Audit Plan Update

- 2.1 Work on the 2023/24 audit plan has commenced, with the Community Triggers and Service Planning & Performance Management well underway and the engagement planning for IT Asset Management in progress. The 2023/24 audit plan is included at Appendix A for information.

The audits due to take place in Q2 are:

- Temporary Accommodation
- Capital Programme Management
- DFG Determinations
- Budget Monitoring & Reporting
- Key Financial systems

- 2.2 Since the last update report three final audit reports have been issued which completes the work on the 2022/23 audit plan. The following 2022/23 audit opinions were issued and the executive summaries are included in Appendix B:

- Fleet management – Substantial
- Business Continuity – Reasonable
- Contaminated Land - Reasonable

3 Internal Audit Recommendations

- 3.1 Internal Audit monitor and follow up all critical, high and medium priority recommendations. There are ten extended recommendations but no overdue recommendations. Appendix C details the extended recommendations.

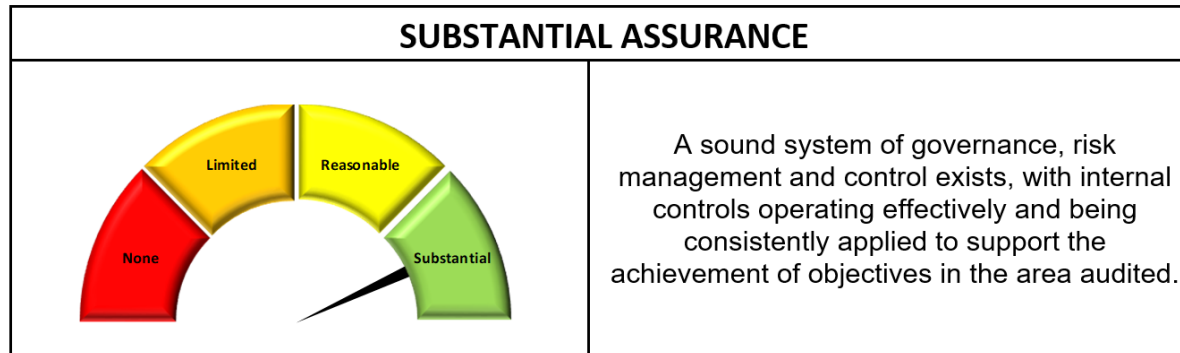
4 Internal Audit Performance Indicators

- 4.1 Progress against the agreed Internal Audit performance targets are documented in Appendix D. There are no areas of concern at this stage.

2023/24 AUDIT PLAN PROGRESS TO 30 JUNE 2023

Audit Area	Type	Planned Days	Actual Days	Status	Assurance Level	Recommendations				Comments
						C	H	M	L	
Workforce Planning	Advisory	4		As required						
ITrent	Advisory	2		As required						
Asset Management	Audit	10		Q4						
Parks & Open Spaces	Audit	10		Q3						
Disabled Facilities Grant Determinations	Grant	4		Q2						
Building Control	Audit	10		Q4						
Sport & Physical Activity	Audit	7		Q4						
Lightbulb	Advisory	5		Q3						
Community Triggers	Audit	10	3	In progress						
Temporary Accommodation	Audit	10	0.5	In progress						
Key Financial Systems	Audit	44		Q2/Q3						
Budget Monitoring & Reporting	Audit	8		Q2						
IT Asset Management	Audit	8	0.5	In progress						
Transformation projects	Advisory	5		As required						
Corporate Project Management	Audit	10		Q3						
Service Planning including Performance Management	Audit	10	7	In progress						
Democratic Services	Audit	10		Q3						
UKSPF	Audit	8		Q3						
Capital Programme Management	Audit	10		Q2						

Fleet Management



Key Findings

Areas of positive assurance identified during the audit:

