



Harlow District Council

Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

Contents

Narrative Report.....	3
Statement of Accounts 2024/25.....	14
Statement of Responsibilities.....	15
Expenditure and Funding Analysis.....	17
Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.....	18
Movement In Reserves Statement.....	20
Balance Sheet	23
Cash Flow Statement.....	24
Notes to the Accounts	25
Housing Revenue Account.....	87
Collection Fund Account.....	94
Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations.....	97
Independent Auditors Report and Certificate to the Members of Harlow District Council...	103
Annual Governance Statement.....	108

NARRATIVE REPORT

Introduction

Welcome to Harlow District Council's Statement of Accounts for the financial year ending 31 March 2025.

This annual publication outlines the Council's financial position and performance. As a statutory document, it details the Council's income and expenditure, cash flows, and balance sheet – providing transparency and accountability to residents, businesses, and government. While some elements of the full Statement are technical in nature, this Narrative Report offers an accessible overview of the Council's activities, financial management, and future direction.

Harlow is an ambitious, strategically located New Town in West Essex, with a proud history and an even more exciting future. Commissioned in 1947 as a Mark One post-war New Town, Harlow has grown into a thriving community of around 100,000 residents living in approximately 40,000 homes. Designed by Sir Frederick Gibberd, the town's unique structure of self-contained neighbourhoods, green spaces and local centres remains one of its defining features.

Harlow is exceptionally well connected. It is served by two M11 motorway junctions, giving rapid access to London, Cambridge, the M25 and the wider UK road network. Two railway stations offer up to six trains per hour to London Liverpool Street (30 mins), Oxford Circus (45 mins) and Cambridge (40 mins). Just 10 miles to the north, London Stansted Airport – serving 28 million passengers annually – is accessible in 19 minutes by train, making Harlow a gateway town to national and international destinations.

The town is at the heart of the UK Innovation Corridor, a region driving the UK's knowledge economy. Harlow is home to the Harlow Innovation Park, an Enterprise Zone attracting billions of pounds in investment and hosting major global firms. It houses the UK's most powerful supercomputer, the world-leading Kao Data campus, and is now recognised as the number one tech hub location in the UK.

Now celebrating its 77th year, Harlow is entering a bold new chapter of transformation and growth which the Council is leading.

In 2017, the Government designated Harlow as part of the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) – a nationally significant programme of sustainable and inclusive growth. This visionary initiative will deliver 23,000 new homes and 20,000 new jobs, making Harlow the fastest-growing place in the UK – expanding at twice the rate of Oxford and five times that of Manchester. Once delivered, Harlow will be larger than Cambridge, Exeter and Guildford.

This rebirth is underpinned by pioneering infrastructure, including the UK's first full Sustainable Transport Corridor, and major Government and private investment. Over the past three years alone, the Council has secured £63 million in Government funding and attracted hundreds of millions in private sector investment, supporting the regeneration of Harlow Town Centre into a vibrant mixed-use destination featuring a new Arts and Cultural Quarter, Transport Interchange, and new public spaces.

To lead this transformation, the Council has formed the Harlow Regeneration Partnership with Hill Group, the UK's leading housebuilder. This partnership will deliver thousands of new homes and regenerate key estates and neighbourhoods across the town.

Harlow Council is a district-level authority delivering a wide range of services to residents and businesses. Based at the Civic Centre in the Water Gardens, the Council employs around 400 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. As the largest social housing landlord per capita in the East of England, the Council manages over 9,200 tenanted homes and 2,500 leaseholds, with approximately 30% of the town's homes being social housing.

NARRATIVE REPORT

The Council also wholly owns HTS (Harlow Trading Services) – a Local Authority Trading Company that carries out housing repairs, street cleaning, and grounds maintenance on the Council's behalf. HTS employs around 325 FTE staff, with the Council as its sole shareholder. In 2024/25, a significant programme of transformation of HTS began focussed on reducing cost, improving efficiency and improving service delivery outcomes.

In 2024, following a Corporate Peer Challenge by the Local Government Association (LGA) and a subsequent follow-up review, Harlow Council was named the second most improved council in the UK at the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards 2024. This reflects the Council's commitment to continuous improvement, innovation, and delivery.

Internally, a comprehensive restructuring of the Council's management framework has been completed, leading to the creation of new directorates, new senior appointments, and strengthened governance processes – ensuring the Council is well-placed to deliver for the people of Harlow.

Financial Context

The Council has an annual net General Fund expenditure of £14.927 million and through its Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is the landlord for over 9,200 properties and over 2,500 leasehold properties at a gross cost of over £50,497 million. The Council currently delivers an annual capital investment programme of approximately £71.233 million.

The services it provides affect the lives of everybody who lives in, works in or visits Harlow. Over the past year, the focus has been on significantly improving service standards and delivery which has been coupled with greater investment into services.

The Government core funding settlement for 2024/25 was slightly above that in the previous financial year and the Council froze its level of Council Tax for 2024/25 as it has each year since 2022/23.

The macroeconomic climate in 2024/25 has proved challenging, as it has for all local authorities.

Financial information, including the Council's budgets, sources of income, and the budget gaps projected by the Council is contained within the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. This can be found on the Council's website at:

www.harlow.gov.uk/your-council/spending-and-performance/budget

Revenue spending - General Fund 2024/25

Prior to the start of the new financial year each year the Council approves its annual revenue budget.

The costs of providing services are monitored against this budget. This budget is also used to determine the Council's budget requirement for Council Tax setting purposes. Throughout the year the budget is reviewed to take account of changing circumstances such as policy changes and the impact of internal and external factors affecting operating cost and income levels.

The Council set a budget for spending on General Fund services in 2024/25 of £14.927 million in February 2024. The Council did not make a Surplus on the General Fund after technical adjustments between the accounting and funding basis.

NARRATIVE REPORT

The table below summarises the outturn position for the Council's General Fund.

General Fund Outturn - 2024/25	Original Estimate £'000	Revised Estimate £'000	Actual £'000	Variance to Revised £'000
Council Services				
Corporate Services & Improvement	1,579	1,604	1,399	(206)
Culture & Community	2,306	2,322	2,316	(6)
Environment	4,928	4,952	4,541	(411)
Executive Office	2,241	2,284	2,416	132
Facilities & Assets	(3,884)	(3,872)	(4,733)	(861)
Finance	1,264	1,335	1,725	390
Housing Operations (People) General Fund	1,299	1,317	2,167	850
Human Resources & Organisational Development	356	424	439	15
Legal & Democratic Services	695	777	630	(146)
Planning & Garden Town	629	627	986	359
Public Protection	1,239	1,301	1,580	279
Regeneration	545	553	1,000	447
Net Service Expenditure	13,196	13,624	14,467	843
Net Interest Payable	(378)	(378)	563	941
MRP	1,737	1,737	1,307	(431)
Other Operating Expenditure	212	-	(144)	(144)
Other Operating income	(975)	(975)	(867)	108
	13,792	14,009	15,326	1,317
Transfers to/(from) Reserves	1,134	918	2,891	1,973
Net Spending Requirement	14,927	14,927	18,217	3,290
Total Funding	(14,927)	(14,927)	(18,217)	(3,290)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit as at 31 March 2025	0	0	0	0

General Fund Budget Variations (Actual Against Revised Estimate)

During 2024/25 the Council's total net service expenditure on its General Fund was £14.467 million (£14.169 million 2023/24), which was offset by income from Council Tax and Government Grants.

Key variances include:

Reduced income from Car Parks	£0.140m
Reduced cost of Civic Centre	(£0.275m)
Reduced cost of Legal Services	(£0.164m)
Additional income from The Harvey Centre	(£0.462m)
Increased Planning staffing costs and reduced income	£0.360m
Net cost of Housing Benefits scheme	£0.433m
Reduced Refuse inflation & increased green and bulky waste income	(£0.712m)
Reduced bad debts provision	(£0.148m)
Increased Interest payable / Reduced interest receivable	£0.941m
Increased cost of Homelessness	£0.995m
Reduced Minimum Revenue Provision	(£0.431m)
Reduced cost of IT Services	(£0.276m)
Other variations	(£0.401m)

NARRATIVE REPORT

The General Fund Balance as at 31 March 2025 stands at £3.968 million. This continues to compare favourably with the Council's recommended minimum working balance of £2.5 million.

The purpose of the General Fund is to enable the Council to hold sufficient resources to help both protect itself financially into the future and to protect the services it delivers to Harlow.

Revenue spending - Housing Revenue Account 2024/25

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a ring-fenced account. The HRA separately identifies the Council's statutory landlord function, as a provider of social housing under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The Council set a revised gross expenditure budget of £59.271 million on HRA services. This was offset by a planned revenue income budget of £59.935 million, to leave a planned surplus of £0.664 million. The following table summarises the updated outturn position:

Housing Revenue Account Outturn - 2024/25	Original Budget	Revised Estimate	Actual	Variance to Revised
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
General Management	13,656	13,656	13,449	(207)
Special Services	9,479	9,479	9,971	492
Repairs & Maintenance	13,404	13,404	13,115	(289)
Rents, Rates & Taxes and Other Charges	104	104	228	124
Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts	443	443	119	(324)
Supporting People Transitional Arrangements	1	1	1	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	0	0	0	0
Depreciation & Impairment of Non-Current Assets	13,410	13,410	12,140	(1,270)
Total Spending for Year	50,497	50,497	49,023	(1,474)
Income				
Dwelling Rents	(51,936)	(51,936)	(51,872)	64
Non-Dwelling Rents	(1,074)	(1,074)	(1,090)	(16)
Other Rents	(80)	(80)	(136)	(56)
Charges for Services & Facilities	(6,437)	(6,437)	(5,977)	460
Total Income for Year	(59,527)	(59,527)	(59,075)	452
Net income for HRA services	(9,030)	(9,030)	(10,052)	(1,022)
Interest payable and similar charges	8,462	8,462	7,298	(1,164)
Interest and investment income	(407)	(407)	(1,184)	(777)
HRA share of Other Operating Income and Expenditure	8,055	8,055	6,114	(1,941)
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	311	311	(198)	(509)
Net (Surplus)/Deficit on HRA as at 31 March 2025	(664)	(664)	(4,136)	(3,472)

It can be seen from the above table that in 2024/25 the net variation in HRA income and expenditure was a favourable £3.472 million.

Consequently, the amount of bad debt provision and reduction in support costs are contributing to the budget variances (underspend), however the predominate reason for the favourable variance,

NARRATIVE REPORT

was reduced depreciation, increased interest and investment income due to the higher than expected capital receipts and the reduced cost of borrowing to fund the capital programme.

Summary of key variances on the HRA include:

- Rents (£64k Adverse)
 - Cost of Homelessness (£596k Adverse)
 - Transfer to Reserves (£509k Favourable)
 - Other Minor Variations (£198k Favourable)
 - Support Costs (£328k Favourable)
 - Provision for bad debts (£324k Favourable)
 - Depreciation (£1.270m Favourable)
 - Leaseholder Service charges (£438k Adverse)
 - Interest Charges (£1.164m Favourable)
 - Interest on revenue balances (£777k Favourable)
- The council completed 352 homeless assessments and prevented around 29% of households from becoming homeless enabling to assist in securing a home for longer than six months.
 - Repairs and maintenance are predominantly delivered by HTS Property and Environment Ltd (HTS), in addition to some external companies, which provide specialist maintenance services.

Capital spending 2024/25

In its capital investment programme aligned with both General Fund and Housing services, the Council incurred expenditure totalling £71.233 million in 2024/25 against an approved programme of £93.191 million. Schemes to the value of £23.101 million are to be carried forward for works due to be undertaken or completed during 2025/26. Housing schemes included:

Housing Capital Programme - 2024/25	Expenditure £000s
Core Programme	
HTS	8,428
External Works	5,322
Damp & Structural Works	1,675
Other Works	8,362
Fire Safety & Compliance	5,084
Energy Efficiency Works	691
Housing IT	183
Garage Demolition Programme	1,084
Total Core Programme	30,829
Property Conversion New Build Programme	754 12,861
Total Housing Capital Programme	44,444
Financed by:	
Major Repairs Reserve	12,140
Capital Receipts	12,861
Other grants and contributions	1,548
Borrowing	17,895
Total Funding	44,444

NARRATIVE REPORT

Non-housing schemes included:

Non-Housing Capital Programme - 2024/25	Expenditure £000s
Property Services	
Latton Bush Centre	677
Commercial Properties	889
Highways & Car Parks	214
Drainage Works	37
Community Buildings	410
Other Public Schemes	31
Civic Centre	1,339
Garage Refurbishments	142
Total Property Services	3,740
Other Services	
Culture & Communities	395
Corporate Services & Improvement	177
Environment	1,185
Executive Office	120
Legal & Democratic Services	15
Public Protection	56
Regeneration	1,154
Total Core Programme	6,844
Acquisitions	12,645
Council House Building Programme	99
Harlow Innovation Park	2,410
Levelling Up Fund	541
Towns Fund	4,249
Total Specific Projects	19,944
Total Non-Housing Capital Programme	26,789
Financed by:	
Capital Receipts	2,721
Direct Revenue Contribution	157
Other grants and contributions	6,214
Borrowing	17,697
Total Funding	26,789

Internal Capital Financing

The Council can borrow to fund capital expenditure where prudent and affordable to do so, either from external sources such as the Public Works Loan Board, or from internal resources (known as internal borrowing which is a temporary measure).

Funding the Capital Programme

In 2024/25 the total capital programme was £71.233 million (General Fund £26.789 million and Housing Capital Programme £44.444 million). The breakdown of the financing can be found within the Capital Spending tables above. The Complete Programme and its financing are shown in the table below.

NARRATIVE REPORT

Capital Programme Financing - 2024/25	Expenditure £000s
Housing Capital Programme	44,444
Non Housing Capital Programme	26,789
Total Capital Programme	71,233
Financed by:	
Capital Receipts	2,721
Capital Receipts (HRA)	12,861
Direct Revenue Contribution	157
Major Repairs Reserve	12,140
Other grants and contributions	7,762
Borrowing (HRA)	17,895
Borrowing	17,697
Total Funding	71,233

Borrowing Facilities

The Council's normal source of external borrowing is the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB), a division of HM Treasury and a facility unique to the public sector. Whilst the projections for the non-housing capital programme are for an underlying need to borrow, the Council's policy is to use the proceeds from the sale of assets (referred to as capital receipts) as its first funding source to fund the programme. Proceeds from sales remain limited due to present economic conditions and their impact on the property market.

The Council has again decided to borrow internally supported by short term cash flow borrowing where required. Future capital receipts will be used to offset this internal borrowing. In the medium term the financial strategy assumes there will be a need to borrow externally as the disposal of assets and associated receipts become fewer and less predictable.

Current Assets and Current Liabilities

The level of current assets reported in the balance sheet has increased from £26.524 million at 31 March 2024 to £31.416 million as at 31 March 2025, a increased of £4.892 million. The most significant movements were:

- An increase in cash and cash equivalents of £4.256 million.
- An decrease in the level of assets held for sale balances of £2.354 million.

Current liabilities have increased from £83.495 million as at 31 March 2024 to £125.182 million as at 31 March 2025. This is largely represented by an increase in short-term Borrowing of £42.419 million due to property acquisitions and a decrease in sundry creditors, as shown the financial statements.

Other Long-Term Liabilities - Pension Fund

Pension Fund liabilities have decreased from £5.299 million as at 31 March 2024 to £4.627 million as at 31 March 2025.

Going Concern

The Council has prepared the 2024/25 Accounts on a going concern basis. This is on the grounds that local authorities cannot be created or dissolved without statutory prescription and it would therefore not be appropriate for their financial statements to be prepared on anything other than a going concern basis.

Performance Management

Central Government requires all Councils to collect and report data relating to their function as a Local Authority in areas such as waste, planning, benefits and housing.

The Council monitors its performance against its corporate missions through its Performance Management Framework. The Framework sets out the mechanisms for performance management within the Council, which utilises a range of tools to assist staff and Councillors in gathering and reporting on its performance data. Outcomes are formally reported to Councillors within the Performance, Finance and Risk (PFR) Report which are presented to every Cabinet meeting.

The Council's missions and priorities are set out in its Corporate Plan 2024-2028 available on the Council's website.

To view the Council performance data and reports, please visit our website at <https://www.harlow.gov.uk/your-council/spending-and-performance/performance>

Explanation of the contents of the Statement of Accounts

Set out below are more detailed explanations relating to each of the main core elements of the Statement of Accounts, to aid further your understanding of what each key statement represents and what it can tell you regarding the Council's financial position.

Councils' accounts are prepared in accordance with proper accounting practices defined by the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 ("The Code"). The Code specifies the accounting principles and practices required to present a 'true and fair' view of a council's financial position, financial performance and cash flows. It requires councils to prepare their financial statements in the manner prescribed by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). The IASB sets out the concepts underlying the preparation and presentation of the statements for the benefit of external users of the accounts. However, if an accounting treatment is prescribed by law, it overrides accounting concepts set by the IASB, if different.

[Statement of Responsibilities](#)

Councils are required to set out the respective responsibilities of the Council and of the Director (Finance) (Section 151 Officer) in relation to the accounts.

[Movement in Reserves Statement](#)

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

[Expenditure and Funding Analysis](#)

NARRATIVE REPORT

The analysis shows how funding available to the Council for the year (from Government grants, rents, Council Tax and Business Rates) has been used in providing services compared to those resources consumed or earned by the Council in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the Council's services. The income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

[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 and rents. The Council raises taxation and rents to cover expenditure in accordance with statutory requirements; this may differ from the accounting cost. The taxation position is shown in both the Movement in Reserves Statement and the Expenditure and Funding Analysis.

[Balance Sheet](#)

The Balance Sheet shows the value of assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council. Reserves are reported in two categories. The first category is usable reserves - those reserves that the Council 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 which can only be used to fund capital expenditure or repay debt). The second category is unusable reserves - those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. It includes reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (such as the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to provide services if the assets were 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](#)

This statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the year. The statement shows how the Council 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 indicates the extent to which the operations of the Council are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the users of services provided by the Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Council's future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital to the Council (i.e. borrowing).

[Housing Revenue Account \(HRA\)](#)

The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and Government grants. Authorities charge rents to cover expenditure in accordance with the legislative framework; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis upon which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement.

[Collection Fund Accounts](#)

The Collection Fund is an "agent's" statement reflecting the Council's statutory obligation as a billing authority 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 (NDR, also known as Business Rates).

NARRATIVE REPORT

Group Accounts

The Code requires local authorities to consider all their interests with external bodies and to prepare a full set of group financial statements where they have material interests in subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures. Harlow Council is the sole shareholder in the HTS Ltd. Company and group financial statements have therefore been included within the Statement of Accounts in accordance with IFRS 10. The Group Accounts comprise the Movement in Reserves Statement; the Comprehensive and Income Expenditure Statement; the Balance Sheet; the Cash Flow Statement and associated notes.

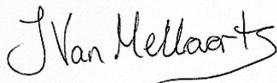
Conclusion

I would like to thank Finance staff and the staff in other service areas for their work in preparing these Statements. I hope the information is helpful in allowing you to have a clear understanding of how the Council's money has been spent in 2024/25.

If you would like to find out more about the Council's finances, including its budgets and earlier years' accounts, you can:

- visit our website at www.harlow.gov.uk/your-council/spending-and-performance
- contact me by e-mail at jacqui.vanmellaerts@harlow.gov.uk
- write to me at:

Harlow District Council
Civic Centre
The Water Gardens
Harlow
Essex
CM20 1WG



Jacqueline Van Mellaerts CPFA
Director – Finance (Section 151 Officer)
26 February 2026

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2024/25

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council's Responsibilities

The Council is required to:

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

The Section 151 Officer's Responsibilities

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

In preparing this Statement of Accounts, the Section 151 Officer has:

- selected suitable accounting policies and applied them consistently;
- made judgements and estimates that were reasonable and prudent; and
- complied with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.

The Section 151 Officer has also:

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

Certification by the Section 151 Officer

The Statement of Accounts presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Harlow District Council as at 31 March 2025 and of its expenditure and income for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The unaudited accounts were issued on 30 June 2025 and, when audited the accounts are due to be presented to the Council's Audit and Standards Committee for review, immediately prior to being authorised and issued for publication.

Signed



Jacqueline Van Mellaerts CPFA
Director – Finance and Section 151 Officer

Date 26 February 2026

Signed



Councillor Matthew Saggars
Chair of Audit and Standards Committee

Date 26 February 2026



CORE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS

The expenditure and funding analysis demonstrates how funding available to the authority (government grants, rents, council tax and business rates) for the year has been used in providing services in comparison with those resources consumed or earned by authorities in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. It also shows how this expenditure is allocated for decision making purposes between the council's directorates. Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices are presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. 2023/24 Costs of Services has been restated, following a restructure of services in 2024/25.

2023/24 RESTATED			2024/25			
Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balances	Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis (see note 7a)	Net Expenditure in the CIES	Expenditure and Funding Analysis	Net Expenditure Chargeable to the General Fund Balances	Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis (see note 7a)	Net Expenditure in the CIES
£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	£'000	£'000
2,913	(57)	2,855	Corporate Services & Improvement	2,746	104	2,850
2,337	221	2,558	Culture & Community	2,372	960	3,332
4,727	97	4,824	Environment	4,589	238	4,828
2,295	(85)	2,209	Executive Office	3,254	(67)	3,187
(3,938)	1,549	(2,389)	Facilities & Assets	(5,014)	5,188	175
3,552	(141)	3,411	Finance	6,848	(33)	6,815
2,021	(61)	1,959	Housing Operations (People) General Fund	2,488	(1)	2,487
489	(9)	480	Human Resources & Organisational Development	565	10	575
758	(26)	732	Legal & Democratic Services	972	(30)	942
1,050	(35)	1,015	Planning & Garden Town	1,000	(38)	963
1,000	141	1,142	Public Protection	1,534	273	1,806
617	(15)	602	Regeneration	1,936	210	2,146
(23,657)	11,945	(11,712)	HRA (Housing Revenue Account)	(27,696)	11,715	(15,981)
(6,415)	14,103	7,687	Net Cost of Services	(4,405)	18,529	14,124
2,919	(30,813)	(27,894)	Other income & Expenditure	(2,418)	(10,175)	(12,592)
(3,496)	(16,710)	(20,207)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Service	(6,823)	8,354	1,531
(45,881)			Opening Balances	(49,377)		
(3,496)			(Surplus)/Deficit on Balances for Year	(6,823)		
(49,377)			Closing Balance	(56,200)		
(3,969)			General Fund Balance	(3,969)		
(25,060)			General Fund Earmarked	(27,951)		
(10,781)			HRA Balance	(14,916)		
(9,568)			HRA Earmarked	(9,364)		
(49,377)			Total	(56,200)		

COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

The Comprehensive Income and Expenditure 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 (or rents). Authorities raise taxation (and rents) 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. The 2023/24 Costs of Services has been restated following a restructure of services in 2024/25.

2023/24 SINGLE RESTATED			2024/25 SINGLE			
Exp. 000	Income £'000	Net £'000	Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	Exp. £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
3,142	(286)	2,855	Corporate Services & Improvement	3,150	(300)	2,850
4,690	(2,132)	2,558	Culture & Community	5,311	(1,979)	3,332
7,527	(2,703)	4,824	Environment	7,732	(2,904)	4,828
2,289	(79)	2,209	Executive Office	3,283	(96)	3,187
6,040	(8,429)	(2,389)	Facilities & Assets	9,590	(9,415)	175
26,520	(23,109)	3,411	Finance	29,012	(22,197)	6,815
3,868	(1,908)	1,959	Housing Operations (People) General Fund	5,082	(2,595)	2,487
495	(15)	480	Human Resources & Organisational Development	591	(16)	575
1,019	(287)	732	Legal & Democratic Services	1,433	(491)	942
1,602	(587)	1,015	Planning & Garden Town	1,440	(478)	963
3,323	(2,181)	1,142	Public Protection	4,151	(2,345)	1,806
1,116	(513)	602	Regeneration	3,190	(1,044)	2,146
43,439	(55,152)	(11,712)	HRA (Housing Revenue Account)	43,027	(59,008)	(15,981)
105,069	(97,382)	7,687	Cost of Service	116,991	(102,867)	14,124
		(5,130)	10 Other Operating Expenditure			4,132
		2,762	11 Financing and Investment Income & Equipment			6,826
		(25,526)	12 Taxation & Non-specific Grant Income			(23,551)
		(20,207)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Service			1,531
		(12,455)	14 (Surplus)/Deficit on revaluation of Property, Plant & Equipment			26,121
		64	28 (Surplus)/Deficit Revaluation Available for Sale Financial Assets			(32)
		4,639	40 Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability/(asset)			507
		(7,753)	Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure			26,596
		(27,959)	Total Comprehensive Income & Expenditure			28,127

2023/24 # GROUP # RESTATED			2024/25 # GROUP #			
Exp. £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000	CIES	Exp. £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
1,082	(29)	1,053	Executive Office	3,283	(96)	3,187
1,019	(287)	732	Legal & Democratic Services	1,433	(491)	942
11,044	(10,564)	480	Culture & Community	5,311	(1,979)	3,332
0	0	0	Facilities & Assets	9,590	(9,415)	175
1,652	(592)	1,060	Planning & Garden Town	1,440	(478)	962
1,198	(517)	681	Regeneration	3,190	(1,044)	2,146
3,428	(296)	3,132	Corporate Services & Improvement	3,150	(300)	2,850
5,516	(22,050)	(16,534)	Finance	755	(21,397)	(20,642)
587	(19)	568	Human Resources & Organisational Development	591	(16)	575
3,441	(2,186)	1,255	Public Protection	4,151	(2,345)	1,806
(80)	(2,502)	(2,582)	Environment	7,732	(2,904)	4,828
3,868	(1,908)	1,960	Housing Operations (People)	5,082	(2,595)	2,487
			General Fund			
40,110	(55,147)	(15,037)	Housing HRA	43,027	(59,008)	(15,981)
27,645	(33)	27,612	HTS Group Ltd	28,890		28,890
100,510	(96,130)	4,380	Cost of Service	117,625	(102,068)	15,557
		(1,889)	Other Operating Expenditure			4,132
		2,791	Financing and Investment I&E			6,845
		(25,526)	Taxation & Non-specific Grant Inc.			(23,551)
		(20,244)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Prov. of Service			2,983
		19	Tax expense of Subsidiary			0
		(20,225)	(Surplus)/Deficit on Group			2,983
		(12,455)	(Surplus)/Def on revaluation of			26,121
		64	(Sur)/Def Reval Avail. for Sale			(32)
		(1,449)	Remeasure of net def ben			(8,130)
		(13,840)	Other Comprehensive I&E			17,959
		(34,065)	Total Comprehensive I&E			20,942

MOVEMENT IN RESERVES STATEMENT

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by the Council, analysed into 'usable reserves' (i.e. those that can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation) and other reserves. The deficit on the Provision of Services line shows the true economic cost of providing the Council's services, more details of which are shown in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (CIES). These are different from the statutory amounts required to be charged to the General Fund Balance for Council Tax setting. The net (increase)/decrease before Transfers to Earmarked Reserves line shows the statutory General Fund Balance before any discretionary transfers to or from earmarked reserves undertaken by the Council.

SINGLE 2024/25 MiRS	General Fund Balance £'000	General Fund Ear-marked £'000	HRA Balance £'000	HRA Ear-marked £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Major Repairs Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Council Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March brought forward	(3,969)	(25,060)	(10,781)	(9,568)	(33,113)	-	(2,741)	(85,232)	(804,320)	(889,552)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services	9,264	-	(7,733)	-	-	-	-	1,531	-	1,531
Other Comprehensive I&E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26,596	26,596
Total Comprehensive I&E	9,264	-	(7,733)	-	-	-	-	1,531	26,596	28,127
Adjs acc & funding basis under regs (Note 8)	(5,510)	-	5,510	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjustments between Accounting Basis and Funding Basis under Regulations	(6,645)	-	(1,709)	-	10,337	-	(93)	1,890	(1,890)	-
Transfers to/(from) reserves	2,891	(2,891)	(204)	204	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Increase) or Decrease in year	0	(2,891)	(4,136)	204	10,337	-	(93)	3,421	24,706	28,127
Balance at 31 March carried forward	(3,969)	(27,951)	(14,916)	(9,364)	(22,777)	-	(2,833)	(81,811)	(779,614)	(861,424)

SINGLE 2023/24 MiRS	General Fund Balance £'000	General Fund Ear-marked £'000	HRA Balance £'000	HRA Ear-marked £'000	Capital Receipts Reserve £'000	Major Repairs Reserve £'000	Capital Grants Unapplied £'000	Total Usable Reserves £'000	Unusable Reserves £'000	Total Council Reserves £'000
Balance at 31 March brought forward	(3,969)	(22,043)	(13,810)	(6,059)	(26,394)	-	(2,677)	(74,952)	(786,640)	(861,592)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Provision of Services	(12,974)	-	(7,232)	-	-	-	-	(20,207)	-	(20,207)
Other Comprehensive I&E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(7,753)	(7,753)
Total Comprehensive I&E	(12,974)	-	(7,232)	-	-	-	-	(20,207)	(7,753)	(27,960)
Transfers of recharges between GF & HRA	(4,847)	-	4,847	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjs acc & funding basis under regs (Note 8)	14,805	-	1,905	-	(6,719)	-	(64)	9,927	(9,926)	-
Transfers to/(from) reserves	3,016	(3,016)	3,509	(3,509)	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Increase) or Decrease in year	-	(3,016)	3,029	(3,509)	(6,720)	-	(64)	(10,280)	(17,679)	(27,960)
Balance at 31 March carried forward	(3,969)	(25,060)	(10,781)	(9,568)	(33,113)	-	(2,741)	(85,232)	(804,320)	(889,552)

# GROUP # 2024/25	General Fund Balance	General Fund Earmarked	HRA Balance	HRA Earmarked	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	# Cou. share of Subs P&L Res #	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	# HTS unusable Reserves #	Total Reserves
MIRS	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 31 March brought forward	(3,969)	(25,060)	(10,781)	(9,568)	(33,113)	-	(2,741)	(1,106)	(86,338)	(804,320)	(16,697)	(907,355)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Prov of Services	10,064	-	(7,733)	-	-	-	-	-	2,331	-	-	2,331
# (Surp)/Def on Prov of Services HTS #	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	652	652	-	-	652
Other Comprehensive I&E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	26,595	-	26,595
# Other Comprehensive I&E HTS #	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	(8,637)	(8,637)
Total Comprehensive I&E	10,064	-	(7,733)	-	-	-	-	652	2,981	26,595	(8,637)	20,942
Transfer of recharges from General to HRA	(5,510)	-	5,510	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjs acc & funding basis under regs (Note 8)	(6,645)	-	(1,709)	-	10,337	-	(93)	-	1,890	(1,890)	-	-
Transfer to/from Earmarked Reserves	2,891	(2,891)	(204)	204	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Increase) or decrease in year	800	(2,891)	(4,136)	204	10,337	-	(93)	652	4,873	24,705	(8,637)	20,942
Balance at 31 March carried forward	(3,169)	(27,951)	(14,916)	(9,364)	(22,777)	-	(2,833)	(454)	(81,467)	(779,614)	(25,334)	(886,415)
# GROUP # 2023/24 (RESTATED)	General Fund Balance	General Fund Earmarked	HRA Balance	HRA Earmarked	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapplied Account	# Cou. share of Subs P&L Res #	Total Usable Reserves	Unusable Reserves	# HTS unusable Reserves #	Total Reserves
MIRS	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 31 March brought forward	(3,969)	(22,043)	(13,809)	(6,059)	(26,394)	-	(2,677)	(11,246)	(86,198)	(786,640)	(450)	(873,288)
<i>Adjustment to opening balance classes</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,159	10,159	-	(10,159)	-
Balance at 31 March brought forward	(3,969)	(22,043)	(13,809)	(6,059)	(26,394)	-	(2,677)	(1,087)	(76,039)	(786,640)	(10,609)	(873,288)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Prov of Services	(12,974)	-	(7,232)	-	-	-	-	-	(20,206)	-	-	(20,206)
# (Surp)/Def on Prov of Services HTS #	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(19)	(19)	-	-	(19)
Other Comprehensive I&E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(7,753)	-	(7,753)
# Other Comprehensive I&E HTS #	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(6,088)	(6,088)
Total Comprehensive I&E	(12,974)	-	(7,232)	-	-	-	-	(19)	(20,225)	(7,753)	(6,088)	(34,066)
Transfers of recharges between GF & HRA	(4,847)	-	4,847	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjs acc & funding basis under regs (Note 8)	14,805	-	1,905	-	(6,719)	-	(64)	-	9,927	(9,927)	-	-
Transfers to/(from) reserves	3,016	(3,016)	3,509	(3,509)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Increase) or decrease in year	-	(3,016)	3,028	(3,509)	(6,720)	-	(64)	(19)	(10,298)	(17,680)	(6,088)	(34,066)
Balance at 31 March carried forward	(3,969)	(25,060)	(10,781)	(9,568)	(33,113)	-	(2,741)	(1,106)	(86,338)	(804,320)	(16,697)	(907,355)

The purposes of these reserves are:

General Fund Balance

Holds the surpluses from the General Fund. The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of a Council are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the Council are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise.

Earmarked General Fund Reserves

Amounts set aside from the General Fund Balance to earmarked reserves to provide financing for specific future expenditure plans. Amounts are posted back from earmarked reserves to meet the specified General Fund expenditure.

Housing Revenue Account

Is a ring-fenced account specifically recording expenditure and income on running the Council's own housing stock and closely related services, for the benefit of the Council's own tenants. The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) separately accounts for the Council's statutory landlord function, as a provider of social housing under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Housing Revenue Account – Earmarked Reserves

Holds amounts set aside specifically for contingencies and cash flow management relating to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

Capital Receipts Reserve

Holds the proceeds from the disposal of non-current assets, which are available to finance capital expenditure in future years.

Major Repairs Reserve

Holds the charge, to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), equal to depreciation, for the purpose of future repairs and maintenance. The item 8 Determination, issued by the MHCLG on 24 January 2017, confirmed that depreciation should be charged to the HRA in accordance with proper accounting practices. Previously transitional arrangements allowed for the reversal of depreciation charged to the HRA.

Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve

Holds the grants and contributions received towards capital projects for which the Council has met the conditions that would otherwise require repayment of the monies but which have yet to be applied to meet expenditure.

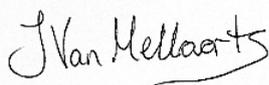
BALANCE SHEET

The Balance Sheet shows the value, as at the Balance Sheet date, of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council. Reserves are reported in two categories. Firstly, there are usable reserves, i.e. those reserves that the council may use to provide services, subject to the need to maintain a prudent level of reserves and any statutory limitations on their use. Secondly there are unusable reserves i.e. those that the Council is not able to use to provide services. The unusable reserves include reserves that hold unrealised gains and losses (e.g. the Revaluation Reserve), where amounts would only become available to use 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.

SINGLE 31 March 2024 £'000	# GROUP # 31 March 2024 £'000	Note	Balance Sheet	SINGLE 31 March 2025 £'000	# GROUP # 31 March 2025 £'000
1,111,032	1,112,660	14	Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)	1,114,447	1,117,784
1,751	1,751	15	Heritage Assets	1,756	1,756
57,694	57,694	17	Investment Property	70,073	70,073
995	1,384	18	Intangible Assets	798	1,546
4,262	4,262	19	Long-Term Investments	4,294	4,294
2,276	2,276	19	Long-Term Debtors	2,356	944
-	16,248	-	Long-Term Provisions	-	24,884
1,178,010	1,196,275		Long-Term Assets	1,193,723	1,221,281
2,353	3,880	24	Assets Held for Sale	(0)	307
57	180	20	Inventories	56	200
-	550	19	Short-Term Investments	-	0
17,333	21,545	21	Short-Term Debtors	19,526	20,433
5,984	7,277	23	Cash and Cash Equivalents (Assets)	11,835	14,171
25,727	33,432		Current Assets	31,416	35,111
(59,081)	(60,191)	19	Short-Term Borrowing	(101,500)	(101,500)
(23,246)	(29,516)	25	Short-Term Creditors	(22,197)	(27,999)
(1,168)	(1,168)	26	Short-Term Provisions	(1,485)	(1,485)
(83,495)	(90,875)		Current Liabilities	(125,182)	(130,984)
(532)	(1,062)	25	Long-Term Creditors	(253)	(579)
(211,837)	(211,960)	19	Long-Term Borrowing	(211,837)	(211,837)
(5,299)	(5,299)	40	Pensions Liability Scheme	(4,627)	(4,627)
(887)	(887)	19	Other Long-Term Liabilities	(671)	(671)
(12,135)	(12,135)	35	Long-Term Capital Grants- Receipts in Advance	(21,146)	(21,146)
-	(134)	-	Deferred Tax Liability	-	(134)
(230,690)	(231,477)		Long-Term Liabilities	(238,534)	(238,994)
889,552	907,355		Net Assets	861,423	886,415
(85,232)	(86,338)	27	Usable Reserves	(81,811)	(81,467)
(804,320)	(820,567)	28	Unusable Reserves	(779,612)	(804,498)
-	(450)	-	# Share Capital #	-	(450)
(889,552)	(907,355)		Total Reserves	(861,423)	(886,415)

The unaudited statement of accounts were issued on 30 June 2026 and are replaced with the accounts within this document. I certify that the statement of accounts gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council as at 31 March 2025 and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2025.

SIGNED BY:



Jacqueline Van Mellaerts CPFA,
Director – Finance and Section 151 Officer

Date: 26 February 2026

CASH FLOW STATEMENT

The Cash Flow Statement shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Council during the reporting period. The Statement shows how the Council generates and uses cash 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 to the extent to which the operations of the Council are funded by way of taxation and grant income or from the recipients of service provided by the Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Council’s future service delivery. Cash flows arising from financing activities are useful in predicting claims on future cash flows by providers of capital to the Council.

SINGLE 2023/24 £'000	# GROUP # 2023/24 £'000	<i>Note</i>		SINGLE 2024/25 £'000	# GROUP # 2024/25 £'000
Cash Flow Statement					
20,207	20,227		<i>CIES</i> Net surplus/(deficit) on the provision of services	(1,531)	(2,983)
9,272	9,939	29	Adjustments to surplus/deficit on the provision of services for non-cash movements	34,459	36,934
(13,154)	(13,154)	29	Adjustment for items included in the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services that are investing or financing activities	(14,609)	(14,609)
16,325	17,012		Net Cash flows from operating activities	18,319	19,362
(78,704)	(78,704)	30	Net cash flows from investing activities	(46,680)	(46,680)
46,367	46,367	31	Net cash flows from financing activities	34,212	34,212
(16,012)	(15,325)		Net (increase) or decrease in cash and cash equivalents	5,851	6,894
21,996	22,603	<i>BS</i>	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	5,984	7,277
5,984	7,277	<i>BS</i>	Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	11,835	14,171



NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Notes Contents

1. Accounting Policies.....	27
2. Accounting standards issued, but have not yet been adopted.....	42
3. Critical Judgements in Applying Accounting Policies.....	42
4. Assumptions Made about the Future and Other Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty.....	43
5. Material Items of Income and Expenditure.....	44
6. Events After the Balance Sheet Date.....	44
7a Expenditure and Funding Analysis.....	45
7b. Segmental Income.....	46
8. Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under regulations.....	47
9. Movement in earmarked reserves.....	50
10. Other operating expenditure.....	53
11. Financing and investment income and expenditure.....	53
12. Taxation and Non-Specific Grant Income.....	53
13. Expenditure and income analysed by nature.....	53
14. Property, Plant and Equipment.....	54
15. Heritage Assets.....	57
16. Heritage Assets: Summary of transactions.....	58
17. Investment properties.....	58
18. Intangible assets.....	60
19. Financial Instruments and Long-Term Debtors.....	60
20. Inventories.....	63
21. Debtors.....	63
22. Debtors for local taxation.....	64
23. Cash and Cash Equivalents.....	64
24. Assets Held for Sale (AHFS).....	64
25. Creditors.....	64
26. Short-Term Provisions.....	65
27. Usable Reserves.....	65
28. Unusable Reserves.....	65
29. Cashflow - Operating Activities.....	69
30. Cashflow - Investing Activities.....	70
31. Cashflow - Financing Activities.....	70
32. Members' Allowances.....	70
33. Officers' Remuneration.....	70
34. External Audit Costs.....	72
35. Grant Income.....	72
36. Related Parties.....	74
37. Capital Expenditure and Capital Financing.....	75
38. Leases.....	75
39. Capitalisation of Borrowing Costs.....	76
40. Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.....	77
41. Contingent Liabilities.....	80
42. Contingent Assets.....	81
43. Nature and Extent of Risks Arising from Financial Instruments.....	81
44. Group Accounts.....	84

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

i. General principles

The statements of account summarise the authority's transactions for the 2024/25 financial year and its position at the year-end of 31 March 2025. The authority is required to prepare an annual statement of accounts by the Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2023 in accordance with proper accounting practices. These practices primarily comprise the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25, 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 Statement of Accounts have been prepared on a "going concern" basis.

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 receivable on investments and payable on borrowings is accounted for respectively as income and expenditure on the basis of the effective interest rate for the relevant financial instrument rather than the cash flows fixed or determined by the contract.
- Where revenue and expenditure have been recognised but cash has not been received or paid, a debtor or creditor for the relevant amount is recorded in the Balance Sheet. Where debts may not be settled, the balance of debtors is written down and a charge made to revenue in financing and investment income and expenditure for the income that might not be collected.

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 three months or less 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 authority's cash management.

iv. Prior period adjustments, changes in accounting policies and estimates and errors

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

Changes in accounting policies are only made when required by proper accounting practices or the change provides more reliable or relevant information about the effect of transactions, other events and conditions on the authority's financial position or financial performance. Where a change is made, it is applied retrospectively (unless not material or 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 and support services are charged an accounting estimate of the cost of holding non-current assets during the year. This comprises:

- 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 authority 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 either an amount calculated on a prudent basis determined by the authority in accordance with statutory guidance.

Depreciation, revaluation and impairment losses, and amortisation are therefore replaced by the contribution in the General Fund balance by way of an adjusting transaction with the capital adjustment account in the Movement in Reserves Statement for the difference between the two.

vi. Council tax and non-domestic rates

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

Accounting for council tax and NDR

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

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

Where debtor balances for the above are identified as impaired because of a likelihood arising from a past event that payments due under the statutory arrangements will not be made, the asset 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 wages and salaries, paid annual leave and paid sick leave, bonuses and non-monetary benefits (e.g. cars) for current employees and are recognised as an expense for services in the year in which employees render service to the authority. An accrual is made for the cost of holiday entitlements (or any form of leave, e.g. time off in lieu) earned by employees but not taken before the year-end that employees can carry forward into the next financial year. The accrual is made at the wage and salary rates applicable in the following accounting year, being the period in which the employee takes the benefit. The accrual is charged to surplus or deficit on the provision of services but then reversed out through the Movement in Reserves Statement to the 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 as a result of a decision by the authority 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 and are charged on an accruals basis to the appropriate service segment or, where applicable, to a corporate service segment at the earlier of when the authority can no longer withdraw the offer of those benefits or when the authority 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 authority 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

Council employees are members of the Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS), administered by Essex County Council. The scheme provides defined benefits (retirement lump sums and pensions) to members, earned whilst employees are working for Council. The scheme provided defined benefits to members (retirement lump sums and pensions), earned as employees worked for the authority.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

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

- The liabilities of the [Essex County Council](#) pension fund attributable to the authority are included in the Balance Sheet on an actuarial basis using the projected unit method – i.e. an assessment of the future payments that will be made in relation to retirement benefits earned to date by employees, based on assumptions about mortality rates, employee turnover rates, etc, and projected earnings for current employees.
- The assets of Essex County Council 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 pensions liability is analysed into the following components:

- Service cost comprising:
 - current service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of years of service earned this year – allocated in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement to the services for which the employees worked.
 - past service cost – the increase in liabilities as a result of a scheme amendment or curtailment whose effect relates to years of service earned in earlier years –

debited to the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement

- net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset), i.e. net interest expense for the authority – the change during the period in the net defined benefit liability (asset) that arises from the passage of time charged to the financing and investment income and expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – this is calculated by applying the discount rate used to measure the defined benefit obligation at the beginning of the period to the net defined benefit liability (asset) at the beginning of the period – taking into account any changes in the net defined benefit liability (asset) during the period as a result of contribution and benefit payments.