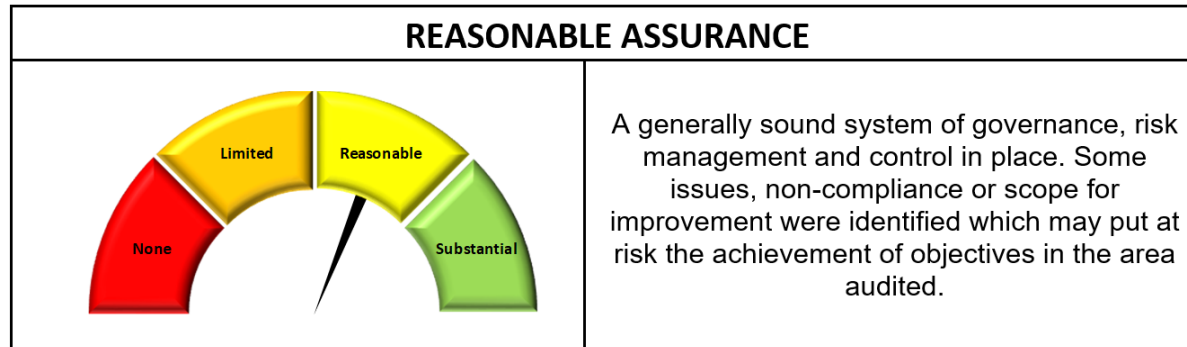
- Procedures are in place, updated as required and available to all relevant staff.
- Vehicles are purchased in accordance with the vehicle replacement strategy and corporate procedures.
- Daily vehicle checks are completed, recorded and monitored.
- Arrangements are in place to ensure defects are reported and addressed.
- Drivers' hours are recorded and monitored in accordance with legislation and licence details are regularly checked.
- Taxi vehicle inspections had been completed as expected.

The main area identified for improvement is:

- The taxi vehicle inspection payment procedure.

Recommendation	Priority	Response/Agreed Action	Officer Responsible	Implementation Date
Details of all relevant contracts are entered onto the Contracts Register.	Medium	Agreed.	Transport Services Manager	30.04.23
The liability and recovery arrangements for unpaid inspection fees are formally agreed and documented.	Medium	Agreed.	Licensing and Environmental Health Team Leader and Transport Services Manager	30.04.23

Business Continuity



Key Findings

Areas of positive assurance identified during the audit:

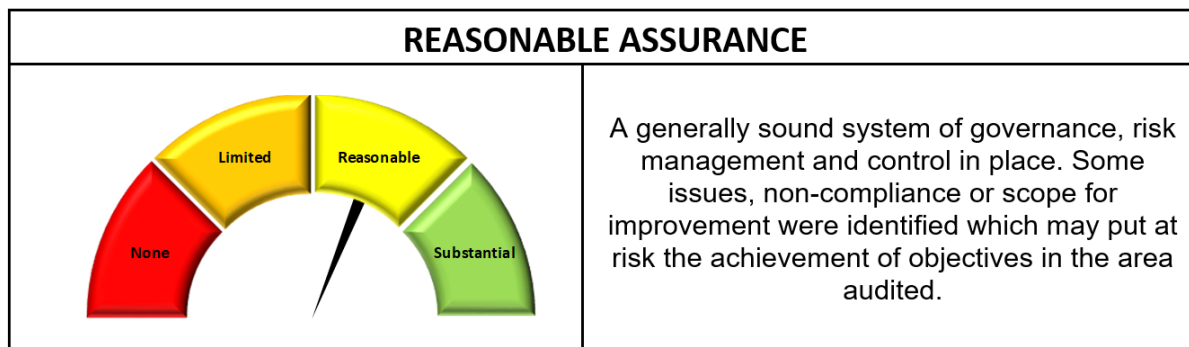
- Critical services have been identified.
- Arrangements are in place to review and update key documents each year.

The main area identified for improvement is:

The testing of business continuity arrangements.

Recommendation	Priority	Response/Agreed Action	Officer Responsible	Implementation Date
1. The information published on iBlaby is reviewed and updated on a regular basis, with links being provided to relevant documentation.	Medium	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	30.04.23
2. Previous versions of the policy and business continuity plans are either removed or archived outside of the shared area of the 'N' drive.	Low	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	30.04.23
3. A reconciliation is completed as part of the annual refresh process to check that all plans have been produced as expected.	Medium	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	30.04.23 and annually thereafter.
4. Business continuity arrangements for critical services are tested periodically and the details and outcome of each exercise together with any lessons learned are recorded in full.	High	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	30.06.23 (for a programme to be in place).
5. The Leaver Checklist for Managers is updated to include a specific reference to the removal of personal contact details from any group messenger facility.	Medium	Agreed.	HR Services Manager	Completed 06.04.23.
6. Managers are reminded of the retention and access requirements, including the facility to access documents through Resilience Direct, as part of the annual refresh process.	Medium	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	30.04.23 and annually thereafter.
7. Consideration is given to utilising the Pentana system to store, manage and monitor the completion of Business Continuity plans.	Medium	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	30.06.23

Contaminated Land



Key Findings

Areas of positive assurance identified during the audit:

- Land contamination risks are managed appropriately for new developments.
- Staff are relevantly trained.