- Remeasurements comprising:
 - the return on plan assets – excluding amounts included in net interest on the net defined benefit liability (asset) – charged to the pensions reserve as other comprehensive income and expenditure
 - 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 Essex County Council 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 authority 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 on the basis of cash flows rather than as benefits are earned by employees.

Discretionary benefits

The authority also has restricted powers to make discretionary awards of retirement benefits in the event of early retirements. Any liabilities estimated to arise as a result of an award 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.

Effect of the asset ceiling

The authority has applied the accounting standard in relation to the defined benefit pension asset/liability and the asset ceiling. The asset ceiling calculation has been provided by actuary based on the present value of the projected future service cost less the minimum future contributions.

viii. Events after the reporting period

Events after the Balance Sheet reporting period are those events, both favourable and unfavourable, that occur between the Balance Sheet date 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 such 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 authority 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 (CIES) for interest payable are based on the carrying amount of the liability, multiplied by the effective rate of interest for the instrument. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments over the life of the instrument to the amount at which it was originally recognised. For most of the borrowings that the authority has, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal repayable (plus accrued interest); and interest charged to the CIES is the amount payable for the year according to the loan agreement.

Financial assets

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

- amortised cost, and
- fair value through profit or loss (FVPL)

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

Financial assets measured at amortised cost

Financial assets measured at amortised cost are recognised on the Balance Sheet when the authority 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 CIES 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 authority, this means that the amount presented in the Balance Sheet is the outstanding principal receivable (plus accrued interest), and interest credited to the CIES is the amount receivable for the year in the loan agreement.

Financial assets measured at fair value through other comprehensive income

Financial assets that are measured at FVOCI 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 other comprehensive income.

Financial assets measured at fair value through profit of loss

Financial assets that are measured at FVPL 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 authority'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 authority 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 the derecognition of the asset are credited or debited to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

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 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 recognised and measured (including the treatment of revaluation gains and losses) in accordance with the authority's accounting policies on property, plant and equipment. However, some of the measurement rules are relaxed in relation to heritage assets as detailed

below. The accounting policies in relation to heritage assets that are deemed to include elements of intangible heritage assets are also presented below.

Heritage assets held by the Council fall into three categories and are held for their intrinsic value as opposed to potential financial gain. As such, they are unlikely to be sold.

- Museum Artefacts- artefacts held at the Museum of Harlow
- Community Heritage Assets- including bandstand in the town park and six war memorials.
- Art Collection- fine art including sculpture, civic gifts and regalia

Further details can be found on the heritage assets note in the main body of the Accounts.

Heritage assets – general

The carrying amounts of heritage assets are reviewed where there is evidence of impairment for heritage assets, e.g. where an item has suffered physical deterioration or breakage or where doubts

arise as to its authenticity. Any impairment is recognised and measured in accordance with the authority's general policies on impairment.

xii. Intangible assets

Expenditure on non-monetary assets that do not have physical substance but are controlled by the authority as a result of past events (e.g. software licences) is capitalised when it is expected that future economic benefits or service potential will flow from the intangible asset to the authority.

Intangible assets are measured initially at cost. Amounts are only revalued where the fair value of the assets held by the authority can be determined by reference to an active market. In practice, no intangible asset held by the authority meets this criterion, and they are therefore carried at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment loss. 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. Interests in companies and other entities

Harlow Trading Services (Property and Environment) Ltd (HTS)

HTS is a wholly owned company of the Council providing a range of environmental and property maintenance services in the district. Its accounting policies are not materially different to those of the Council and the appropriate elements of its accounts are included in the group accounts.

HTS is an admitted body to the Local Government Pension Scheme referred to in paragraph (v).

As such, HTS makes fixed contributions to the pension fund and its employees in the scheme are entitled to the post-employment benefits from the scheme. The Council makes further contributions to the fund in respect of HTS employees to ensure that the pension liability attributable to HTS is fully funded. As such, that pension fund liability is included in the pension disclosures in the single entity accounts of the Council. financial assets at cost, less any provision for losses.

xiv. Long-term contracts

Long-term contracts are accounted for on the basis of charging the surplus or deficit on the provision of services with the consideration allocated to the performance obligations satisfied based on the goods or services transferred to the service recipient during the financial year.

xv. 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. Properties 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 applied to gains and losses on disposal.

Rentals received in relation to investment properties are credited to the financing and investment income line and result in a gain for the General Fund balance. However, revaluation and disposal gains and losses are not permitted by statutory arrangements to have an impact on the General Fund balance. The gains and losses are therefore reversed out of the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement and posted to the capital adjustment account and (for any sale proceeds greater than £10,000) the capital receipts reserve.

xvi. Leases

The authority as lessee

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

Initial measurement

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

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

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

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

Subsequent measurement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Low value and short lease exemption

As permitted by the Code, the authority excludes leases:

- for low-value items that cost less than £10,000 when new, provided they are not highly dependent on or integrated with other items, and
- with a term shorter than 12 months (comprising the non-cancellable period plus any extension options that the authority is reasonably certain to exercise and any termination options that the authority is reasonably certain not to exercise).

Lease expenditure

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

Depreciation and impairments are not charges against council tax, as the cost of non-current assets is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are

therefore appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

The authority as lessor

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

Finance leases

Where the authority 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 authority's net investment in the lease, is credited to the same line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement also as part of the gain or loss on disposal (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal), matched by a lease (long-term debtor) asset in the Balance Sheet.

Lease rentals receivable are apportioned between:

- a charge for the acquisition of the interest in the property – applied to write down the lease debtor (together with any premiums received), and
- finance income (credited to the financing and investment income and expenditure line in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement).

The gain credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement on disposal is not permitted by statute to increase the General Fund balance and is required to be treated as a capital receipt. Where a premium has been received, this is posted out of the General Fund balance to the capital receipts reserve in the Movement in Reserves Statement. Where the amount due in relation to the lease asset is to be settled by the payment of rentals in future financial years, this is posted out of the General Fund balance to the 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 asset is fully provided for under separate arrangements for capital financing. Amounts are therefore appropriated to the capital adjustment account from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

Operating leases

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

xvii Overheads and support services

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

xviii. 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 of £5,000 or more on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of property, plant and equipment is capitalised on an accruals basis, provided that it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the authority and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. Expenditure that maintains but does not add to an asset's potential to deliver future economic benefits or service potential (i.e. repairs and maintenance) is charged as an expense when it is incurred.

Measurement

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 authority does not capitalise borrowing costs incurred while 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 (i.e. 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 authority.

Donated assets (Heritage only for the authority) are measured initially at fair value. The difference between fair value and any consideration paid is credited to the taxation and non-specific grant income and expenditure line of the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, unless the donation has been made conditionally. Until conditions are satisfied, the gain is held in the donated assets account. Where gains are credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement, they are reversed out of the General Fund balance to the capital adjustment account in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

- infrastructure, community assets and assets under construction – in this and predecessor Codes these assets have been consistently required to be measured at depreciated historical cost, but this practice has been subject to modification. The annex to Section 4.1 of the Code provides a historical summary of the modifications to historical costs and sets out how the depreciated historical cost basis of measurement has been established
- council dwellings – current value, determined using the basis of existing use value for social housing (EUV–SH)
- council offices – current value, determined as the amount that would be paid for the asset in its existing use (existing use value – EUV), except for a few offices that are situated close to the council's housing properties, where there is no market for office accommodation, and that are measured at depreciated replacement cost (instant build) as an estimate of current value
- 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 current 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.

Increases in valuations are matched by credits to the revaluation reserve to recognise unrealised gains.

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 this is less than the carrying amount of the asset, an impairment loss is recognised for the shortfall.

Where impairment losses are identified, they are accounted for 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 (i.e. freehold land and certain community assets) and assets that are not yet available for use (i.e. assets under construction).

Depreciation is calculated on the following bases:

- council 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 as advised by a suitably qualified officer.

Where an item of property, plant and equipment asset has major components whose cost is significant in relation to the total cost of the item, the components are depreciated separately.

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.

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 General Fund.

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 previously recognised losses in the surplus or deficit on the 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 they 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 (i.e. netted off against the carrying value of the asset at the time of disposal). Any revaluation gains accumulated for the asset in the revaluation reserve are transferred to the capital adjustment account.

Amounts received for a disposal in excess of £10,000 are categorised as capital receipts. A proportion of capital receipts relating to housing disposals is payable to the government. 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 authority's underlying need to borrow (the capital financing requirement). Receipts are appropriated to the reserve from the General Fund balance in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

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

xix. 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 authority a present obligation
- that probably requires settlement by a transfer of economic benefits or service potential, and
- 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 at 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 authority 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 than probable that a transfer of economic benefits will now be required (or a lower settlement than anticipated is made), the provision is reversed and credited back to the relevant service.

Where some or all of the payment required to settle a provision is expected to be recovered from another party (e.g. from an insurance claim), 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 authority 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 authority. 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 with sufficient reliability.

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 authority 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 authority.

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.

xx. Reserves

The authority sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. Reserves are created by transferring amounts out of the General Fund balance. When expenditure to be financed from a reserve is incurred, it is charged to the appropriate service in that year to score against the surplus or deficit on the provision of services in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The reserve is then 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, local taxation, retirement and employee benefits and do not represent usable resources for the authority – these reserves are explained in the relevant policies.

xxi. 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 authority 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.

xxii. VAT

VAT payable is included as an expense only to the extent that it is not recoverable from HMRC. VAT receivable is excluded from income.

xxiii. Fair value measurement of non-financial assets

The authority's accounting policy for fair value measurement of financial assets is set out in section ix. The authority also measures some of its non-financial assets such as surplus assets and investment properties and some of its financial instruments such as equity shareholdings at fair value at each reporting date. Fair value 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 measurement assumes that the transaction to sell the asset takes place either:

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. ACCOUNTING STANDARDS ISSUED, NOT ADOPTED

The Code of Practice for Local Authority Accounting (The Code) requires the disclosure of information relating to the expected impact of an accounting change that will be required by a new standard which has been issued but has not yet been adopted by the 2024/25 Code. The Code also requires that changes in accounting policy are to be applied retrospectively unless transitional arrangements are specified, this would, therefore result in an impact on disclosures spanning two financial years.

The following have been issued but not yet adopted:

- IAS 21 The Effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rate (Lack of Exchangeability) issued in August 2023. The amendments to IAS 21 clarify how an entity should assess whether a currency is exchangeable and how it should determine a spot exchange rate when exchangeability is lacking, as well as require the disclosure of information that enables users of financial statements to understand the impact of a currency not being exchangeable.
- IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts issued in May 2017. IFRS 17 replaces IFRS 4 and sets out principles for recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of insurance contracts.
- The changes to the measurement of non-investment assets within the 2025/26 Code include adaptations and interpretations of IAS 16 Property, Plant and Equipment and IAS 38 Intangible Assets. These include setting out three revaluation processes for operational property, plant and equipment, requiring indexation for tangible non-investment assets and a requirement to value intangible assets using the historical cost approach. These have the same effect as requiring a change in accounting policy due to an amendment to standards, which would normally be disclosed under IAS 8. However, the adaptations also include a relief from the requirements of IAS 8 following a change in accounting policy as confirmed in paragraph 3.3.1.4.

Harlow Council are unlikely to be affected materially by these changes.

3. CRITICAL JUDGEMENTS IN APPLYING ACCOUNTING POLICIES

In applying the accounting policies, 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:

- There is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government. However, the Council has determined that this uncertainty is not yet sufficient to provide an indication that the assets of the Council might be impaired as a result of a need to close facilities and reduce levels of service provision.
- Employees of the Council's wholly owned subsidiary, Harlow Trading Services (HTS) Ltd., are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme which is a defined benefit scheme. The Council has guaranteed any future pension liabilities of the company and pays employer's contributions to the company above a level agreed with the company. As such the company makes defined contributions to the scheme. The Council has determined that the arrangement does not constitute a pool for pension reporting purposes and includes its additional contributions in its Consolidated Income and expenditure statement.
- The Council has employed the Weighted Average Remaining Useful Life (WARUL) method in determining the remaining useful life of its council housing stock. The method takes into account the useful lives of various components of the "beacon" properties used in the valuation of the stock. The resulting average useful life of 54 years has been used to calculate the depreciation charge for the year.

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 2025 for which there is a significant risk of material adjustment in the forthcoming financial year are as follows:

Assumptions Made about the Future and Other Major Sources of Estimation Uncertainty		
Item	Uncertainties	Effect if Actual Results Differ from Assumptions
Property, Plant and Equipment	Assets are depreciated over useful lives that are dependent on assumptions about the level of repairs and maintenance that will be incurred in relation to individual assets. The current economic climate makes it uncertain that the Council will be able to sustain its current spending on repairs and maintenance, bringing into doubt the useful lives assigned to assets.	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 £1.450m for Council Dwellings and decrease £28k for Other buildings- for every year that useful lives had to be reduced.
Fair Value Measurement	When the fair values of financial assets cannot be measured based on quoted prices in active markets (i.e. Level 1 inputs), their fair value is measured using valuation techniques. Where possible, the inputs to these valuation techniques are based on observable data, but where this is not possible judgement is required in establishing fair values. These judgements typically include considerations such as uncertainty and risk. However, changes in the assumptions used could affect the fair value of the authority's assets and liabilities. Where Level 1 inputs are not available, the Council employs relevant experts to identify the most appropriate valuation techniques to determine fair value (for example for investment properties an external valuer). Information about the valuation techniques and inputs used in determining the fair value of the authority's assets and liabilities is disclosed in notes below.	The authority uses the discounted cash flow (DCF) model to measure the fair value of its investment properties and financial assets. The significant unobservable inputs used in the fair value measurement include management assumptions regarding rent growth, vacancy levels and discount rates – adjusted for regional factors (for both investment properties and some financial assets). Significant changes in any of the unobservable inputs would result in a significantly lower or higher fair value measurement for the investment properties and financial assets.
Provisions	The Council has based its Provision for Business Rates Appeals on available data regarding checks, challenges and appeals actually lodged with the Valuation Office Agency at the time of making the estimation. Changes to these data, along with case law emerging regarding settlement of appeals at tribunal may create differences between the estimated provision required, and the subsequent actuals.	Should the value of checks, challenges and appeals actually settled increase or reduce by 10%, it would be necessary to add or subtract £331k to the total amount required, of which £132k (40%) would be attributable to the Council.
Pensions Liability	Estimation of the net liability to pay pensions depends on a number of complex judgements relating, primarily, 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. Professional actuaries are engaged to provide the Council with expert advice about the assumptions to be applied. Harlow Council Accounts include the agreed additional pension contributions but exclude the attributable liabilities of its wholly owned subsidiary Harlow Trading Services (Property and Environment) Limited.	The effects on the net pension liability of changes in individual assumptions can be measured. For example, a 0.1% increase in the discount rate assumption would result in a reduction in the pension liability of £2.304 million. However, the assumptions interact in complex ways.
Arrears	At 31 March 2025, the Council had made significant allowances for the impairment of debts, totalling circa £6million. In the current economic climate, including the effect of housing welfare reforms, it is not certain that the allowance is sufficient.	If the Council's collection rates were to deteriorate, an increase in the current provisions by 1% would require an extra provision of £60k.

5. MATERIAL ITEMS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Revaluation of Council Properties

The Council had its non-current assets valued as at 31 December 2024. A further exercise was undertaken to determine if there had been any material changes in values between that date and 31 March 2025. Movements and balances for non-current assets are shown in Note 14 – Property, Plant and Equipment.

Council Tax

The Council received £8.307 million from the Collection Fund as its share of Council Tax receipts in 2024/25 (£8.229 million in 2023/24).

Non-Domestic (Business) Rates

The Council received Non-Domestic Rates of £19.387 million under the rate retention system in 2024/25 (£18.859 million in 2023/24). This was offset by a payment under the system of £17.966 million as a tariff in 2024/25 (£17.407 million in 2023/24).

Housing Benefits

The Council has incurred spending of £20.058 million on housing benefits in 2024/25 (£20.371 million in 2023/24) and received Government grants of £21.642 million to meet this cost in 2024/25 (£20.297 million in 2023/24).

Harlow Trading Services (HTS) Ltd.

The Council paid a net amount of £34.785 million to its wholly owned company in 2024/25 (£40.732 million in 2023/24) for the provision of a range of services which include housing property services, grounds maintenance, street cleaning and capital works.

Pensions

The Council paid £3.251 million in 2024/25 (£3.031 million in 2023/24) into the Local Government Pension Scheme in respect of pension costs (£3.914 million employers contributions minus £0.663 million unfunded). The Council also paid £0.949 million in 2024/25 directly to HTS (Property and Environment) Ltd as a contribution in respect of their employees that are part of the LGPS (£0.928 million in 2023/24).

Grants

The Council received a number of material grants during the year and details of these are contained in Note 36.

6. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

The DRAFT Statement of Accounts were authorised for issue by the Director – Finance (Section 151 Officer) 30 June 2025. Events taking place after this date are not reflected in the financial statements nor notes. Where events taking place before this date provided information about conditions existing at 31 March 2025, the figures in the financial statements and notes have been adjusted in all material respects to reflect the impact of this information.

7. NOTE TO THE EXPENDITURE AND FUNDING ANALYSIS
7A. ADJUSTMENT BETWEEN FUNDING AND ACCOUNTING BASIS

Adjustments between funding and accounting basis				2024/25
Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes £'000	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments £'000	Other Differences £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Corporate Services & Improvement	175	(74)	2	104
Culture & Community	1,025	(73)	6	960
Environment	264	(29)	5	240
Executive Office	10	(82)	4	(68)
Facilities & Assets	5,210	(20)	(2)	5,188
Finance	-	(32)	(1)	(33)
Housing Operations (People) General Fund	85	(83)	(3)	(1)
Human Resources & Organisational Development	21	(14)	2	9
Legal & Democratic Services	-	(29)	(1)	(30)
Planning & Garden Town	4	(37)	(5)	(38)
Public Protection	354	(78)	(4)	272
Regeneration	235	(26)	1	210
HRA (Housing Revenue Account)	12,301	(580)	(6)	11,715
Net Cost of Services	19,685	(1,156)		18,529
Other I&E from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(14,577)	(23)	4,425	(10,175)
Difference between GF surplus or deficit and CIES Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	5,108	(1,179)	4,425	8,354

Adjustments between funding and accounting basis				2023/24
Adjustments from General Fund to arrive at the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement amounts	Adjustments for Capital Purposes) £'000	Net change for the Pensions Adjustments £'000	Other Differences £'000	Total Adjustments £'000
Corporate Services & Improvement	13	(70)	-	(57)
Culture & Community	295	(73)	(1)	221
Environment	125	(30)	2	97
Executive Office		(79)	(6)	(85)
Facilities & Assets	1,572	(27)	4	1,549
Finance	-	(139)	(2)	(141)
Housing Operations (People) General Fund	20	(82)	1	(61)
Human Resources & Organisational Development	3	(12)	-	(9)
Legal & Democratic Services	-	(27)	1	(26)
Planning & Garden Town	-	(35)	-	(35)
Public Protection	199	(72)	14	141
Regeneration	5	(24)	4	(15)
HRA (Housing Revenue Account)	12,538	(601)	9	11,945
Net Cost of Services	15,350	(1,270)	25	14,105
Other I&E from the Expenditure and Funding Analysis	(24,424)	(3,874)	(2,505)	(30,813)
Difference between GF surplus or deficit and CIES Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(9,084)	(5,144)	(2,480)	(16,708)

The Adjustments between Funding and Accounting Basis column reflects major adjusting items in respect of:

Capital purposes – adding in depreciation and impairment and revaluation gains and losses in respect of council dwellings and other land and buildings; adjusting for the sale of land or buildings; adding in the statutory charge for the repayment of borrowing; adjusting for capital grants received.

Pensions – removing employer pension contributions allowed by statute and replacing with the current and past costs allowed under international accounting standards, including interest notionally payable on the actuarial defined pension liability.

Other – reflecting the timing difference between the forecast of council tax and non-domestic rates to be received which is included in the accounts and the actual amounts received.

7B. SEGMENTAL INCOME

Income received on a segmental basis is analysed below:

	2023/24	2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Income from services		
Corporate Services & Improvement	(286)	(300)
Culture & Community	(2,132)	(1,979)
Environment	(2,708)	(2,904)
Executive Office	(79)	(96)
Facilities & Assets	(8,429)	(9,415)
Finance	(23,109)	(22,197)
Housing Operations (People) General Fund	(1,908)	(2,595)
Human Resources & Organisational Development	(15)	(16)
Legal & Democratic Services	(287)	(491)
Planning & Garden Town	(587)	(478)
Public Protection	(2,181)	(2,345)
Regeneration	(513)	(1,044)
HRA (Housing Revenue Account)	(55,152)	(59,008)
Total income analysed on a segment basis	(97,387)	(102,867)

8. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS & FUNDING BASIS UNDER REGULATIONS

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

General Fund Balance

The General Fund is the statutory fund into which all the receipts of the Council are required to be paid and out of which all liabilities of the Council are to be met, except to the extent that statutory rules might provide otherwise. It 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.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Balance

The Housing Revenue Account Balance reflects the statutory obligation to maintain a revenue account for the local authority council housing provision. It contains the balance of income and expenditure as defined by legislation that is available to fund future expenditure in connection with the Council's landlord function or (where in deficit) that is required to be recovered from tenants in future years.

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 for the repayment of debt. The balance on the reserve shows the resources that have yet to be applied for these purposes at the year-end.

Major Repairs Reserve

The Council is required to maintain the Major Repairs Reserve, which controls an element of the capital resources limited for use on capital expenditure on HRA assets or the financing of historical capital expenditure by the HRA. The balance shows the capital resources that have yet to be applied at the year-end.

Capital Grants Unapplied

The Capital Grants Unapplied account 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.

2024/25	General Fund Balance	HRA Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapp'd Account	Movement Unusable Reserves
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments to Revenue Reserves:						
Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:						
Pension costs (transferred to/from the Pensions Reserve)	599	580				(1,179)
Financial Instruments (transferred to the financial instruments adjustment account)	-	(6)				6
Council Tax & NNDR (transfers to/from the Collection Fund Adjustment Account)	(4,425)	-				4,425
Holiday pay (transferred to/from to the Accumulated Absences Reserve)	(6)	6				
Reversal of entries relating to capital expenditure (charged to the Capital Adjustment Account):						
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(3,742)	(11,942)				15,684
Revaluation Losses/(Gains) on Property, Plant and Equipment	(3,460)	(160)				3,620
Movements in the Market Value of Investment Properties	(288)	-				288
Reverse Impairments in the year from Revaluation Increase						-
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(183)	(198)				381
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute						
-Funded by Grants	(1,016)					1,016
-Funded by Capital Receipts (Flexible Use)	(1,451)		1,451			-
Amounts of Non-current Assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the Gain/(Loss) on Disposal to the CIES	(4,951)	(5,925)				10,876
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	(18,922)	(17,645)	1,451	-	-	35,116
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources:						
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds to the Capital/Deferred Receipts Reserve	2,958	3,796	(6,622)			(132)
Transfer of capital grants and contributions to capital grants unapplied	2,252	-			(2,252)	-
Payments to the government housing receipts pool						
Transfer of HRA resources from revenue to the Major Repairs Reserve		12,140		(12,140)		
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from Capital adjustment account)	1,307					(1,307)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances	157					(157)
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	6,674	15,936	(6,622)	(12,140)	(2,252)	(1,596)
Adjustments to Capital Resources:						
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure			15,582			(15,582)
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance capital expenditure				12,140		(12,140)
Application of Capital grants to finance capital expenditure	5,603	-	-		2,159	(7,762)
Transfer from Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve upon receipt of cash			(74)			74
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	5,603	-	15,508	12,140	2,159	(35,410)
Total Adjustments	(6,645)	(1,709)	10,337	-	(93)	(1,890)

2023/24	General Fund Balance	HRA Balance	Capital Receipts Reserve	Major Repairs Reserve	Capital Grants Unapp'd Account	Move-ment Unusable Reserves
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustments to Revenue Reserves:						
Amounts by which income and expenditure included in the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement are different from revenue for the year calculated in accordance with statutory requirements:						
Pension costs (transferred to/from the Pensions Reserve)	4,543	601				(5,145)
Financial Instruments (transferred to the financial instruments adjustment account)	-	2				(2)
Council Tax & NNDR (transfers to/from the Collection Fund Adjustment Account)	2,505	-				(2,505)
Holiday pay (transferred to/from to the Accumulated Absences Reserve)	(15)	(9)				24
Reversal of entries relating to capital expenditure (charged to the Capital Adjustment Account):	-	-				-
Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets	(2,242)	(12,845)				15,086
Revaluation Losses/(Gains) on Property, Plant and Equipment	16	307				(322)
Movements in the Market Value of Investment Properties	(300)	-				300
Reverse Impairments in the year from Revaluation Increase	-	-				-
Amortisation of Intangible Assets	(7)	-				7
Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute	(579)	-				579
Amounts of Non-current Assets written off on disposal or sale as part of the Gain/(Loss) on Disposal to the CIES	-	(2,645)				2,645
Total Adjustments to Revenue Resources	3,921	(14,588)	-	-	-	10,667
Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources:						
Transfer of non-current asset sale proceeds to the Capital/Deferred Receipts Reserve	4,130	3,648	(7,773)			(5)
Transfer of capital grants and contributions to capital grants unapplied	1,760	-			(1,760)	-
Payments to the government housing receipts pool	-	-	-			-
Transfer of HRA resources from revenue to the Major Repairs Reserve	-	12,845		(12,845)		-
Statutory provision for the repayment of debt (transfer from Capital adjustment account)	927	-				(927)
Capital expenditure financed from revenue balances	451	-				(451)
Total Adjustments between Revenue and Capital Resources	7,268	16,492	(7,773)	(12,845)	(1,760)	(1,383)
Adjustments to Capital Resources:						
Use of the Capital Receipts Reserve to finance capital expenditure			1,127			(1,127)
Settlement of Loan written back to Capital Receipts Reserve			-			-
Use of the Major Repairs Reserve to finance capital expenditure				12,845		(12,845)
Application of Capital grants to finance capital expenditure	3,616	-			1,696	(5,312)
Transfer from Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve upon receipt of cash			(74)			74
Total Adjustments to Capital Resources	3,616	-	1,053	12,845	1,696	(19,210)
Total Adjustments	14,805	1,905	(6,720)	-	(64)	(9,926)

9. MOVEMENTS IN EARMARKED RESERVES

The following table sets out the amounts set aside from the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account balances in earmarked reserves to provide financing for future expenditure plans and the amounts posted back from earmarked reserves to meet General Fund and HRA expenditure in 2024/25.

General Fund Earmarked Reserves	Bal at 1st April 2023 £'000	Transfer in 2023/24 £'000	Transfer out 2023/24 £'000	Bal at 31 Mar 2024 £'000	Transfer in 2024/25 £'000	Transfer out 2024/25 £'000	Bal at 31st Mar 2025 £'000
Audit Fees	(166)	-	-	(166)	-	166	-
Budget Carryovers	-	(166)	-	(166)	-	166	-
Budget Stabilisation	(219)	(982)	-	(1,201)	(1,328)	-	(2,529)
Bush Fair Capital Improvements	(42)	-	42	-	-	-	-
Business Rates Equalisation	(2,509)	(4,648)	568	(6,589)	(2,040)	8,629	-
Climate Change	-	(100)	-	(100)	-	-	(100)
Collection Fund					(1,000)	-	(1,000)
Covid-19	(158)	-	158	-	-	-	-
Debt Financing	(3,415)	(238)	498	(3,155)	(711)	866	(3,000)
Discretionary Services Fund	(2,005)	-	451	(1,553)	(175)	563	(1,165)
Enterprise Zone	(338)	-	263	(75)	-	75	-
Environment	(27)	-	27	-	-	-	-
Environmental Urgent Works & Improvement	(1,291)	(27)	12	(1,305)	(57)	1,363	-
Hardship Fund	(155)	-	-	(155)	-	105	(50)
Housing Benefits Subsidy	(192)	-	192	-	(300)	-	(300)
Housing TA	(150)	-	150	-	(500)	-	(500)
Insurance claims - GF	(856)	(50)	-	(906)	-	906	-
Insurance Fund - GF	(1,954)	(202)	15	(2,141)	-	1,541	(600)
Invest To Save & Improve Reserve	(108)	-	-	(108)	-	108	-
Local Government Reform					(500)	-	(500)
Neighbourhood Renewal	(187)	(170)	191	(166)	(2,180)	327	(2,019)
Neighbourhood Renewal Capital	-	(42)	-	(42)	-	42	-
Partnership Fund	(200)	-	-	(200)	-	200	-
Pensions	(1,255)	-	-	(1,255)	-	255	(1,000)
Perpetuity	(847)	(40)	57	(831)	-	19	(812)
Planning	(79)	-	-	(79)	(26)	106	-
Public Protection					(80)	-	(80)
Regeneration & Enterprise Reserve	(800)	(361)	655	(507)	(10,039)	275	(10,271)
Regeneration	(24)	-	24	-	-	-	-
Risk Management - GF	(299)	-	31	(268)	-	68	(200)
Severance	(752)	-	164	(588)	(15)	303	(300)
The Harlow & Gilston Garden	(140)	-	14	(126)	-	126	-
Town Funding							
Transformation	-	(144)	-	(144)	(400)	44	(500)
Total	(18,167)	(7,171)	3,513	(21,825)	(19,351)	16,250	(24,926)

HRA Earmarked Reserves	Bal at 1st April 2023	Transfer in 2023/24	Transfer out 2023/24	Bal at 31 Mar 2024	Transfer in 2024/25	Transfer out 2024/25	Bal at 31st Mar 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Housing Insurance Property Reserve	(70)	(10)	-	(80)	-	-	(80)
Housing Investment Fund	-	(3,583)		(3,583)	(2,931)	-	(6,514)
Insurance claims	(796)	(50)	-	(846)	-	846	-
Insurance Fund	(2,366)	(328)	195	(2,499)	-	1,899	(600)
Pensions Reserve	(1,333)	-	-	(1,333)	-	333	(1,000)
Perpetuity Reserves	(893)	(401)	627	(667)	(556)	549	(674)
Risk Management Reserve	(574)	-	31	(543)	-	47	(496)
Total	(6,033)	(4,373)	854	(9,552)	(3,486)	3,674	(9,364)

Earmarked Grants	Bal at 1st April 2023	Transfer in 2023/24	Transfer out 2023/24	Bal at 31 Mar 2024	Transfer in 2024/25	Transfer out 2024/25	Bal at 31st Mar 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund	(3,876)	(256)	898	(3,234)	(1,372)	1,582	(3,024)
HRA	(26)	-	10	(16)	-	16	-
Total	(3,902)	(256)	908	(3,250)	(1,372)	1,599	(3,024)

All Earmarked Reserves	Bal at 1st April 2023	Transfer in 2023/24	Transfer out 2023/24	Bal at 31 Mar 2024	Transfer in 2024/25	Transfer out 2024/25	Bal at 31st Mar 2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Total Earmarked Reserves	(28,102)	(11,800)	5,275	(34,628)	(24,210)	21,522	(37,315)

Earmarked Reserves - Description and Purpose	
General Fund Reserves	Purpose
Audit Fees	Set aside to meet expect External Audit Fees
Budget Stabilisation	The creation of the reserve will remove the need to make short term decisions related to potential budget reductions
Bush Fair capital improvement works	To fund capital works in the area
Business Rates Equalisation	Created to equalise business rates pressures on the general fund
Climate Change	Pressures relating to climate change
Collection Fund	Established to mitigate possible future deficits within the collection fund
Covid-19 Reserve	Set aside for Covid-19 pressures
Debt financing	Established to finance future costs in relation to borrowing.
Discretionary services fund	To fund services to the community that are not required by statute & to provide financial support to organisations providing such services.
Enterprise Zone	Created to fund works at Enterprise Zone
Environment	Past energy savings, available to finance energy-efficiency schemes & measures to reduce future energy usage & emissions.
Environmental urgent works and improvement	For works and improvements in the Harlow wider town area.
Hardship	To provide hardship funding to support those local residents most significantly impacted by the Covid 19 crisis and least able to meet their council tax payments

Housing benefits subsidy	An equalisation reserve to meet any future reductions in subsidy from previous years' increases.
Housing Temporary Accommodation	Set aside to mitigate against potential increasing cost of Temporary Accommodation
Insurance claims	To meet any costs of future claims resulting from the insolvency of the Council's previous insurer Municipal Mutual Insurance Ltd.
Insurance fund	A self-insurance reserve to meet excess charges in respect of policies for theft, motor insurance, employer's liability, fire and dwellings and other minor items.
Invest To Save & Improve	Established from previous years' windfall income, used to deliver service improvements or to fund efficiency initiatives.
Local Government Reform	Pressures around local government reform
Neighbourhood Renewal	Activities to meet our corporate mission of renewing our neighbourhood
Partnership fund	For implementation costs of potential partnership arrangements for the delivery of the Revenues and Benefits service.
Pension	To Mitigate future risk in Pension fluctuations
Perpetuity	Amounts set aside to meet long-term contractual obligations under a range of covenants.
Planning	Used to transfer resources between years should delivery of the Local Development Framework (LDF) be rescheduled.
Public Protection	Set aside to contribute to public protection initiatives.
Regeneration and enterprise	A reserve to support Harlow's regeneration.
Regeneration	A reserve to support the regeneration of the Town Centre.
Risk management reserve	Established in order to finance future initiatives that mitigate insurable risks and potential insurance claims against the Council and help limit increases in insurance premiums.
Severance reserve	Used to finance redundancy costs in excess of the amount included in the revenue budget.
The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town funding reserve	Established to contribute towards the Gilston Garden Town project and other developments in and around Harlow to ensure maximum benefits in respect of affordable housing and skills and employment initiatives.
Transformation	To support the transformation of the council.

Earmarked Reserves - Description and Purpose

<u>Housing Revenue Account Reserves</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Housing Insurance Property	Repairs & Maintenance insurance for asbestos claims
Housing Investment Fund	Set aside for investing in our housing to meet our corporate mission
Insurance claims	To meet any future costs resulting from the insolvency of the Council's previous insurer Municipal Mutual Insurance Ltd.
Insurance fund	A self-insurance reserve to meet excess charges in respect of policies for theft, motor insurance, employer's liability, fire and dwellings and other minor items.
Pension	To Mitigate future risk in Pension fluctuations
Perpetuity reserves	Amounts set aside to meet long-term contractual obligations under a range of covenants.
Risk management reserve	Established in order to finance future initiatives that mitigate insurable risks and potential insurance claims against the Council and help limit increases in insurance premiums.

<u>Earmarked Grants Reserves</u>	Specific revenue grants received are accounted for in the year of receipt. Any unused grant is held in these reserves until specified expenditure is incurred.
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10. OTHER OPERATING EXPENDITURE

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(5,130)	(Gain)/Loss on the Disposal of Non-Current Assets	4,132
(5,130)	Total Other Operating Expenditure	4,132

11. FINANCING AND INVESTMENT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
7,961	Interest payable and similar charges	7,415
(3,874)	Net interest on the net defined benefit liability / (asset)	(23)
(1,333)	Interest receivable and similar income	(561)
209	Income and expenditure in relation to investment properties and changes in their fair value	196
(201)	Other investment income	(201)
2,762	Total	6,826

12. TAXATION AND NON-SPECIFIC GRANT INCOME

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(8,434)	District Council element of Council Tax Income	(8,556)
(3,251)	District Council element of NNDR income in year	(3,427)
(9,449)	Non-ringfenced government grants	(4,837)
(4,392)	Capital Grants and Contributions	(6,731)
(25,526)	Total	(23,551)

13. EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ANALYSED BY NATURE

Income and expenditure accounted for under generally accepted accounting practices is presented more fully in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. The Council's expenditure and income can be analysed as follows:

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
Expenditure:		
Employee benefits expenses	20,525	22,517
Other services expenses	68,314	73,406
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment	14,771	19,685
Interest payments	4,087	7,392
Loss on disposal	(5,130)	4,132
Total expenditure	102,567	127,131
Income:		
Fees, charges and other service income	(71,262)	(76,227)
Interest and investment income	(1,325)	(565)
Income from council tax and non-domestic rates income	(11,685)	(11,983)
Government grants and contributions	(38,502)	(36,824)
Total income	(122,774)	(125,600)
(Surplus) or Deficit on the Provision of Services	(20,207)	1,531

14. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

2024/25	Council Dwellings £'000	Other Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant & Equipment £'000	Infrastructure Assets £'000	Community Assets £'000	Surplus Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Property, Plant & Equipment £'000
Cost or Valuation at 1 April	856,117	213,999	12,767	12,584	2,837	2,222	26,897	1,127,423
Adjustments to opening balance								
Additions	31,394	6,911	1,347	237	271	-	17,205	57,365
Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Revaluation Reserve	(33,620)	(6,678)	-	-	-	(358)	-	(40,656)
Revaluation increases/ (decreases) recognised in the Surplus/(Deficit) on the Provision of Services	(265)	(4,136)	-	-	-	-	-	(4,401)
Reversal of impairments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Derecognition - Disposals	(3,503)	(4,273)	(6,520)	-	-	(193)	(489)	(14,978)
Derecognition - Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assets reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	910	17,665	-	(1,232)	(346)	(46)	(16,951)	
Other movements in cost or valuation								
at 31 March	851,033	223,488	7,593	11,589	2,762	1,625	26,662	1,124,752
Accumulated Depreciation at 1 April	(145)	(3,303)	(8,314)	(4,449)	(84)	(67)	(28)	(16,390)
Adjustment to opening balance								
Depreciation Charge	(11,936)	(2,948)	(926)	(205)	-	-	-	(16,015)
Depreciation written out to the Revaluation Reserve	11,830	2,706	-	-	-	-	-	14,536
Depreciation written out to the Surplus/(Deficit) on the Provision of Services	105	676	-	-	-	-	-	781
Derecognition - Disposals	-	(64)	6,520	-	-	-	-	6,456
Impairments recognised in RR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assets reclassified (to)/from Held for Sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other movements in cost or valuation	146	-	-	-	85	67	27	325
at 31 March		(2,933)	(2,719)	(4,654)	1	0	(1)	(10,306)
NBV at 31 March 2025	851,033	220,555	4,874	6,935	2,763	1,625	26,661	1,114,445
NBV at 31 March 2024	855,972	210,697	4,453	8,135	2,754	2,154	26,869	1,111,034

2023/24	Council Dwellings £'000	Land & Buildings £'000	Vehicles, Plant & Equipment £'000	Infrastructure £'000	Community Assets £'000	Surplus Assets £'000	Assets Under Construction £'000	Property, Plant & Equipment £'000
Cost or Valuation at 1 April	837,223	210,296	11,217	11,235	3,591	2,871	21,751	1,098,183
Additions	23,226	2,013	1,514	1,349	399	2	4,613	33,116
Reval inc/(dec) in the Revaluation Reserve	8,944	3,229	-	-	-	283	-	12,456
Reval inc/(dec) in the Surp/Def on the POS	307	11	-	-	-	5	-	323
Derecognition- Disposal	(899)	-	-	-	-	(192)	(501)	(1,592)
Derecognition- Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	(152)	564	36	-	(1,153)	(743)	1,033	(415)
Other movements	(12,531)	(2,113)	-	-	-	(4)	-	(14,648)
at 31 March	856,117	213,999	12,767	12,584	2,837	2,222	26,897	1,127,423
Accumulated Depreciation at 1 April	(105)	(3,339)	(8,190)	(4,275)	(66)	(21)	(8)	(16,005)
Depreciation charge	(12,570)	(2,106)	(123)	(174)	(18)	(50)	-	(15,041)
Deprec written out to Revaluation Reserve	12,531	2,113	-	-	-	4	-	14,648
Deprec written out to the Surp/Def on PoS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	(1)	29	-	-	-	-	(19)	9
Othe movements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
at 31 March	(145)	(3,303)	(8,314)	(4,449)	(84)	(67)	(28)	(16,390)
NBV at 31 March 2024	855,972	210,697	4,453	8,135	2,754	2,154	26,869	1,111,034
NBV at 31 March 2023	837,117	206,958	3,025	6,960	3,525	2,849	21,743	1,082,178

14.1 Depreciation

The following useful asset lives and depreciation rates have been used in the calculation of depreciation except in specific cases (for example non-standard construction):

- Council Dwellings – 54 years
- Other Land and Buildings – 4 to 53 years
- Vehicles, Plant, Furniture and Equipment – 5 years
- Infrastructure – 40 years

14.2 Capital Commitments

As at 31 March 2025 the Council had entered into a number of contracts for enhancement to Property, Plant and Equipment and other assets. The major commitments are:

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
971	Housing	625
1,659	New builds	11,496
1,718	Other works	1,700
4,348	Total PPE- Capital Commitments	13,821

14.3 Revaluations

The Council carries out a rolling program that ensures that all property, plant and equipment required to be measured at current value is revalued at least every five years. 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. Valuations of vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment are based on historic cost as a proxy for current values

Other Land and Buildings – all assets are subject to a 5 year rolling review. Major assets are valued every year.

Surplus Assets – are valued at fair value.

Council Dwellings - Housing Beacons were valued by Wilks Head and Eve as at 31 December 2024 as part of the valuation process and reviewed as at 31 March 2025. The number of dwellings pending disposal 31 March 2025 was 33, all being pending 'Right To Buy' sales.

The following details set out significant assumptions applied in estimating the fair values of assets:

- Existing Use Value (EUUV) is defined as the estimated amount for which a property should exchange on the date of valuation between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's-length transaction, after proper marketing. The parties are taken to have acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.
- Where insufficient market-based evidence of fair value is available because an asset is specialised and/or rarely sold, the Code permits the use of Depreciated Replacement Cost (DRC).
- Existing Use Value - Social Housing (EUUV-SH) is the estimated amount for which a council dwelling should exchange on the date of valuation, between a willing buyer and a willing seller, in an arm's-length transaction. There is presumption of proper marketing and that the parties are acting knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion.
- Market Value (MV) is defined as "The estimated amount for which a property should exchange on the date of valuation between a willing buyer and a willing seller in an arm's-length transaction after proper marketing wherein the parties had each acted knowledgeably, prudently and without compulsion".

Carrying value of assets – based on last valuation date

15. HERITAGE ASSETS

Heritage assets held by the Council fall into three categories and are held for their intrinsic value as opposed to potential financial gain. As such, they are unlikely to be sold.

2023/24 Artefact £'000	2023/24 Comm £'000	2023/24 Art Coll £'000	2023/24 Total £'000	Heritage Assets	2024/25 Artefact £'000	2024/25 Comm £'000	2024/25 Art Col £'000	2024/25 Total £'000
				Cost or Valuation				
729	22	1,005	1,756	Start of year	729	22	1,005	1,756
-	-	-	-	Additions	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	Reval Inc/(dec)	-	-	-	-
729	22	1,005	1,756	End of year	729	22	1,005	1,756
				Accum depr/imprmt				
-	(5)	-	(5)	Start of year	-	(6)	-	(6)
-	(1)	-	(1)	Depr charged in yr	-	6	-	6
-	-	-	-	Imprmt rec in CIES	-	-	-	-
-	(6)	-	(6)	End of year	-	-	-	-
729	16	1,005	1,751	Balance end of year	729	22	1,005	1,756

Artefacts held at the Museum of Harlow

The Council's collection of artefacts is reported on the Balance Sheet at the insurance value as assessed by Lyon and Turnbull in April 2010. These assets are deemed to have an indeterminate life and the Council does not consider it necessary to provide for depreciation. The valuation of any donated items is initially assessed by a responsible officer at the museum and if required, by external valuers. There were no acquisitions or disposals from the collection during 2024/25.

Community Heritage Assets

These include the bandstand in the Town Park and six war memorials. The Sculpture Trail along the River Stort was established in 2007/08 and includes four freestanding sculptures and a metal and glass walkway which form the three-and-a-half-mile waterside trail along the river linking Parndon Mill Gallery to the Gibberd Garden in Harlow. These items are listed in the fine arts schedule and are deemed to have an indeterminate life, such that the Council does not consider it appropriate to provide for depreciation.