The main areas identified for improvement are:

- The Contaminated Land Strategy and inspection programme.

Recommendation	Priority	Response/Agreed Action	Officer Responsible	Implementation Date
1. The draft Contaminated Land Strategy is finalised, approved and published as required.	High	Agreed.	Environmental Services Manager	30.09.23
2. A proactive inspection programme is developed to support the Contaminated Land Strategy.	High	Agreed.	Environmental Services Manager	31.12.23

Audit Opinion Definitions

Opinion	Definition
Substantial	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exists, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Reasonable	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
Limited	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
No Assurance	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

Recommendation Priority

Level	Definition
Critical	Recommendations which are of a very serious nature and could have a critical impact on the Council, for example to address a breach in law or regulation that could result in material fines/consequences.
High	Recommendations which are fundamental to the system and require urgent attention to avoid exposure to significant risks.
Medium	Recommendations which, although not fundamental to the system, provide scope for improvements to be made,
Low	Recommendations concerning issues which are considered to be of a minor nature, but which nevertheless need to be addressed or potential opportunities for management to improve the operational efficiency and/ or effectiveness of the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER – EXTENDED RECOMMENDATIONS AS AT 30 JUNE 2023

Appendix C

Audit Year	Audit	Recommendation	Priority	Response/ Agreed Action	Responsible Officer	Due Date	1st Follow up comments	Ext Date	Second Follow up comments	Ext Date	Further Management update	Further Ext Date
2020/21	Safeguarding	17. Consideration should be given to adding DBS requirements to the relevant position within the HR/Payroll system to ensure that all posts that require a DBS check have been identified and that requirements for mandatory DBS checks are not overlooked.	Medium	Agreed.	HR Services Manager	Dec-21	Nov-21 - Will review January 2022 along with policy updates.	Jan-22	Mar-22: iTrent procurement underway. Will review ability to record in iTrent when procurement and any related changes confirmed.	Mar-22	iTrent procurement being finalised. No implementation dates available yet.	Sep-23
2021/22	Hospital Housing Enablement	1. A formal procurement process should be completed for the clean and clear service in order to comply with the contract procedure rules and legislation.	High	Agreed.	Housing Enablement Team Leader	Nov-21	Dec-21: Due to recent issues of low staffing numbers within the team it was agreed with the Group Manager that the action for the procurement should be pushed back until the new year.	Feb-22	Mar-22: The formal procurement process is ongoing and is a shared procurement framework between HET, Lightbulb and the Safespaces Project. The Lightbulb Service Manager is leading on this and working with Welland. An exemption form to cover HET for the interim period whilst this process is ongoing will be submitted shortly.	May-22	An exemption agreement has been put in place with current provider while a full procurement exercise is undertaken with a view to having a new contract in place from April 2023. March 23 - It is planned to start work on the procurement exercise from April 2023, the HET Service Manager will be leading on this and will need to secure input from colleagues working on safespaces to do this	Apr-23 Sept-23 Apr-24
2020/21	HR and Payroll	1. The Recruitment Policy and procedure notes should be reviewed and updated in order to provide for applicants that have previously worked for the Council through an agency or those with non-traditional work histories.	Medium	Agreed.	Strategic HR Manager and HR Services Manager	Sept-21	Nov-21 - Reviewed approach to references in the depot where agency/non-traditional work histories have been more prevalent. Trialled a different reference process (noted in email). Review efficacy and where relevant update corporate policy by end January 2022.	Jan-22	Jan-22: Update received from HR - To be allocated within HR team to review actions in depot and update policy if relevant. Timeframe and person undertaking work to be updated at next month's review. Mar-22: Update from HR - Allocated within HR team. Timeframe tbc.	Feb-22	To form part of the policy work that is a priority for the incoming HR Transformation Manager. June-23 This point is being incorporated in the overall review of the Recruitment Policy.	Sep-23
2020/21	Safeguarding	16. The process for obtaining and checking references should be strengthened in accordance with the Guidance for Safer Recruitment produced by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Board and the Council's Recruitment Procedure should be updated to reflect this.	Medium	Agreed.	HR Services Manager	Dec-21	Nov-21 - Will update along with action 12 above.	Jan-22	Jan-22: Undertaking review and review started Jan 2022. March 22 - Draft almost finished of DBS process and guidance. Feedback obtained from HR. Next steps feedback from Safeguarding Lead and Audit as agreed.	Mar-22	Following DBS Policy finalising practice re safer recruitment will be implemented.	Apr-23 Sept-23