Fine arts including Sculpture, Civic Gifts, and Regalia

In Harlow there are various works of art on housing estates and the Council has its own fine art collection including three paintings listed as civic gifts. The assets are carried on the Balance Sheet at an insurance value assessed by Doerr Dallas valuations in May 2020. The value is reviewed every five years. The assets are deemed to have an indeterminate life and the Council does not consider it necessary to provide for depreciation. The insurance value of the artworks and sculptures was assessed by Doerr Dallas Valuations in May 2020 and is reviewed periodically to ensure potential material changes can be reflected

Acquisitions are initially recognised at cost, and donated assets at a valuation provided by external valuers with reference to appropriate commercial markets using the most recent and relevant information from sales at auctions.

Other items include a variety of gifts received through civic visits and three chains of office, which are excluded from the Balance Sheet as they are of low monetary value.

Listed Properties

Archaeological Sites

The Council owns a number of archaeological and historic sites within the town. The Council does not consider that reliable cost information or valuations can be obtained for these sites, the assets lack any comparable market values and cost records do not exist. The cost of providing a balance sheet valuation would be disproportionate to any benefit to the user of the Council's financial statements and therefore is excluded from the balance sheet.

Policy of acquisition, preservation, management and disposal of heritage assets.

Fine arts including sculpture, civic gifts and regalia are acquired by donation and as gifts to the Council. Through the insurance valuation a record is maintained of the art works and sculptures held. In addition, the gifts received have been catalogued for reference.

For the museum collections, the museum is accredited to the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and adopts the policies of this body governing acquisitions, disposals and the appropriate ethical and professional management of the museum and its collections.

By their nature there are few acquisitions or disposals of community heritage assets, but the Council has policies to acquire, preserve, manage and dispose of any such assets.

16. HERITAGE ASSETS: SUMMARY OF TRANSACTIONS

2023/24 Total £'000	Heritage Assets	2024/25 Purchases £'000	2024/25 Donations £'000	2024/25 Disposal £'000	2024/25 Depr w/back £'000	2024/25 Total £'000
729	Artefact	-	-	-	-	729
16	Community	-	-	-	6	22
1,005	Art Collection	-	-	-	-	1,005
1,751	Total	-	-	-	6	1,756

17. INVESTMENT PROPERTIES

The following items of income and expenditure have been accounted for in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement (excluding Fair Value movement):

2023/24 £'000	Investment Property Income & Expenditure	2024/25 £'000
(91)	Rental income from investment property	(95)
-	- Direct operating expenses from investment property	
(91)	Net (income) / expenditure	(95)

There are no restrictions on the Council's ability to realise the value inherent in its investment property or on the Council's right to the remittance of income and the proceeds of disposal. The Council has no contractual obligations to purchase, construct or develop investment property or repairs, maintenance or enhancement.

2023/24 £'000	Investment Property Fair Value Movement	2024/25 £'000
1,259	Opening Balance	57,694
56,735	Additions (purchases)	12,667
-	- Disposals	-
(300)	Net gains / (losses) from fair value adjustments taken to the CIES	(288)
57,694	Balance at the end of the year	70,073

Fair Value Hierarchy

All the Council's investment properties have been value assessed as Level 2 on the fair value hierarchy for valuation purposes.

Valuation Techniques Used to Determine Level 2 Fair Value for Investment Property

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

2024/25 FV Hierarchy	Levels (No. Of Prop)			Fair Value £'000
	Quoted prices in active markets for identical assets Level 1	Other significant observable inputs Level 2	Significant unobservable inputs Level 3	
	Farms	-	2	
Golf Club	-	1	-	691
Other	-	6	-	69,025
Balance at 31 March	0	9	0	70,073

2023/24 FV Hierarchy	Levels (No. of Prop)			Fair Value £'000
	Quoted prices in active markets for identical assets Level 1	Other significant observable inputs Level 2	Significant unobservable inputs Level 3	
	Farms	-	2	
Golf Club	-	1	-	691
Other	-	2	-	56,646
Balance at 31 March	0	5	0	57,694

In estimating the fair value of the Council's investment properties, the highest and best use of the properties is their current use. There has been no change in the valuation techniques used during the year for investment properties. The fair value of the Council's investment property is measured annually at each reporting date. All valuations are carried out externally by WHE, in accordance with the methodologies and bases for estimation set out in the professional standards of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. The Council's valuation experts work closely with Finance officers reporting directly to the Chief Financial Officer on a regular basis regarding all valuation matters.

18. INTANGIBLE ASSETS

Intangible fixed assets are those items which, although the cost incurred in their acquisition is of a capital nature, there is no physical tangible asset to show.

2023/24 £'000	Intangible Asset Movement	2024/25 £'000
<u>Balance at start of year:</u>		
4,685	Gross carrying amounts	5,237
(3,958)	Accumulated amortisation	(4,242)
727	Net carrying amount at start of year	995
552	Purchases	183
-	Disposals	(4,063)
(284)	Amorisation	(381)
-	Reversal of past amort on disposal	4,063
995	Net carrying amount at end of year	797
<u>Comprising:</u>		
5,237	Gross carrying amounts	1,357
(4,242)	Accumulated amortisation	(560)
995	Total	797

The Council's intangible non-current assets are predominantly ICT / software items serving various areas of activity within the Council (Housing, Community, Planning, Payroll and HR as examples). The useful lives of these assets vary depending on circumstance but broadly are under 10 years.

19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Financial Assets

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

	Non-current				Current				TOTAL	
	Investments		Debtors		Investment		Debtors		31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000
	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000		
Fair value thru P&L (ST deposits Cash Equivalent)	-	--	-	-	4,890	9,195	-	-	4,890	9,195
Amortised cost- investments	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Amortised cost- debtors	-	-	2,276	2,356	-	-	17,333	19,526	19,609	21,882
Fair value through other comp income – designated equity instruments	4,262	4,294	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,262	4,294
Total financial assets	4,262	4,294	2,276	2,356	4,890	9,195	17,333	19,526	28,761	35,371
Non-financial assets- debtors	-	-	-	-	-	-	(10,835)	(15,279)	(10,835)	(15,279)
Total	4,262	4,294	2,276	2,356	4,890	9,195	6,498	4,247	17,926	20,092

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities carried in the balance sheet are measured at amortised cost:

Financial Liabilities	Non-current				Current				TOTAL	
	Borrowing		Creditors		Borrowing		Creditors		31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000
	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000	31-Mar 2024 £'000	31-Mar 2025 £'000		
Fair value through profit or loss	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Amortised cost- Borrowing	(211,837)	(211,837)	-	-	(59,081)	(101,500)	-	-	(270,918)	(313,337)
Amortised cost- Creditors	-	-	(532)	(253)	-	-	(23,034)	(21,981)	(23,566)	(22,234)
Amortised cost- Leases	(887)	(671)	-	-	-	-	(212)	(216)	(1,099)	(887)
Total financial liabilities	(212,724)	(212,508)	(532)	(253)	(59,081)	(101,500)	(23,246)	(22,197)	(295,583)	(336,458)
Liabilities not defined as Fin. Instruments	-	-	-	-	-	-	19,088	11,453	19,088	11,453
Total	(212,724)	(212,508)	(532)	(253)	(59,081)	(101,500)	(4,158)	(10,744)	(276,495)	(325,005)

Investments in Equity Instruments Designated at Fair Value through Other Comprehensive Income

The following equity instruments have been designated at fair value through other comprehensive income.

The Council invested £2 million in 2015/16 in the Churches, Charities and Local Authorities Investment Management Ltd. (CCLA) specialist property fund (which is only available to local authority investors) to achieve an attractive income and capital growth over time. The units in the fund are valued based on the overall value of the property portfolio. The Council is free to divest itself of its investments at any time and would receive a payment based on the number of units held multiplied by the quoted redemption price per unit. The gain on the instrument of £35k in 2024/25 (a loss of £72,791 in 2023/24) has been credited to Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

The Council have invested £450,000 in £1 ordinary shares in its wholly owned company Harlow Trading Services (Housing & Regeneration Ltd).

The Council invested £2 million in the Royal London Cash Plus Fund in 2017/18 in order to diversify its investments held for treasury management purposes. The amount invested is fully liquid and the Council is free to divest itself of its investment at any time, receiving a payment based on the number of units held multiplied by the quoted redemption price per unit. The loss on the instrument of £2k in 2024/25 (a gain of £9,246 in 2023/24) has been charged to Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement.

2023/24 £'000	Fair Value is assessed	2024/25 £'000
1,793	CCLA Property Fund	1,828
450	Harlow Trading Services HTS (purchase of shares)	450
2,018	Royal London Cash + Fund	2,016
4,261	Total non-current assets (Long Term)	4,294

Note: Fair value is assessed at input level 1 of the fair value hierarchy - unadjusted quoted prices in active markets for identical assets.

Income, Expense, Gains and Losses

2023/24 Surplus or Deficit on the Provisio n of Services £'000	2023/24 Other Comprehe n-sive Income and Expenditur e £'000		2024/25 Surplus or Deficit on the Provisio n of Services £'000	2024/25 Other Comprehen- sive Income and Expenditure £'000
-	64	Net gain/loss on; Investment in equity instrument designated at fair value through other comp income	-	(32)
-	64	Total net gain/loss	-	(32)
* -	-	Interest revenue; Fin asset measured at amortised cost	(560)	-
* (1,321)	-	Fin asset measured at FVPL	-	-
* (12)	-	Fin asset measured at FVOCI	-	-
(1,333)	-	Total interest revenue (note 11- interest receivable)	(560)	-
7,961	-	Interest Expense (note 11- interest payable)	10,641	-

Fair Values of Financial Instruments

The fair value of short-term instruments, including trade payables and receivables, is assumed to be approximate to the carrying amount given the low and stable interest rate environment.

The fair value of most financial assets, including money market and other pooled funds, is taken from the market price (level 1 of the fair value hierarchy – quoted prices in active markets for identical assets). The fair value of loans for service purposes is classed as level 2 of the hierarchy - calculated from inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset, e.g. interest rates or yields for similar instruments

Financial liabilities, Public Works Loan Board (PWL) borrowing, is carried in the balance sheet at amortised cost. The fair value (level 2 of the hierarchy - calculated from inputs other than quoted prices that are observable for the asset, e.g., interest rates or yields for similar instruments) has been estimated by discounting the contractual cash flows over the whole life of the instrument at the appropriate market rate for local authority loans and with the following assumptions:

- the market rate is the published interest rate for new certainty rate loans arranged on 31st March 2025;
- no early repayment or impairment is recognised.

Fair values are as follows:

	Carrying amount 31-03-2024 £'000 RESTATED	Fair Value 31-03-2024 £'000 RESTATED	Carrying amount 31-03-2025 £'000	Fair Value 31-03-2025 £'000
Financial assets;				
LT Investments	4,262	3,812	4,294	3,844
ST deposits (cash equiv)	4,890	4,890	9,195	9,195
ST Debtors- FI's	6,498	6,498	4,247	4,247
ST Debtors- not FI's	10,835	10,835	15,279	15,279
Other LT debtors	2,276	2,276	2,356	2,356
Total	28,761	28,311	35,371	34,921
Financial Liabilities;				
LT Borrowing	(211,837)	(211,837)	(211,837)	(182,819)
ST Borrowing	(59,081)	(59,000)	(101,500)	(103,704)
Creditors- FI's	(4,478)	(4,478)	(10,781)	(10,781)
ST Creditors- not FI's	(19,088)	(19,088)	(11,453)	(11,453)
Other LT creditors (Leases)	(1,099)	(887)	(887)	(671)
Total	(295,583)	(295,289)	(336,458)	(309,428)

* Restated '23/24, did not reconcile to FI total in note43 and did not disclose FI assets as required. The fair value of financial liabilities is greater than the carrying amount because the Council's portfolio of loans includes a number of fixed rate loans where the interest rate payable is higher than the current rates available for similar loans in the market at the Balance Sheet date.

Transfers between Levels of the Fair Value Hierarchy and Changes in the Valuation Technique

There were no transfers or changes during the year.

20. INVENTORY

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
3	Leah Manning Provisions	3
7	Reprographics Stock	6
7	Franking Machine	1
17	Playhouse Stock	22
9	Pet's Corner stock	6
0	Latton Bush Centre Stock	0
9	Refuse & Recycling stock	14
4	Museum Supplies	3
1	Sumners Farm Close Stock	-
57	Total	55

21. SHORT TERM DEBTORS

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
6,498	Trade Receivables	4,247
132	Payments in advance / Prepayments	268
10,703	Other Receivables	15,011
17,333	Total	19,526

The table below shows the amount that was owed to the Council as at 31 March 2025 by third parties, together with amounts paid by the Council in advance of receipt of goods or services.

22. DEBTORS FOR LOCAL TAXATION

The past due but not impaired amount for local taxation (council tax and non-domestic rates) can be analysed by age as follows:

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
	- Less than 3 months	-
	- 3 to 6 months	-
1,203	6 months to 1 year	1,302
3,479	More than 1 year	3,792
4,682	Total	5,094

23. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
7	Cash held by officers	5
1,038	Bank account balances	2,635
4,939	Short Term Deposits / Cash Equivalents	9,195
5,984	Total Cash & Cash Equivalents (Assets)	11,835
	- Cash and Bank balances	-
	- Short Term Deposits / Cash Equivalents	-
	- Total Cash & Cash Equivalents (Liabilities)	-

24. ASSETS HELD FOR SALE (CURRENT ONLY)

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
3,044	Start of the Year	2,353
	- Assets newly classified as HfS PPE	
	- Assets declassified as HfS PPE	
(691)	Assets Sold	(2,354)
	- Other Movements	
2,353	End of the Year	(0)

25. CREDITORS

2023/24 £'000	Short Term Creditors	2024/25 £'000
(4,158)	Trade payables	(10,744)
(2,603)	Receipts in advance	(5,458)
(16,485)	Other payables	(5,996)
(23,246)	Total	(22,197)

2023/24 £'000	Long Term Creditors	2024/25 £'000
(532)	Leaseholder and Tenant	(253)
(532)	Total	(253)

26. PROVISIONS (CURRENT ONLY)

2023/24 £'000	NDR Appeals	2024/25 £'000
(1,542)	Opening Balance	(1,063)
(365)	Increase in provision during year	(262)
844	Utilised during year	-
(1,063)	Closing Balance	(1,325)

The total provision for NDR appeals at 31st March 2025 is (£3.312m); the above table reflects only the Council's share (40%) of the provision, at a value of (£1.325m).

	Other Provisions	
(106)	Opening Balance	(106)
-	Increase in provision during year	(160)
-	Utilised during year	106
(106)	Closing Balance	(160)

(1,168)	All Provisions Total Closing Balance	(1,485)
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27. USABLE RESERVES

Movements in the Council's usable reserves are detailed in the Movement in Reserves Statement.

28. UNUSABLE RESERVES

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(555,411)	Revaluation Reserve	(526,729)
188	Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve	156
(249,633)	Capital Adjustment Account	(257,278)
2	Financial Instruments Adjustment Account	8
(782)	Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve	(840)
5,299	Pension Reserve	4,627
(4,167)	Collection Fund Adjustment Account	258
184	Accumulated Absences Account	184
(804,320)	Total	(779,614)

28.1 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:

- re-valued 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.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(552,758)	Balance 1 April	(555,411)
(30,089)	Upward revaluation of assets	(16,436)
17,634	Downward reval. of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Sur/Def on PoS	42,557
(12,455)	Movement in year	
9,802	Difference between fair value depreciation and historical cost depreciation	-
-	- Accumulated gains on assets sold or scrapped	2,561
-	- Other amounts written off to the Capital Adjustment Account	
9,802	Amount written off to the Capital Adjustment Account	2,561
(555,411)	Balance 31 March	(526,729)

28.2 Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve

The Financial Instruments Revaluation Reserve contains the gains made by the Council arising from increases in the value of its investments that are measured at fair value through Other Comprehensive Income. The balance is reduced when investments with accumulated gains are:

- revalued downwards or impaired and the gains are lost,
- disposed of and the gains are realized

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
125	Balance 1 April	188
-	- Upward revaluation of assets	(32)
63	Downward revaluation of assets and impairment losses not charged to the Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services	-
63		(32)
-	- Accumulated gains or losses on assets sold and maturing assets written out to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement as part of other investment income	-
-	- Accumulated gains or losses on assets sold and maturing assets written out to the General Fund balances for financial assets designated to fair value through other comprehensive income	-
188	Balance 31 March	156

28.3 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 and 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, and enhancement. The account contains accumulated gains and losses on Investment Properties and gains recognised on donated assets that have yet to be consumed by the Council. 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.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(237,464)	Balance 1 April	(249,633)
	<u>Reversal of Items relating to capital expenditure debited/credited to the CIES</u>	
15,086	Charges for depreciation and impairment of non-current assets (PPE)	15,684
(322)	Net revaluation gains/losses on non-current assets (PPE)	3,620
7	Amortisation of intangible assets	381
579	Revenue expenditure funded from capital under statute	1,016
2,645	Amounts of non-current assets w/off on disposal/sale as part of the gain/loss on disposal to CIES	10,876
	- Expected Credit Gains or Losses on Financial Instruments	
	- Other adjustments	
17,995	Total	31,577
(9,802)	Adjusting Amounts written out of the Revaluation Reserve	(2,561)
8,193	Net written out amount of the cost of non-current assets consumed in the year	29,016
(1,127)	Use of Capital Receipts Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(15,582)
(12,845)	Use of Major Repairs Reserve to finance new capital expenditure	(12,140)
(3,616)	Capital Grants and Contributions credited to the CIES that have been applied to capital financing	(5,603)
(1,696)	Application of grants to capital financing from the capital grants unapplied account	(2,159)
(927)	Statutory provision for the financing of capital investment charged against the General Fund balances	(1,307)
(451)	Capital expenditure charged against the General Fund balances	(157)
(20,662)	Total	(36,948)
300	Movements in the market value of Investment Properties debited/credited to the CIES	288
(249,633)	Balance 31 March	(257,278)

28.4 Financial Instruments Adjustment Account

The financial Instruments Adjustment Account absorbs the timing differences arising from the different arrangements for accounting for income and expenses relating to certain financial instruments and for bearing losses or benefiting from gains per statutory provisions.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
5	Balance 1 April	2
	- Premiums incurred in the year and charged to the CIES	-
	- Proportion of premiums incurred in previous financial years to be charged against the General Fund balance in accordance with statutory requirements	-
(3)	Amount by which finance costs charged to the CIES are different from finance costs chargeable in the year in accordance with statutory requirements	6
2	Balance 31 March	8

28.5 Deferred Capital Receipts Reserve

The deferred capital receipts reserve holds the gains recognised on the disposal of non-current assets but for which cash settlement has yet to take place. Under statutory arrangements, the authority does not treat these gains as usable for financing new capital expenditure until they are backed by cash receipts. When the deferred cash settlement eventually takes place, amounts are transferred to the capital receipts reserve.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(851)	Balance 1 April	(782)
(5)	Transfer of deferred sale proceeds credited as part of the gain/loss on disposal to the CIES	(132)
74	Transfer to the capital receipts reserve upon receipt of cash	74
(782)	Balance 31 March	(840)

28.6 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 earned 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 require benefits earned to be financed as the Council makes employer's contributions to the Pension Fund or pays pensions for which it is directly responsible. The debit balance on the Pensions Reserve therefore shows a substantial shortfall in the resources the Council has set aside compared to the benefits earned by past and current employees. The statutory arrangements ensure that funding will have been set aside by the time the benefits come to be paid.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
5,805	Balance 1 April	5,299
-	<i>Opening balance adjustment per IAS19 actuary report</i>	-
4,639	Remeasurements of the net defined benefit liability/asset	507
(1,461)	Reversal of items relating to retirement benefits dr/cr to Surplus/Deficit on Provision of Services in the CIES	2,735
(3,684)	Employer's pensions contributions and direct payments to pensioners payable in the year	(3,914)
5,299	Balance 31 March	4,627

28.7 Collection Fund Adjustment Account

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

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(1,662)	Balance 1 April	(4,167)
(2,505)	Amount by which council tax and non-domestic rates income credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement is different from council tax income calculated for the year in accordance with statutory requirements	4,425
(4,167)	Balance 31 March	258

28.8 Accumulated Absences Adjustment 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, e.g. annual leave entitlement carried forward at 31st March. Statutory arrangements require that the impact on the General Fund balance is neutralized by transfers to or from the account.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
160	Balance 1 April	184
(160)	Settlement or cancellation of accrual made at the end of the preceding year	(184)
184	Amounts accrued at the end of the current year	184
24	Amount by which officer remuneration charged to the CIES on an accruals basis is different from remuneration chargeable in year in accordance with statutory requirements	0
184	Balance 31 March	184

29. CASHFLOW STATEMENT - OPERATING ACTIVITIES

The cash flows for operating activities include the following items.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
2,762	Interest received	572
(8,166)	Interest paid	(6,936)
201	Dividends received	201
(5,203)	Total	(6,163)

The Net Surplus/ (Deficit) on the Provision of Services has been adjusted for the following non-cash movements:

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
15,086	Depreciation of tangible assets	15,684
(322)	Impairment and downward valuations	3,620
7	Amortisation of intangible	381
-	- Deferred revenue/ deferred payment agreements (IFRS 15)	-
-	- Inc/(dec) in provision for doubtful debts	-
546	Inc/(dec) in creditors	4,063
(3,361)	(Inc)/dec in debtors	410
(5)	(Inc)/dec in inventory	1
(5,145)	Movement in pension liability	(1,179)
2,645	Carrying amount of non-current assets and non-current assets held for sale, sold or derecognised	10,876
(179)	Other non-cash items charged to the net surplus or deficit on the provision of services	604
9,272	Total	34,459

The Net Surplus/(Deficit) on the Provision of Services has been adjusted for the following items which are investing and financing activities:

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(7,778)	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(6,754)
-	- Net adjustment from the sale of short and long term investments not considered cash equivalents	-
(5,376)	Capital Grants credited to surplus or deficit on the provision of services	(7,855)
(13,154)	Total	(14,609)

30. CASHFLOW STATEMENT - INVESTING ACTIVITIES

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(91,473)	Purchase of property, plant and equipment, investment property and intangible assets	(70,215)
	- Purchase of short-term and long-term investments	-
(574)	Other payments for investing activities	(2,249)
7,847	Proceeds from the sale of property, plant & equipment, investment property and intangible assets	6,695
	- Proceeds from short-term and long-term investments	-
5,496	Other receipts from investing activities	19,089
(78,704)	Net cash flows from investing activities	(46,680)

31. CASHFLOW STATEMENT - FINANCING ACTIVITIES

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
65,000	Cash receipts of short and long term borrowing	206,500
6,054	Other receipts for financing activities	(2,197)
	- Cash payments for the reduction of o/s liabilities relating to finance leases and BS PFI contracts	-
(28,000)	Repayments of short- and long-term borrowing	(164,000)
3,313	Other payments for financing activities	(6,091)
46,367	Net cash flows from financing activities	34,212

32. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

The Council paid the following amounts to Members of the Council during the year.