2021/22	S106 Agreements	1. The existing SPD should be reviewed and updated to ensure that contributions sought are in accordance with current legislation, guidance, local policies and construction costs.	High	Agreed.	Development Strategy Manager	Oct-22	09.06.22: The DSM advised IA that the timescale has slipped due to reduced capacity within the team. The revised timetable is: • Internal consultation with Planning & Legal starting this week and running for 3-4 weeks. • Report to September Council with 6 week external consultation to follow • Adoption at January Council at earliest	Jan 23	Oct-22: Report did not go to Sep-22 Council. Timetable has slipped due to vacancies within the team and additional workload due to several new Neighbourhood Plans, the timing of which is outside of the Council's control. Jan-23: A workshop is scheduled to discuss the SPD internally but it is expected that they will not be consulting ahead of the local elections so it will be June-23 at the earliest.	Jul-23		-
2022/23	Environmental Permits	2. The ongoing development of the IDOX module should include the facility to record the annual subsistence charge and invoicing details.	Medium	Agreed.	Senior Technical Officer and Performance and Systems Officer	Dec-22	30.01.23: Update received from ESM - The team are continuing to work with the Uniform team on configuration of the system. Training day booked with Idox for 02.03.23. Extended implementation date agreed.	Mar-23	Apr-23: The records do not show any details of the annual subsistence fees. May-23: The facility is now available but advised that the annual subsistence charges could not be correctly imported onto the system. This is still being worked on. Further extension agreed.	May-23	June-23: Fees to be recorded once Risk Assessments are completed for each process. Additionally, work is being carried out with the software team to streamline schedule of fees as there are two lists within the system currently.	Jul-23
2022/23	Environmental Permits	5. The system records for each permit should be reviewed in full and updated as required to correctly reflect the current status of each permit, all other relevant details, and ensure that all supporting documentation is attached.	High	Agreed.	Performance and Systems Officer	Dec-22	30.01.23: Update received from ESM - Records have been updated by the team following training given by the Uniform team but there are still queries over some of the data due to the set up of the Uniform system which will be addressed in the training on 02.03.23. Extended implementation date agreed.	Mar-23	Mar-23: Advised that the inspection updates are still in progress and completion date set for this with the team. Apr-23: A number of records have now been updated but some supporting docs are still outstanding. The next inspection due is not being recorded on the IVA so that the process can be monitored using the workflow system. May-23: Confirmed that some officers have now fully updated their records, but others still have work to do. Further extension agreed.	May-23	June-23: All records updated by officers to include inspections completed, unable to risk assess and add fees until the risk assessment is working correctly.	Jul-23
2022/23	Environmental Permits	12. Performance should be formally monitored and recorded.	High	Agreed.	Environmental Services Manager	Dec-22	Feb-23 - This action is still in progress, officers are undertaking a number of joint inspections to train some of the newer team members and are checking on quality and consistency of inspections at the same time. The Environmental Services Manager checks 10% of each officer's casework (from the system records for the previous month) as part of the monthly 121 process. Extended implementation date agreed.	May-23	Jun 23: Procedure for adding information to uniform has been issued to the team and a number of joint visits have taken place to ensure consistency across the team. Extended until end of July to allow for risk assessment information to be included.	Jul-23		
2022/23	Business Continuity	3. A reconciliation is completed as part of the annual refresh process to check that all plans have been produced as expected.	Medium	Agreed.	Neighbourhood Services and Assets Group Manager	Apr-23 and annually thereafter.	May-23: Extension.	May-23	June-23: this is in progress and expected to be completed by the end of Q1	June-23		

2022/23	Policy Management	5. The Democratic Services Report Writing Toolkit should be reviewed and updated, and training provided to staff if required to ensure compliance.	High	Agreed The Toolkit will be updated.	Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer	May-23	June-23: The Toolkit has yet to be updated, due to staff sickness and post-Election workload.	Aug-23				
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2023/24 INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE

Performance Measure	Position as at 30.06.23	Comments
Achievement of the Internal Audit Plan	0%	Four audits in progress.
Quarterly Progress Reports to Management Team and Audit and Standards Committee	On track	
Follow up testing completed in month agreed in final report	On track	
Annual Opinion Report	Achieved	
100% Customer Satisfaction with the Internal Audit Service	100%	Based on four returns for 2022/23.
Compliance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards	Conforms	External inspection carried November 2020 which confirmed that we conform to the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

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