2023/24 £'000	Amounts paid to Members of the Council during the year.	2024/25 £'000
187	Allowances	363
4	Expenses	3
191	Total	366

Member allowances increased in 2024/25, approved by Full Council 19th September 2024 (item-36).

33. OFFICERS' REMUNERATION

Senior Officers Remuneration

2024/25 (01/04/2024 to 03/02/2025)		Salary, Fees and Allowances £'000	Comp for loss of office £'000	Total exc pension contr. £'000	Pension Contr. £'000	Total £'000
Director of Governance and Corporate Services (Monitoring Officer)	01.04.24 - 05.04.24	4,086	78,850	82,936	455	83,391
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	01.04.24 - 04.11.24	81,106	-	81,106	15,541	96,647
Interim Chief Executive - Yvonne Rees	01.04.24 - 03.10.24	228,923	-	228,923	-	228,923
Interim Director of Strategic Growth and Regeneration	29.04.24 - 03.10.24	123,046	-	123,046	-	123,046
Assistant Director (S151 Officer)	18.10.24 - 31.01.25	29,068	-	29,068	6,482	35,550
Legal Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)	11.04.24 - 31.01.25	70,243	-	70,243	15,664	85,907
Totals		536,472	78,850	615,322	38,142	653,464

2024/25 (03/02/2025 to 31/03/2025)		Salary, Fees and Allowances £'000	Comp for loss of office £'000	Total exc pension contr. £'000	Pension Contr. £'000	Total £'000
Managing Director	01.02.25 - 31.03.25	27,500	-	27,500	6,133	33,633
Executive Director (Housing Focus)	01.02.25 - 31.03.25	33,250	-	33,250	7,415	40,665
Interim Assistant Director Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)	10.03.25 - 31.03.25	14,790	-	14,790	-	14,790
Assistant Director (S151 Officer)	01.02.25 - 31.03.25	16,926	-	16,926	3,774	20,700
Legal Services Manager (Monitoring Officer)	01.02.25 - 25.02.25	9,478	-	9,478	1,236	10,714
Total		101,944	-	101,944	18,558	120,502

2023/24		Salary, Fees and Allowances £'000	Comp for loss of office £'000	Total exc pension contr. £'000	Pension Contr. £'000	Total £'000
Chief Executive - Andrew Bramidge	01.04.23 - 31.01.24	123,006	32,766	155,772	26,196	181,968
Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance (S151 Officer)	01.04.23 - 31.03.24	115,288	-	115,288	25,709	140,997
Director of Housing	01.04.23 - 31.03.24	85,309	23,907	109,216	23,164	132,380
Director of Communities and Environment	01.04.23 - 11.04.23	4,029	67,713	71,742	558	72,300
Director of Governance and Corporate Services (Monitoring Officer)	01.04.23 - 31.03.24	107,850	-	107,850	24,023	131,873
Interim Chief Executive	16.02.24 - 31.03.24	39,955	-	39,955	-	39,955
Interim Director of Housing	20.06.23 - 15.01.24	132,480	-	132,480	-	132,480
Total		607,917	124,386	732,303	99,650	831,953

The table below shows the number of Council officers whose remuneration exceeds £50,000 per annum grouped into £5,000 bands. The banding table below is comprehensive and includes senior employees who are shown in the table of senior employees, shown above.

	2023/24	2024/25
£50,000 to £54,999	16	10
£55,000 to £59,999	6	12
£60,000 to £64,999	11	9
£65,000 to £69,999	3	7
£70,000 to £74,999	3	2
£75,000 to £79,999	1	-
£80,000 to £84,999	6	2
£85,000 to £89,999	-	3
£90,000 to £94,999	-	2
£95,000 to £99,999	1	1
Over £99,999	5	2
Total	52	50

Remuneration is the amount paid to or receivable by an employee and includes gross pay (i.e. before deduction of the employee's pension contributions, tax and National Insurance), sums due by way of expense allowances, and the estimated monetary value of any additional benefits that are non-cash in their nature. Also included, where applicable, are amounts relating to retirement and redundancy lump sum payments and pay in lieu of notice. Contributions made by the Council to the pension scheme are not included in this table.

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

Exit package cost band (including special payments)	Number of comp redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of exit packages by cost band		Total cost of exit packages in each band £	
	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25	23/24	24/25
£0-£20,000	-	-	3	5	3	5	24,040	29,359
£20,001-£40,000	-	1	2	-	2	1	56,673	29,485
£40,000-£60,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£60,001-£80,000	2	-	-	1	2	1	139,131	78,850
£80,001-£100,000.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
... £200,001-£250,000	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	215,694
Total	2	2	5	6	7	8	219,844	353,388

34. EXTERNAL AUDIT COSTS

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
198	Fees payable to external auditors with regard to external audit services carried out by the appointed auditor	215
-	- Fees payable to external auditors for the certification of grant claims & returns (HB only)	57
-	- Refund of fee payable to external auditors	-
198	Total	272

35. GRANT INCOME

2023/24 £'000	Grants credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement- Taxation and Non-specific Grant Income	2024/25 £'000
(361)	Council Tax Sharing Agreement	(392)
(572)	New Homes Bonus Grant	(475)
(686)	Funding Guarantee	(1,011)
(26)	Levy Account Surplus Grant	(26)
(128)	RSG	(136)
(7,550)	S31 Grants	(2,775)
(126)	Service Grant	(22)
(4,392)	Capital Grants and Contributions	(6,731)
(13,841)	Total Taxation and Non-specific grants Income	(11,568)

2023/24 £'000	Grants credited to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement- Net Cost of Services	2024/25 £'000
(256)	DWP- Council Tax Rebate Scheme	-
(113)	DWP- Disc Hou benefits	(167)
(319)	DWP- HB subsidy admin	(289)
(18)	DWP- HB subsidy Award Accuracy Initiative HBAA	-
(4)	DWP- kickstart	-
(189)	DWP Local Council Tax Support	-
(8,249)	DWP Rent Allowances	(9,105)
(12,047)	DWP Rent Rebates	(10,663)
(286)	DWP Service Grant	-
(17)	DWP Verification of Earnings and Pensions	(6)
(42)	DWP Other Grants	-
(12)	BEIS New Burdens Admin Grant	-

(2) DLUHC Affordable Housing Investment	-
(170) DLUHC Asylum Dispersal	(71)
DLUHC Cost of Collection	(113)
(985) DLUHC DFG	(1,124)
(36) DLUHC Domestic Abuse	(37)
(26) DLUHC Elections Act 2022	(205)
(728) DLUHC Homelessness Prevention	(830)
- DLUHC New burdens LA IT	(51)
(86) DLUHC Levelling Up Local Growth Capacity Support Grant	(149)
DLUHC Long Term Plan Capacity	(250)
(8) DLUHC New Burdens	(3)
(3) DLUHC Pavement Licensing	-
DLUHC Redmond Review	(55)
(291) DLUHC Rough Sleepers	(166)
(18) DLUHC Tenant Satisfaction Measures	(18)
(86) DLUHC Towns Fund	-
(54) DLUHC UK Shared Prosperity Fund	(499)
(21) DLUHC Other Grants	(3)
(68) HE Growth Area Funding	-
(25) ECC Caseworker Funding	(24)
(238) ECC Collection Investment Income	(196)
(5) ECC COMF Funding	
9 ECC Hardship Fund	(27)
(18) ECC Housing Domestic Abuse co-ordinator	(24)
(77) ECC Fraud and Error Reduction Incentive Scheme	(140)
(6) ECC Homes for Ukraine	-
6 ECC LA Treescape Fund	-
ECC NEHA Contribution	(889)
(13) ASB Hot Spot Pilot	(15)
(61) PFCC Safer Streets	(6)
(21) Royal Opera House	-
(99) UKSPF	-
Rural Payments Agency	(23)
(109) Other Smaller Grants	(100)
(24,791) Total Grant Income to Services	(25,257)
(38,632) Total Grant Income to General Fund and HRA	(36,824)

Long Term Liabilities- Grant Receipts in Advance (Capital)

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
(12,061)	Town Fund	(16,594)
	Levelling Up Fund	(4,457)
(55)	Changing Places	
	Food Waste Grant	(76)
(19)	UKSPF	(19)
(12,135)	Total	(21,146)

36. RELATED PARTIES

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, prescribes the terms of many of the transactions that the Council has with other parties (such as Council Tax bills, or Housing Benefits) and provides the majority of its funding in the form of grants. Grant receipts outstanding at 31 March 2025 are shown in Note 35.

Members

Members have direct control over the Council's financial and operating policies. The total of Members' allowances is disclosed in Note 32. In addition, Members, chief officers and heads of service disclose, by way of declaration, anything which could result in them being a related party of the Council and any transactions with the Council. Declarations made by Members in 2024/25 are summarised on the Council's website at: www.harlow.gov.uk/councillor-declarations.

Senior Officers

There are no known senior officer interests.

Other Public Bodies (subject to common control by Central Government):

Essex County Council – four Council Members were also Members of Essex County Council during the year. Material transactions which took place with related parties are as follows:

	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Debtors at 31/03/2025 £'000	Creditors at 31/03/2025 £'000
Essex County Council	(3,670)	224	831	(132)
HTS Ltd	(1,585)	36,369	1,810	(1,664)
Veolia	(17)	3,784	17	(622)
Total	(5,272)	40,377	2,659	(2,418)

	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Debtors at 31/03/2024 £'000	Creditors at 31/03/2024 £'000
Essex County Council	(2,472)	200	479	(37)
HTS Ltd	(1,946)	42,678	1,275	(1,407)
Veolia	-	4,724	-	(632)
Total	(4,418)	47,602	1,754	(2,076)

Entities controlled or significantly influenced by the Council

Harlow Trading Services Ltd. (HTS) is a subsidiary company, wholly owned by the Council and subject to its control, which provides a range of environmental and property maintenance services in the district.

37. 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), along 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), a measure of the capital expenditure incurred historically by the Council that has yet to be financed. The movement in CFR is analysed in the second part of this note.

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
302,231	Opening Capital Financing Requirement	372,273
	Capital Investment:	
33,116	Property Plant and Equipment	57,367
56,735	Investment Properties	12,667
275	Intangible Assets	183
579	Rev. Exp. Funded from Capital Under Statute	1,016
90,704	Total Capital Investment	71,232
	Sources of Finance:	
(1,127)	Capital receipts	(15,582)
(5,312)	Government Grants and other contributions	(12,140)
(12,845)	Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)	(7,762)
(19,284)	Total	(35,484)
	Set Aside from revenue:	
(451)	Direct revenue contributions	(157)
(927)	Minimum revenue provision (MRP)	(1,307)
(1,378)	Total	(1,464)
372,273	Closing Capital Financing Requirement	406,557
70,042	Increase in underlying need to borrow (unsupported by Government Financial Assistance)	34,284
70,042	Increase/(Decrease) in Capital Financing Requirement	34,284

38. LEASES

Council as Lessee

In 2019/20 the Council acquired a number of vehicles under a finance lease. These assets are carried as property, plant, and equipment in the balance sheet at the following net amount.

2023/24 £'000	Finance Leases - Vehicles, plant, furniture and equipment	2024/25 £'000
1,405	Start of the year	1,171
-	- Additions	-
-	- Revaluations	-
(234)	Depreciation and amortisation	(234)
-	- Disposals	-
1,171	End of the year	937

Transactions under leases

2023/24 £'000	Vehicles only (under refuse contract)	2024/25 £'000
	CIES;	
	- Interest expense on lease liabilities	-
	- Expense relating to short-term leases	-
	- Expense relating to exempt leases of low-value items	-
	- Variable lease payments not included in the measure of lease liabilities	-
	- Income from subletting right-of-use assets	-
	- Gains or losses arising from sale and leaseback transactions	-
	Cash Flow Statement;	
1,157	Minimum lease payments	1,157

Maturity analysis of lease liabilities

2023/24 £'000	Vehicles only (under refuse contract)	2024/25 £'000
212	Less than 1 year	216
887	One to five years	671
	- More than five years	-
1,099	Total discounted liabilities	887

Council as Lessor

The Council has leased out property in the Town Centre to the NatWest Bank on a finance lease, with a remaining term of 70 years.

The Council has a gross investment in the lease made up of the minimum lease payments expected to be received over the remaining term and the residual value anticipated for the property when the lease comes to an end.

The minimum lease payments comprise settlement of the long-term debtor for the interest in the property acquired by the lessee and finance income that will be earned by the Council in future years whilst the debtor remains outstanding.

The Council leases out property and equipment under operational leases. The future minimum lease payments receivable are:

2023/24 £'000	Operating leases as lessor only (no finance finances as lessor)	2024/25 £'000
712	Less than 1 year	726
2,035	One to five years	2,302
2,106	More than five years	2,551
4,853	Total discounted receivables	5,579

In 2024/25 £233,709 contingent rents were receivable by the Council (2023/24 £233,709).

39. CAPITALISATION OF BORROWING COSTS

Finance costs of £3.227m have incurred during 2024/25 for the property acquisition of burnt mills have been capitalised. Capitalised spend on the total project up to 31st March 2025 totaled £56.567m, and a rate of 5.44% was applied. This interest rate is a calculation of the average borrowing costs incurred within the financial year. Capitalisation will cease on practical completion of the project which will then be categorised and included in the balance sheet in accordance with proper practices.

40. DEFINED BENEFIT PENSION SCHEME

Participation in the Pension Scheme

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 (for those benefits) that need to be disclosed at the time that employees earn their future entitlement.

The Council participates in the Local Government Pension Scheme:

- The scheme is administered locally by Essex County Council and 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.
- The scheme also includes arrangements for the award of discretionary post-retirement benefits upon early retirement – an unfunded defined benefit arrangement, under which liabilities are recognised when awards are made, there are no investment assets built up to meet those liabilities and cash has to be generated to meet actual pension payments as they eventually fall due.
- The scheme is operated under the regulatory framework for the Local Government Pension Scheme and the governance of the scheme is the responsibility of the pensions committee of Essex County Council. Policy is determined in accordance with the Pensions Fund Regulations.
- The principal risks to the Council of the scheme are the longevity assumptions, statutory changes to the scheme, structural changes to the scheme (i.e. large-scale withdrawals from the scheme), changes to inflation, bond yields and the performance of the equity investments held by the scheme. These are mitigated to a certain extent by the statutory requirements to charge to the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account the amounts required by the statute as described in the accountancy policies note.

Asset Ceiling

When the calculation results in an asset for the Council, the asset must be recognised at the lower of that asset and the asset ceiling which is calculated as the net present value of future costs less net present value of future contributions over the future working lifetime. Where the asset ceiling is the lower, an adjustment is required, which is included as a remeasurement.

Transactions Relating to Post-Employment Benefits

The costs of retirement are recognised and reported in the Cost of Service when they are earned by the employees, rather than when the benefits are eventually paid. However, the charge required to be made to the Council Tax is based on the cash payable in the year, so the real costs 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:

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
	Cost of services:	
	Service cost comprising:	
2,221	Current service costs	2,576
-	Past service costs	-
	Financing and Investment income and exp:	
(3,874)	Net interest expense	(23)
192	Admin costs	182
(1,461)	Total post emp benefit charged to the surplus/deficit on PoS	2,735
	Other post emp benefits charge to the CIES	

	Remeasurement of the net defined benefit liability comprising:	
19,397	Return on plan assets (exc. amount inc. the net interest exp.)	253
2,795	Actuarial gain/loss arising on changes in financial assumptions	22,796
3,067	Actuarial gain/loss arising on changes in demographic assumption	-
(672)	Actuarial (gains) and losses arising from liability other experience	-
(29,226)	Changes in asset ceiling	(23,556)
(4,639)	Total post emp benefit charged to the CIES	(507)
	Movement in Reserves Statement	
(1,461)	Rev of net charges made to sur/def on PoS for post emp ben.	2,735
	Actual amount charged to GF for pensions in year:	
3,684	Employer's contributions payable to scheme	3,914
	Retirement benefits payable to pensioners	

Pensions Assets and Liabilities Recognized in the Balance Sheet

The amount included in the Balance Sheet arising from the Council's obligation in respect of its defined benefit plan is as follows.

2023/24		2024/25
£'000		£'000
(206,881)	Present value of the defined benefit obligation	(185,282)
302,375	Fair value of plan assets	309,117
95,494	Net (Deficit)/Surplus	123,835
(95,494)	Effect of asset ceiling	(123,835)
(5,299)	PV of disc. obligations	(4,627)
(5,299)	Net liability arising from the defined benefit obligation	(4,627)

Reconciliation of the Movements in the Fair Value of the Scheme (Plan) Assets

2023/24		2024/25
£'000		£'000
276,461	Opening fair value of scheme assets	302,375
-	Opening balance adjustment per IAS19 actuary report	-
14,174	Interest income	14,943
19,397	Return on assets less interest	253
(192)	Administration expenses	(182)
3,684	Contribution from employer	3,914
927	Contribution from employees into scheme	942
(12,076)	Benefits paid	(13,128)
302,375	Closing fair value of scheme assets	309,117

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

2023/24		2024/25
£'000		£'000
(215,998)	Opening balance at 1st April	(212,180)
-	Opening balance adjustment per IAS19 actuary report	-
(2,210)	Current service costs	(2,407)
(10,300)	Interest costs	(10,135)
(927)	Contributions by scheme participants	(942)
2,795	Change in financial assumptions	22,796
	Remeasurement gain/(loss):	
3,067	- Actuarial gain/loss arising on changes in demographic assumptions	-
(672)	- Actuarial gain/loss arising from liability experience	-
11,424	Benefits paid	12,465
(11)	Past service costs	(169)
652	Unfunded pension payment	663
(212,180)	Closing balance at 31st March (without asset ceiling adj.)	(189,909)

2023/24 £'000	Reconciliation of asset ceiling	2024/25 £'000
(66,268)	Start of the year	(95,494)
	- Interest on impact asset ceiling	(4,785)
	Actuarial loss/(gain);	
66,268	Reversal of previous years asset ceiling	95,494
(95,494)	In year asset ceiling	(119,050)
(29,226)	Total Actuarial loss/(gain) charged to CIES	(23,556)
(95,494)	End of year	(123,835)

The Council has guaranteed any possible future unfunded pension fund liabilities of HTS Ltd. as a result of its employees being members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. Such liabilities are considered most unlikely, and it is currently not possible to estimate any potential cost to the Council.

Local Government Pension Scheme Assets Comprised

2023/24 Quoted £'000	2023/24 Unquot ed £'000	2023/24 Total £'000	Fair value of scheme assets	2024/25 Quoted £'000	2024/25 Unquot ed£'000	2024/25 Total £'000
	7,459	7,459	Cash and Cash equivalents		6,029	6,029
			Equity instruments:			
-		-	• Overseas	-		-
			Private equity:			
167,487		167,487	• Overseas	169,720		169,720
	10,086	10,086	• Other		-	-
			Debt securities:			
5,402		5,402	• Index linked Gov	4,685		4,685
			Property:			
4,537	16,334	20,871	• All	4,637	20,315	24,952
			Others:			
	22,986	22,986	• Infrastructure		30,293	30,293
	7,975	7,975	• Timber		9,274	9,274
	4,926	4,926	• Private debt		7,026	7,026
	55,184	55,184	• Other managed funds		57,138	57,138
177,426	124,949	302,375	Total Assets	179,042	130,075	309,117

Basis for Estimating Assets and Liabilities

Liabilities have been assessed on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method, an estimate of the pensions that will be payable in future years dependent on assumptions about mortality rates, salary levels, etc. The pension scheme's liabilities (both funded and unfunded) have been assessed by Barnett Waddingham, an independent firm of actuaries, estimates for the County Council Fund being based on the latest full valuation of the scheme as at 31 March 2025.

2023/24 %		2024/25 %
20.8 yrs	Life expectancy at 65 for current pensioners: Men	20.8 yrs
23.3 yrs	Women	23.3 yrs
22.0 yrs	Life expectancy at 65 for future pensioners: Men	22.1 yrs
24.7 yrs	Women	24.8 yrs
4.90%	Rate for discounting scheme liabilities	5.75%
2.90%	Rate of increase in pensions (CPI)	2.90%
3.90%	Rate of increase in salaries	3.90%

The estimation of the defined benefit obligations is sensitive to the actual assumptions set out in the table above. The sensitivity analyses below have been determined based on reasonable possible changes of the assumptions occurring at the end of the reporting period and assumes for each change that the assumptions analysed changes while all the other assumptions remain constant. The assumptions in longevity, for example, assume that life expectancy increases or decreases for men and women. In practice, this is likely 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, i.e. on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The methods and types of assumptions used in preparing the sensitivity analysis did not change from those used in the previous period.

	Present value of total obligation		
	Increase in assumption	Base assumption	Decrease in assumption
	£000	£000	£000
Longevity (change in 1 year)	197,822	189,909	182,346
Rate of change in salaries (change by 0.5%)	190,612	189,909	189,230
Rate of change in pensions (change by 0.5%)	201,798	189,909	179,193
Rate for discounting scheme liabilities (change by 0.5%)	178,856	189,909	202,206

Impact on the Council's Cash Flows

The objectives of the scheme are to keep employers' contributions at as constant a rate as possible. Essex County Council has agreed a strategy with the scheme's actuary to achieve a funding level of 100% over a number of years. Funding levels are monitored on an annual basis. The next triennial valuation will take effect as at 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 31 March 2014 (or service after 31 March 2015 for other main existing public service pension schemes in England and Wales). The Act provides for scheme regulations to be made within a common framework, to establish new career average revalued earnings schemes to pay pensions and other benefits to certain public servants.

The total contributions expected to be made to the Local Government Pension Scheme by the Council in the year to 31 March 2026 is £4.011 million.

41. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

At 31 March 2025, the Council has the following contingent liabilities.

Insured Liabilities

The Council insures various risks with Zurich Municipal and operates a self-insurance fund to cover small claims and that part of larger claims which are subject to an excess. The fund balance as at 31 March 2025 was reduced to £0.600 million (£5.039 million at 31 March 2024), due to the assessed risk of liability. The timing and the value of any unreported and unsettled future liabilities cannot be determined with any certainty.

Guarantees

In 1987 and 1992 the Council agreed jointly with a number of other local authorities to guarantee loans of £83.6 million to Home Housing Association raised to provide housing in Harlow and surrounding authorities. The guarantee is for 50 years ending 2037. The Council's proportion of the total liability is £4.5 million. No fair value for the guarantee has been included under Financial Instruments.

42. CONTINGENT ASSETS

There were no contingent assets as at 31 March 2025.

43. NATURE AND EXTENT OF RISKS ARISING FROM FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Overall procedures for managing risk

The Council complies with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management and Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, both revised in December 2017.

In line with the Treasury Management Code, the Council approves a Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) before the beginning of each financial year. The Strategy sets out the parameters for the management of risks associated with financial instruments. The Council also produces Treasury Management Practices (procedure notes) specifying the practical arrangements to be followed to manage these risks.

The TMSS includes an Investment Strategy in compliance with the MHCLG Guidance on Local Government Investments. This Guidance emphasises that priority is to be given to security and liquidity, rather than yield. The Council's Treasury Management Strategy and its Treasury Management Practices seek to achieve a suitable balance between risk and return on cost.

The risks covered are:

- Credit risk - the possibility that the counterparty to a financial asset will fail to meet its contractual obligations, causing a loss to the Council.
- Liquidity risk - the possibility that the Council might not have the cash available to make contractual payments on time.
- Market risk - the possibility that an unplanned financial loss will materialise because of changes in market variables such as interest rates or equity prices.

Credit Risk

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

This risk is minimised through the Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS), 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 Poor's credit ratings services. The Council uses the creditworthiness service of Arlingclose Limited, its treasury management advisors, to analyse the credit ratings. The TMSS also sets 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. The TMSS for 2024/25, which was approved by the Council on 22nd February 2024, can be found on the Council's website. Treasury Management Strategy 2024/25.

In addition to the above, the Council uses a range of additional indicators and information sources to minimise risk, including:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies,
- credit default swap spreads, which can provide early warning of likely changes in an institution's credit ratings,

- equity price movements,
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy (AAA-rated) countries outside the UK.

The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk in relation to its investments in banks and building societies cannot be assessed generally as the risk of any institution failing to make interest payments or repay the principal sum will be specific to the institution. Recent experience has shown that it is rare for such entities to be unable to meet their commitments. A risk of non-recoverability applies to all of the Council's deposits, but there was no evidence at the 31 March 2025 that this was likely to arise.

Customers purchasing goods and services are allocated individual credit limits assessed taking into account their financial position, past experience and other parameters set by the Council and its respective departments.

The Council does not generally allow credit for its customers. As at 31 March 2025, £25,227 million of total short-term debt (gross of BDP) was overdue for payment, as shown below:

2023/24 £'000		2024/25 £'000
2,665	Past due < 3 months	1,613
528	Past due 3 - 6 months	210
19,218	Past due 6+ months	23,404
22,411	Total	25,227

The Council has analysed the effect of applying expected credit loss methodology to its financial assets to determine impairment loss allowances in accordance with IFRS 9 and has determined that there would be no material difference to the financial statements or carrying amount of the assets compared with calculating a provision for bad debts under IAS19.

Liquidity Risk

The Council has a comprehensive cash flow management system that seeks to ensure that cash is available as needed. The Council previously raised long-term borrowing from the PWLB and has preserved access to the PWLB as a 'lender of last resort' by complying with the Government guidance regarding capital investment. If unexpected movements occur the Council will look at a range of sources. There is no perceived risk that the Council will be unable to raise finance to meet its commitments. Instead, the risk is that it will need to refinance a significant proportion of its borrowing at a time of unfavourably high interest rates.

Refinancing and Maturity Risk

The maturity analysis of financial liabilities / assets is as follows:

2023/24 £'000 RESTATED *			Time of Maturity	2024/25 £'000		
Liabilities £'000	Assets £'000	Net £'000		Liabilities £'000	Assets £'000	Net £'000
(82,327)	22,224	(60,103)	Under 1 year	(165,465)	28,721	(136,744)
(42,521)	2,276	(40,245)	1-2 years	(253)	-	(253)
(665)	-	(665)	2-5 years	(42,438)	2,356	(40,082)
(41,767)	-	(41,767)	5-10 years	(41,767)	-	(41,767)
(125,302)	-	(125,302)	10-20 years	(83,535)	-	(83,535)
(3,000)	-	(3,000)	Over 20 years	(3,000)	-	(3,000)
-	4,261	4,261	Indefinite	-	4,294	4,294
(295,583)	28,761	(266,822)	Total	(336,458)	35,371	(301,087)

All trade payables/receivables are due to be paid in less than one year.

* Restated '23/24, did not reconcile to FI total in note 19 and did not disclose FI assets as required.

The risk that the Council will need to refinance, in the longer term, a significant proportion of its borrowing at a time when interest rates may be unfavorably high is addressed by close monitoring (by the Council and its treasury management advisors) of the status of loans outstanding, an analysis of current and forecast economic and market conditions and detailed consideration of the possibility of the premature repayment or rescheduling of the debt. The Council's TMS sets upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of its borrowing.

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. For instance, a rise in interest rates would have the following effects:

- borrowings at variable rates – the interest expense charged to the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement 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 Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement will rise; and
- investments at fixed rates – the fair value of the assets will fall (no impact on revenue balances).

Investments measured at amortised cost and loans borrowed are not carried at fair value, so changes in their fair value will have no impact on the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement. However, changes in interest payable and receivable on variable rate borrowing and investments will be posted to the Surplus or Deficit on the Provision of Services. Movements in the fair value of fixed rate investments classed as measured at fair value will be reflected in Other Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

The Treasury Management Strategy aims to mitigate these risks by setting upper limits on its net exposures to fixed and variable interest rates.

If, at 31 March 2025, all interest rates had been 1% higher (with all other variables held constant) the financial effect would have been:

2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
- Increase in interest payable on variable rate borrowing	-
(87) Increase in interest receivable on variable rate investments	(3)
19 Decrease in FV of loans and receivables *	-
* (138) Decrease in FV of fixed rate borrowing/liabilities *	(11,689)

* No impact on Comprehensive Income and Expenditure.

The approximate impact of a 1% fall in interest rates would be as above but reversed.

44. GROUP ACCOUNTS

In order to provide a full picture of the economic and financial activities of the Council and its exposure to risk, the accounting statements of material subsidiary companies are consolidated with those of the Council. The resulting Group Accounts are presented in addition to the Council's single entity accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Code.

The Council's wholly owned subsidiary company, Harlow Trading Services Ltd. ("HTS"), began active trading on 1 February 2017 and its accounts have been consolidated with the Council's and are shown below.

Accounting Policies

HTS has prepared 2023/24 accounts using, in the main, accounting policies consistent with those applied by the Council. The major exception is in respect of employee pensions. HTS is an admitted body to the Local Government Pension Scheme and, as such, it makes fixed contributions to the pension fund and its employees in the scheme are entitled to the post-employment benefits from the scheme. The Council makes further contributions to the fund in respect of HTS employees to ensure that the pension liability attributable to HTS is fully funded.

This pension fund liability is excluded from both the pension disclosures in the single entity accounts of the Council and the accounts of the company. HTS's accounting policies have been aligned to those of the Council so that the liability is reflected in the Group Accounts. In addition, there is a minor adjustment for depreciation to align accounting policies.

HTS's accounts have been consolidated with those of the Council on a line-by-line basis, and any balances and transactions between parties have been eliminated. HTS's income and expenditure, adjusted for transactions with the Council, is included on the relevant service lines in the Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement; and Balance Sheet values are incorporated into the relevant heading of the Balance Sheet, removing balances owed between the two parties. It should be noted that the Group Accounts include the Pension Reserve as a Usable (Distributable) Reserve whereas in the Council's single entity accounts the Pension Reserve is classified as an Unusable Reserve. This is due to there being a difference in the classification of the Reserve in the Public and Private Sectors. This does not affect the true and fair presentation of the Group Accounts.

(Profit)/Loss from Operations HTS

2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
(32,236) Turnover	(32,926)
28,929 Cost of Sales	29,966
3,427 Admin expenses	3,669
(186) Other operating income	(176)
(66) Operating (profit)/loss	533
76 Financing costs	116
(27) Investment income	(16)
(20) Other loss/(gain)	19
(38) (Profit)/Loss before tax	652
19 Tax on ordinary activities	-
(19) Total (profit)/loss for the year	652
17,803 Shareholders' funds	24,988

Share of Ownership Interests between HTS and HDC

2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000
0 Investments in Shareholding Companies	0
(782) Loans with Harlow District Council	(1,810)
(782) Total	(1,810)



SUPPLEMENTARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



Housing Revenue Account

Financial Statements

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

The HRA Income and Expenditure Statement shows the economic cost in the year of providing housing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices, rather than the amount to be funded from rents and Government grants. Councils charge rents due to cover expenditure in accordance with regulations; this may be different from the accounting cost. The increase or decrease in the year, on the basis of which rents are raised, is shown in the Movement on the HRA Statement. The account has to be self-financing, and the total cost is met by income from rents, charges and Government subsidies. Contributions to or from Council Taxpayers, other than for strictly defined purposes, are not permitted under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The balance on this account is not in accordance with the statutory provisions that specify the net expenditure that councils need to take into the Housing Revenue Account. In order to give a full presentation of the financial performance of the Council during the year and the actual spending power carried forward, the balance on this account needs to be reconciled in the Movement on the Housing Revenue Account Statement to the amount established by the relevant statutory provision (see following statement).

2023/24 £'000	HRA income and Expenditure Statement	2024/25 £'000
	Expenditure:	
15,459	Repairs and Maintenance	13,083
15,493	Supervision and Management	17,136
154	Rent, Rates and Other Charges	228
12,538	Depreciation- Dwellings & amortisation	12,300
	- Depreciation- Other non-current assets	-
	- Change in valuation of non-current assets	-
(206)	Movement in the allowance for bad debts	279
1	Suns directed by SoS that are expenditure in accordance with the Code	1
43,439	Total Expenditure	43,027
	Income:	
(48,405)	Dwelling Rents	(51,872)
(1,145)	Non-dwelling Rents	(1,226)
(4,882)	Charges for Services and Facilities	(5,066)
(586)	Supervision and Management	(580)
(134)	Contributions towards expenditure	(264)
(55,152)	Total Income	(59,008)
(11,712)	Net Cost of HRA Services as included in the CIES	(15,981)
	- HRA services share of non-distributed costs	
(11,712)	Net Cost of HRA services	(159,81)
(1,005)	Loss/(Gain) on sale of HRA non-current assets & pooling	2,134
6,806	Interest Payable and similar charges	7,298
(1,321)	Interest and Investment Income	(1,184)
	- Capital grant and contributions	
(7,232)	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year on HRA services	(7,733)

MOVEMENT ON THE HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STATEMENT

The HRA Income and Expenditure Account show the actual financial performance for the year, measured in terms of the resources consumed and generated over the last twelve months. However, the Council is required to account for its statutory housing activity on a different accounting basis, the main differences being that:

- the difference between the calculated depreciation on HRA assets and the Housing Subsidy Major Repairs Allowance has to be adjusted back into the balance for the year,
- the gain or loss on the disposal of HRA assets has to be reversed before a final balance is calculated; and
- any impairment on HRA assets, either due to economic consumption or valuation, has to be reversed from the account before a statutory balance can be finalised.

This reconciliation statement summarises the differences between the outturn on the Income and Expenditure Account and the Housing Revenue Account Balance.

2023/24 £'000	Movement of HRA Statement	2024/25 £'000
(13,810)	HRA balance brought forward	(10,782)
(7,232)	(Surplus)/Deficit for the year on the HRA Income and Expenditure Account	(7,733)
1,905	Adjustments between accounting basis and funding basis under statute	(1,709)
4,847	Net Transfer to/(from) General Fund	5,510)
(480)	Net increase/(decrease) in year on HRA before transfers to/from reserves	(3,932)
3,509	Transfer to/from earmarked reserves	(204)
-	- Other	-
3,029	Dec/(inc) in the HRA balance for the year	(4,136)
(10,782)	HRA balance at the end of the year, carried forward	(14,916)

H1. ADJUSTMENTS BETWEEN ACCOUNTING BASIS AND FUNDING BASIS UNDER STATUTE

2023/24 £'000	HRA Adjustment between Accounting and Funding Basis under Statute	2024/25 £'000
	Items included in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account but excluded from the Movement on the HRA Balance for the year:	
	- Amortisation of Intangible Assets	-
307	Revaluation loss on Property, Plant & Equipment	(160)
	- Reversals of Impairment of Fixed Assets	
(12,845)	Depreciation	(12,140)
1,003	Net Gain/(Loss) on sale of HRA Fixed Assets	(2,129)
2	Financial Instruments	(6)
601	Employer's contr payable to ECC Pension Fund & retire ben payable direct to pensioners	580
12,845	Transfers To/From the Major Repairs Reserve	12,140
	- Application of Capital grants to finance capital expenditure	-
(9)	Accumulated Absences	6
	Items not included in the HRA Income and Expenditure Account but to be included in the Movement on the HRA Balance for the year:	
	- Capital Expenditure Funded by the HRA	-
1,904	Net additional amount required by statute debited/(credited) to HRA Bal for the year	(1,709)

H2. TRANSFERS TO / (FROM) RESERVES

2023/24 £'000	HRA Transfers to / (from) Reserves	2024/25 £'000
261	Contribution to Insurance Fund	0
387	Contribution to Perpetuity Earmarked Reserves	0
	- Contribution to Housing Investment Fund	2,931
153	Interest on Earmarked Reserves	0
	- Contribution to Insurance Claims Reserve	(846)
(195)	Contribution from Insurance Fund	(1,899)
(670)	Contribution from Perpetuity Earmarked Reserves	7
3,583	Contribution to Pensions Reserve	(333)
	- Contribution to Risk Management Reserve	(47)
(10)	Contribution to Earmarked Grants Reserve	(16)
3,509	Total	(203)

H3. ANALYSIS OF THE HOUSING STOCK

2023/24 No. Of Prop	HRA Analysis of Housing Stock by Type of Dwelling	2024/25 No. Of Prop
5,515	Houses and Bungalows	5,504
3,511	Flats and Maisonettes	3,534
11	Equity Share Ownership (ESO)	9
3	Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)	3
-	- Assets (Dwellings) Under Construction (AUC)	-
-	- Assets (Dwellings) Held for Sale under Right to Buy	-
9,040	Total Number of Housing Units	9,050
4.88%	Percentage of ESO owned by the Council	4.88%

2023/24 No. Of Prop	3	2024/25 No. Of Prop
395	Bedsitters	394
2,031	1 Bedroom	2,063
3,479	2 Bedrooms	3,468
2,795	3 Bedrooms	2,786
312	4 Bedrooms	311
25	5 Bedrooms	25
3	HMO 6 Bedrooms or more	3
9,040	Total Number of Housing Units	9,050

2023/24 No. Of Prop	HRA The change in Housing Stock can be summarised as follows:	2024/25 No. Of Prop
9,065	Stock at 1 April	9,040
(23)	Deduct Dwelling Sales	(26)
(2)	Deduct Demolitions / Disposals	(2)
-	- Add House Purchases - New Build - AUC	38
9,040	Total Number of Housing Units	9,050

H4. BALANCE SHEET VALUES FOR THE HOUSING STOCK

2023/24 £'000	HRA Balance Sheet Values	2024/25 £'000
	Council Dwellings;	
193,340	Land	202,143
663,372	Dwellings	721,603
856,712		923,746
23,758	Other Land & Buildings	4,548
103	Infrastructure and Community Assets	96
3,423	Assets under Construction	4,577
1,174	Surplus Assets Not Held for Sale	765
1,329	Assets Held for Sale	965
886,499	Balance carried forward 31 March	934,697

H5. VACANT POSSESSION

The vacant possession value of the Council's Housing stock is shown below. It shows the economic cost of providing council housing at less than market rents.

2023/24 £'000	HRA Balance Sheet Values at Vacant Possession	2024/25 £'000
2,254	Vacant possession Value of Dwellings	2,431
2,254	Total HRA Balance Sheet Values	2,431

H6. IMPAIRMENT CHARGES

There were no material impairment charges on the Housing Revenue Account for 2024/25.

H7. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE AND FINANCING

2023/24 £'000	HRA Capital Expenditure	2024/25 £'000
23,226	Dwelling Stock	31,394
-	- Non-dwelling Stock	-
2,570	Assets under Construction	12,866
276	Investment in IT	183
26,072	Total HRA Capital Expenditure	44,444
-	- Financed by: Revenue Contributions	-
12,845	Financed by: Contribution from Major Repairs Reserve	13,213
1,698	Financed by: Capital Receipts	12,861
114	Financed by: Capital Grant & Contributions	475
11,415	Financed by: Borrowing for New Builds and House Purchases	17,895
26,072	Total Financing	44,444

H8. CAPITAL RECEIPTS

2023/24 £'000	HRA Capital Receipts Reserve	2024/25 £'000
2,964	Sale of Council Houses- direct	3,592
684	Other (including shared ownership)	146
67	Other (including shared ownership)- Deferred	65
(3,715)	Total	3,803

H9. CHARGES FOR DEPRECIATION

2023/24 £'000	HRA Charges for Depreciation and Amortisation	2024/25 £'000
150	Council Dwellings	194
-	- Other land and buildings	-
-	- Infrastructure and community assets	(7)
(44)	Surplus assets held for sale	-
-	- Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	-
-	- Intangible assets - amortisation	-
106	Total	187

H10. MOVEMENT ON THE MAJOR REPAIRS RESERVE

2023/24 £'000	Major Repairs Reserve	2024/25 £'000
	- Balance as at 1 April	-
12,845	Transfers in	12,140
(12,845)	Transfers out	(12,140)
	- Balance as at 31 March	-

H11. HRA SHARE OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO/ FROM THE PENSIONS RESERVE

With effect from 2017/18 the accounting statements, upon cessation of the organisation, include Kier Harlow pension figures. Also incorporated within the single entity accounts are the HTS Ltd IAS19 reported figures.

The actual payments for pensions made to the pension fund from the HRA of £728,895 (2023/24: £723,306) plus the continuing pension payments in relation to underfunding and early retirements awarded to HRA employees of £412,018 (2023/24: £405,496) are removed from the HRA and replaced by the current service cost applying the principles of IAS 19 making a total amount removed of £662,941 (2023/24: £652,447). The corresponding entry is to the Pensions Fund Reserve.

The current service cost included in the HRA is the IAS19 reported sum of £561,312 (2023/24: £527,306) which represents the pension costs of current staff.

H12. RENT ARREARS

Outstanding tenant rent arrears at 31 March 2025 total £2,668,515 including £67,033 in overpaid housing benefit (£2,640,027 and £68,341 as at 31 March 2024). An allowance for the impairment of debts has been made as at 31 March 2025 totalling £2,140,503 (£2,237,207 at March 2024).

The arrears exclude prepayments of £1,463,831 (£1,101,301 as at March 2024) and may be analysed as follows:

2023/24 £'000	Rent Arrears	2024/25 £'000
1,822	Arrears due from: Current Tenants	1,804
1,179	Arrears due from: Former Tenants	1,285
3,001	Total Rent Arrears (gross)	3,089
(1,089)	Prepayments	(1,453)
1,911	Total Rent Arrears (net)	1,636

These arrears include all charges due from tenants i.e. rent, rates, heating and other charges.



Collection Fund

Financial Statements

COLLECTION FUND ACCOUNT

Harlow District Council is the authority responsible for the billing, collection and recovery of Council Tax and Business Rates on behalf of itself, its preceptors (Essex County Council, Essex Fire Authority and Essex Police Authority) and Central Government.

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 Council in relation to the collection from taxpayers and distribution to local authorities and the Government of council tax and business rates.

31 March 2024			31 March 2025			
Business Rates £'000	Council Tax £'000	Total £'000	Collection Fund Income and Expenditure Account	Business Rates £'000	Council Tax £'000	Total £'000
			Income:			
	(60,503)	(60,503)	Council Tax Receivable		(64,129)	(64,129)
(45,603)		(45,603)	Business Rates Receivable	(50,179)		(50,179)
-		-	TPP due (from) Central Govt #	-		-
	(189)	(189)	Ctax discounts funded from GF		(17)	(17)
(45,603)	(60,692)	(106,295)	Total amounts to be credited	(50,179)	(64,146)	(114,325)
			Expenditure:			
			Apportm't of Prev. Yr (Surp)/Def:			
(1,880)	(17)	(1,897)	Harlow District Council	1,515	537	2,052
(423)	(84)	(507)	Essex County Council	341	2,693	3,034
	(13)	(13)	Essex Police Authority	-	434	434
(47)	(5)	(52)	Essex Fire Authority	38	149	187
(2,350)		(2,350)	Central Government	1,893	-	1,893
			Precepts, demands and shares:			
18,859	8,229	27,088	Harlow District Council	19,387	8,307	27,694
4,243	41,305	45,548	Essex County Council	4,362	43,777	48,139
	6,650	6,650	Essex Police Authority	-	7,085	7,085
471	2,287	2,758	Essex Fire Authority	485	2,376	2,865
23,574		23,574	Central Government	24,234	-	24,234
			Disregarded Amounts:			
1,794		1,794	Enterprise Zone	2,040	-	2,040
			Charges to Collection Fund:			
899	789	1,687	Inc/(dec) in allowance for debt impair	367	774	1,141
(2,109)		(2,109)	BR Appeals settles against provision	654	-	654
912		912	BR Appeals change in provision	-	-	-
112		112	BR Cost of Collection Allowance GF	112	-	112
-		-	Interest charged to Collection fund	-	-	-
(2,256)		(2,256)	TPP due to Central Govt #	(43)	-	(43)
41,798	59,140	100,939	Total amounts to be debited	55,385	66,132	121,517
(3,804)	(1,552)	(5,356)	(Surplus)/Deficit arising in year	5,206	1,986	7,192
479	(1,625)	(1,146)	(Surplus)/Deficit b/f at 1 April	(3,325)	(3,176)	(6,501)
(3,325)	(3,176)	(6,501)	(Surplus)/Deficit c/f at 31 March	1,881	(1,190)	691

CF1. Business Rates

National Non-Domestic Rates (also known as NNDR or Business Rates) are based on local rateable values provided by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) multiplied by a uniform business rate (a “multiplier”) set nationally by Central Government. The national multipliers for 2024/25 were 49.9p for qualifying small businesses and 54.6p for all other businesses (49.9p and 51.2p respectively in 2023/24).

The NNDR income due (after exemptions and reliefs) of £50.179 million for 2024/25 (£45.603 million for 2023/24) was based on a rateable value for the Council’s area of £117.524 million 31 March 2025 (£118.566 million 31 March 2024).

CF2. Council Tax

Council Tax income derives from charges raised according to the value of residential properties (estimated as at 1 April 1991), which have been classified into eight valuation bands. Individual charges are calculated by estimating the amount of income required to be taken from the Collection Fund by Essex County Council, Essex Police and Crime Commissioner, Essex Fire Authority and the Council for the forthcoming year and dividing this by the Council Tax base.

The Council Tax base, which was 28,753 for 2024/25 (28,483 for 2023/24), is the aggregate of an adjusted total number of properties in each valuation band (reduced by allowances for discounts and an estimated collection rate) converted by a proportion to the number of Band D equivalent chargeable dwellings.

The Council Tax base was calculated as follows:

	Discounted Equivalent Dwelling	Weighting	Band D Equivalent
Valuation Band A*	3		2
Valuation Band A	2,050	6/9	1,366
Valuation Band B	6,981	7/9	5,430
Valuation Band C	17,638	8/9	15,678
Valuation Band D	4,541	1	4,541
Valuation Band E	2,842	11/9	3,474
Valuation Band F	1,118	13/9	1,615
Valuation Band G	408	15/9	680
Valuation Band H	15	18/9	29
Total Band D Equivalents			32,814
Less Local Council Tax Support			(3,172)
Less allowance for non-collection (3%)			(889)
Total Band D Equivalents			28,753

CF3. Distribution of surplus/deficit

31 March 2024			31 March 2025			
Business Rates £'000	Council Tax £'000	Total £'000		Business Rates £'000	Council Tax £'000	Total £'000
(1,330)	(451)	(1,781)	Allocated to;			
(299)	(2,241)	(2,540)	Harlow District Council	750	(164)	586
	(360)	(360)	Essex County Council	170	(846)	(676)
(33)	(125)	(158)	Essex Police Authority		(136)	(136)
(1,662)		(1,662)	Essex Fire Authority	19	(45)	(26)
			Central Government	944		944
(3,325)	(3,176)	(6,501)	Total	1,881	(1,190)	691



Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

This glossary of terms and abbreviations is designed to aid interpretation of the Council's Statement of Accounts.

Accounting Period

A period of 12 months commencing on 1 April also referred to as "financial year of account" or "financial year". The end of the accounting period (31 March) is the Balance Sheet date.

Accruals

Amounts included in the accounts for income or expenditure relating to the financial year for which payment has not been received or made in the financial year. The Council accrues for both revenue and capital items.

Amortisation

The measure of the cost of economic benefits derived from intangible fixed assets that are consumed during the period, charged to the Income and Expenditure Account. It reduces the carrying value of these assets in the Balance Sheet and is similar to a depreciation charge.

Annual Governance Statement

This is a statutory document that explains the processes and procedures in place to enable the Council to carry out its functions effectively.

Assets Held for Sale

Assets are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount is going to be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continued use. This excludes any assets that are going to be abandoned or scrapped at the end of their useful lives.

Balances (or Reserves)

These are accumulated funds available to the Council. Some balances (reserves) may be earmarked for specific purposes for funding future defined initiatives or meeting identified risks or liabilities; and some that are technical only and may not be used to finance services.

Billing Authority

A billing authority is a local authority responsible for collecting Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates.

Business Rates

Business Rates (sometimes referred to as Non-Domestic Rates or NDR) are charged on most non-domestic premises, including commercial properties such as shops, offices, pubs, warehouses and factories. The sums collected by the Council are distributed to Central Government (50%) and to local authorities for the area (Harlow Council 40%, Essex County Council 9% and Essex Fire Authority 1%).

Capital Expenditure

Spending which produces or enhances an asset such as land, buildings, roads, vehicles, plant and machinery, and intangible assets such as computer software. Only expenditure that directly relates to bringing the asset in use may be treated as capital expenditure. Any expenditure which does not fall within the definition must be charged to a revenue account.

Capital Adjustment Account

This is an account that reflects financing of capital from revenue and capital receipts together with the adjustment of the minimum revenue provision.

Capital Receipts

Proceeds from the sale of non-current assets such as land and buildings which can be used to repay any outstanding debt on fixed assets or to finance new capital expenditure, within rules set down by Government. Capital receipts cannot be used to finance revenue expenditure.

Carrying Amount

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The value at which an asset is shown in the Balance Sheet after deducting any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)

The professional accountancy body concerned with local authorities and the public sector.

Code of Practice (The Code)

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom (issued by CIPFA) defines proper accounting practices to be adopted for the Statement of Accounts to ensure they 'present a true and fair view of the financial position of the Council. The Code incorporates guidance in line with IFRS, IPSAS and UK GAAP Accounting Standards and carries statutory status via the provision of the Local Government Act 2003. An updated version is published every year.

Collection Fund

This is a statutory fund set up under the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. It includes the transactions of the charging authority in relation to Business Rates and Council Tax, and illustrates the way in which the fund balance is distributed to the Government, preceptors and the Council.

Collection Fund Adjustment Account

This is a reserve that reconciles differences between statutory requirements as a Billing Authority and proper accounting practice.

Community Assets

The class of Non-current Assets held in perpetuity that have no determinable useful life and may have restriction on their disposal.

Componentisation

For some assets it is possible to identify parts of that asset separately which then, by their nature, can be depreciated separately according to their individual economical lives. For example, components in a building might comprise land, building structure, major mechanical and electrical items, all of which would have different useful lives and so would be depreciated at different rates.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

This is a measure of inflation that examines changes in the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services. Changes in CPI are used to assess price changes associated with the cost of living.

Contingent Assets/Liabilities

These are potential gains and losses for which a future event will establish whether a liability or asset exists and for which it is inappropriate to set up a debtor or provision in the accounts.

Deferred Capital Receipts

Arise when non-current assets are sold and the amounts owed by the purchasers are repaid over a number of years, e.g. mortgages. The balance is reduced by the amount principal repayable in any financial year.

Depreciation

A charge made to the revenue account that represents a measure of the wearing out, consumption or other reduction in the useful life of a fixed asset.

DWP

The Department for Work and Pensions, which is a Central Government department that administers the State Pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits.

Earmarked Reserves

Funds set aside for a specific purpose, or a particular service, or type of expenditure.

Finance Lease

An arrangement whereby the lessee is treated as the owner of the leased asset, and is required to include such assets within the non-current assets on the balance sheet.

Financial Instruments

This is any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Examples include bank deposits, cash, investments, debtors (or receivables), long-term debtors, creditors, temporary loans and borrowings.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Non-current Assets - Tangible

These are any assets with a physical presence such as land and buildings and which yield benefits to the Council and the services it provides for a period of more than one year.

Non-current Assets – Intangible

There are any assets which are of benefit to the organisation but have no physical presence, e.g. as software licences.

General Fund

This is the primary account through which all the Council's non-HRA related transactions pass. The balance at year-end is not earmarked for any specific purpose.

Harlow Trading Services Ltd (HTS)

This is a company set up by the Council and it is wholly owned subsidiaries of HTS Group Ltd. Services provided by HTS include housing repairs and maintenance, capital and planned works, facilities management, environmental and compliance services. These are provided to the tenants, leaseholders and residents of Harlow.

Housing Beacons

These are dwellings that are used in valuing the Council's housing stock. A typical dwelling has been identified for each dwelling type that the Council owns e.g. a 3-bedroom semi-detached, a 2-bedroom bungalow. These are known as Beacon Properties and the valuer will value these Beacon Properties and the value for each Beacon Property will be applied to all properties of the same Beacon type. This approach is taken as it would take too long and be too costly to value every single dwelling that the Council owns.

Infrastructure Assets

These are assets which have no tangible value such as highways and roads.

International Accounting Standard Board (IASB)

This is an accounting standards setting body. The Council will comply with the accounting standards when preparing the Statement of Accounts. It should be noted that compliance with statute will override compliance with the accounting standards and so adjustment will be made in the accounts to move from one position to the other where required.

International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS)

These are accounting standards which are recognised globally and are ones that the Council will comply with in preparing the accounts initially. Adjustments will be made to the accounts prepared in accordance with the standards in order to present a position that complies with statute.

Impairment

This is an accounting adjustment made to the value of an asset when its carrying amount (the amount at which an asset is recognised in the Balance Sheet after deducting accumulated depreciation and impairment losses) exceeds its recoverable amount (the higher of assets fair value less cost of sale and its value in use).

Intangible Assets

Assets which are of benefit to the organisation but have no physical presence such as software licences, or goodwill which is more commonly found in the private sector.

International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)

These are a set of accounting standards issued by the IPSAS Board for use by public sector entities around the world in the preparation of financial statements.

Investment Property

These are land and buildings, or part of a building held solely to earn rentals or for capital appreciation or both, rather than for use in the production or supply of goods or services or for administrative purposes, or for sale in the ordinary course of operations.

Investments – Short-Term

These are cash deposits for less than one year with approved institutions.

Loans and Receivables

These are sums invested by the Council that are not quoted in an active market; and short-term trade debtors.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Long-Term Debtors

These are debtors where the capital income is still to be received, for example, from the sale of an asset or the granting of a loan.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

This is the Council's strategic financial plan for the future five-year period. It takes into account the anticipated cost of future service plans and matches this with the Council's financial resources and its forecast levels of grant and other income. It is updated annually so that it is constantly looking at the next 5 years into the future.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

This is a charge made to the General Fund or HRA revenue accounts representing the setting aside of prudential sums for the repayment of debt. When a Council has incurred borrowing, there is a statutory requirement to set a prudent level of MRP for the General Fund.

MHCLG

This is the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - a Government department responsible for housing, planning, devolution and local government, as well as community issues.

Movement in Reserves Statement (MIRS)

This is a core financial statement which shows the movement in usable and unusable reserves (the Council's total reserve balances).

Net Realisable Value

The amount at which an asset could be sold after the deduction of any related selling costs.

Non-Current Assets

These are capital assets which provide benefits to the Council for more than a year.

Non-operational Assets

These are non-current assets held by an organisation but not directly occupied, used or consumed in the delivery of services. An example of a non-operational asset is an investment property or an asset being held pending its sale.

Operational Asset

These are non-current assets held by the Council which are used or consumed in the delivery of its services.

Operating Lease

This is an arrangement whereby the risks and rewards of ownership of the leased asset remain with the lessor.

Pension Fund

This is a pension scheme for employees, maintained by an administering authority, or a group of authorities, under statute primarily in order to make pension payments on retirement of scheme members. It is financed from contributions from both the employing authorities and the employees together with income from investments.

Perpetuity Reserves

These are funds received from a range of sources over many years which have covenants concerning their use (contractually binding obligations, usually indefinite in nature), or have other contractual or ring-fencing obligations incorporated within them.

Pooling of Housing Capital Receipts

This is the term given to the requirement to pay over to the Government a proportion of certain types of capital receipt, such as from the sale of council houses under the Right to Buy scheme.

Precept

This is the amount which an authority, e.g. a County Council, a Police Authority, requires from a Billing Authority (e.g. District Councils) to meet its expenditure requirements. The Billing Authority collects these sums on behalf of the precepting authorities from its residents through the Council Tax.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Profit on the sale of Non-Current Assets

The difference between the book value of an asset sold and the sale proceeds.

Provisions

Sums set aside to meet future expenditure where a specific liability is known to exist but cannot be measured accurately.

Receivables

These are sums due from customers and clients that the Council provides services to and are known as short-term trade debtors.

Reserves

These are amounts set aside, each for a specific purpose in one year and carried forward to meet future obligations.

Retail Price Index (RPI)

This is a measure of inflation that examines changes in the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services. RPI includes the cost of mortgage interest in its calculation which is excluded from CPI.

Revenue

Costs and income relating to the day-to-day running of services e.g. salaries and wages, supplies and services, transport and fees from service-related income.

Revenue Expenditure Funded from Capital under Statute

This is capital expenditure which is allowable by statute to be funded from capital resources but which does not fall within the Code's definition of non-current assets (as the assets on which the expenditure is being incurred does not belong to the Council). Examples include grants and similar advances made to other parties to finance capital investment.

Revenue Support Grant

This is a Government grant provided by the MHCLG based on the Government's assessment as to what a Council should be spending on local services. The amount of grant is fixed at the beginning of each financial year.

Surplus Asset

This is a non-current asset not in use which does not meet the criteria of an Asset Held For Sale and is held as Property, Plant and Equipment.

Tangible Assets

These are assets that are property, plant or equipment which has long-term physical existence or is acquired for use in the operations of the organisation and is not specifically held for sale to customers.

UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (GAAP) Accounting Standards

These are accounting Standards and other guidance published by the UK's Financial Reporting Council (FRC).

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT AND CERTIFICATE

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HARLOW DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF THE AUTHORITY'S FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Disclaimer of opinion

We were engaged to audit the financial statements of Harlow District Council ("the Authority") for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the Group and Authority Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statements, Group and Authority Balance Sheet, Group and Authority Movement in Reserves Statement, Group and Authority Statement of Cash Flows, Collection Fund Account, Housing Revenue Account and the related notes, including the Expenditure and Funding Analysis and the accounting policies in note 1.

We do not express an opinion on the financial statements. Due to the significance of the matters described in the Basis for disclaimer of opinion section of our report, we have not been able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion.

Basis for disclaimer of opinion

The Accounts and Audit (Amendment) Regulations 2024 (the "Amendment Regulations") require the Authority to publish its financial statements and our opinion thereon for the year ended 31 March 2025 by 27 February 2026 (the "Backstop Date").

We have been unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence over a number of areas of the financial statements as we have been unable to perform the procedures that we consider necessary to form our opinion on the financial statements ahead of the Backstop Date. These areas include, but were not limited to, cash and cash equivalents, property, plant and equipment, investment property, short and long term debtors, short and long term creditors, short and long term borrowings, the comprehensive income and expenditure statement and the balance of, and movements in, usable and unusable reserves for the year ended 31 March 2025 in relation to both the Group and the Authority.

In addition, we have been unable to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence over any of the disclosed comparative figures for the year ended 31 March 2024 due to the Backstop Date for the Group and the Authority. As a result, we were unable to determine whether there were any consequential effects on the Group's and the Authority's income and expenditure for the years ended 31 March 2024 and 2025.

Any adjustments from the above matters would have a consequential effect on the Group's and the Authority's net assets and the split between usable reserves, including the Housing Revenue Account, and unusable reserves as at 31 March 2024 and 31 March 2025, the Collection Fund and on their income and expenditure and cash flows for the years then ended.

We disclaimed our audit opinion on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 regarding this same limitation.

Fraud and breaches of laws and regulations – ability to detect

As stated in the Disclaimer of opinion section of our report, we do not express an opinion on the financial statements due to the reasons described in the *Basis for disclaimer of opinion* section of our report.

Other information

The Director - Finance and Section 151 Officer (the "Section 151 Officer") is responsible for the other information, which comprises the information included in the Statement of Accounts, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Any opinion on the financial statements would not

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT & CERTIFICATE

cover the other information and we do not express an opinion or, except as explicitly stated below, any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether, based on our financial statements audit work, the information therein is materially misstated or inconsistent with the financial statements or our audit knowledge.

Due to the significance of the matter described in the *Basis for disclaimer of opinion* section of our report, and the possible consequential effect on the related disclosures in the other information, whilst in our opinion the other information included in the Statement of Accounts for the financial year is consistent with the financial statements, we are unable to determine whether there are material misstatements in the other information.

Section 151 Officer's and Audit and Standards Committee's responsibilities

As explained more fully in the statement set out on page 15, the Section 151 Officer is responsible for the preparation of financial statements in accordance with CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2024/25 and that give a true and fair view. They are also responsible for: such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; assessing the Group's and the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern; and using the going concern basis of accounting unless they have been informed by the government of the intention to either cease the services provided by the Group and the Authority or dissolve the Group and the Authority without the transfer of their services to another public sector entity.

The Audit and Standards Committee of the Authority is responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

Auditor's responsibilities

Our responsibility is to conduct an audit of the financial statements in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK), and to issue an auditor's report. However, due to the significance of the matter described in the Basis for disclaimer of opinion section of our report, we were not able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion on the financial statements.

We have fulfilled our ethical responsibilities under, and are independent of the Group in accordance with, UK ethical requirements including the FRC Ethical Standard.

REPORT ON OTHER LEGAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS

Report on the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources

Under the Code of Audit Practice published by the National Audit Office in November 2024 on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General (the "NAO Code of Audit Practice"), we are required to report to you if we identify any significant weaknesses in the arrangements that have been made by the Authority to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Our review of the Council's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources identified that Except for the matters detailed below, we have nothing else to report in this respect.

Identified significant weakness – Governance

As referenced within the Council's annual governance statement, during the 2024/25 financial year the Council did not have a formalised process for the management of operational risk. While a strategic risk register was in place this only recorded the most significant risks to the achievement of the Council's

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT & CERTIFICATE

strategy. During the year there were not consistent mechanisms within individual services for ensuring that risks were identified, recorded and appropriate mitigating actions implemented.

We recommend that the Council clarifies its policies and procedures for managing operational risks and ensures that risk registers are set up at a management level and service levels, with a process in place to escalate risks to the strategic risk register where required.

Respective responsibilities in respect of our review of arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources

The Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. We are required under section 20(1) of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 to be satisfied that the Authority has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

We are not required to consider, nor have we considered, whether all aspects of the Authority's arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources are operating effectively. We are also not required to satisfy ourselves that the Authority has achieved value for money during the year.

We planned our work and undertook our review in accordance with the NAO Code of Audit Practice and related statutory guidance, having regard to whether the Authority had proper arrangements in place to ensure financial sustainability, proper governance and to use information about costs and performance to improve the way it manages and delivers its services. Based on our risk assessment, we undertook such work as we considered necessary.

Statutory reporting matters

We are required by Schedule 2 to the NAO Code of Audit Practice to report to you if:

- we issue a report in the public interest under section 24 and Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make written recommendations to the Authority under Section 24 and Schedule 7 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make an application to the court for a declaration that an item of account is contrary to law under Section 28 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we issue an advisory notice under Section 29 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; or
- we make an application for judicial review under Section 31 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014.

We have nothing to report in this respect.

THE PURPOSE OF OUR AUDIT WORK AND TO WHOM WE OWE OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT & CERTIFICATE

DELAY IN CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF THE AUDIT

As at the date of this audit report, we are unable to confirm that we have completed our work in respect of the Authority's Whole of Government Accounts consolidation pack for the year ended 31 March 2025 because we have not received confirmation from the NAO that the NAO's audit of the Whole of Government Accounts is complete.

Until we have completed this work, we are unable to certify that we have completed the audit of the Harlow District Council for the year ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 and the NAO Code of Audit Practice.



Rashpal Khangura

for and on behalf of KPMG LLP

Chartered Accountants

1 Sovereign Square,
Sovereign Street,
LS1 4DA

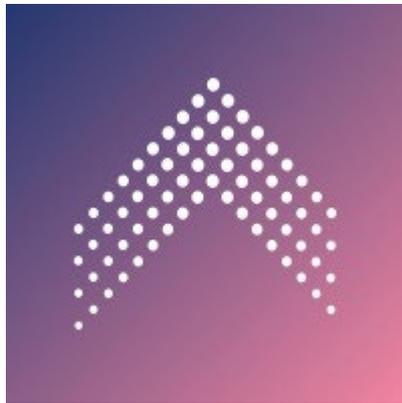
27 February 2026

ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

HARLOW DISTRICT COUNCIL

DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

2024/25



Scope of Responsibility

Harlow District Council (HDC) is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently, and effectively. The 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 meeting this overall responsibility, the council must put in place arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

The council has adopted a [Code of Corporate Governance](#) (last reviewed November 2024), which is consistent with the principles of the 2016 CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting)/SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives) Framework Delivering Good Governance in Local Government.

This statement explains how the council delivers good governance and reviews the effectiveness of these arrangements. It also meets the requirements of Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, in relation to the publication of an annual governance statement (AGS).

Purpose of the Governance Framework

The governance framework comprises the processes and protocols by which the Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it is accountable to, engages with and supports its communities. It assures that in conducting its business, the Council:

- operates in a lawful, open, inclusive and honest matter
- safeguards public money and assets from inappropriate use, or from loss and fraud, and ensures it is properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively
- has effective arrangements for risk management
- secures continuous improvement in the way that it operates
- enables human, financial, environmental and other resources to be managed efficiently and effectively
- properly maintains records and information
- ensures its values and ethical standards are met

The governance framework also includes the Council's wholly owned subsidiary company HTS.

A brief description of the key elements of the Governance Framework in place at Harlow Council is included as Appendix 1. The annual review of the effectiveness of this framework is covered in the next section.

Review of effectiveness and overall opinion of Harlow's governance arrangements

The Council is responsible for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework, including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by various sources as detailed in this AGS.

This AGS demonstrates that the Council has sound governance arrangements in place which continued to work well in practice for the 2024/25 financial year.

This is supported by the Head of Internal Audit's annual opinion which for 2024/25 concluded that the Council has adequate and effective governance, risk management arrangements and control processes.

The Executive Management Team has undertaken an assessment of the arrangements for governance during 2024/25 including a review of the assurance checklists and statements submitted by managers. It has concluded that arrangements are fit for purpose and working effectively. However, the Council is not complacent and areas for improvement or development are detailed in the action plan towards the end of this AGS. Progress against which will be monitored by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the Audit and Standards Committee.

Key features of the council's governance framework:

For 2024/25 this included:

1. The Council Corporate Plan – identifies and communicates the Council's vision, objectives and priorities. The Plan for 2024/25 spanned 2024-28 and is being superseded in 2025/26 with Building Harlow's Future.
2. The Constitution – sets out the Council's decision-making framework. Changes are being made to the Constitution following the management restructure during 2024/25. Changes to contract standing orders were approved by Council in March 2025. The changes ensure that procurement processes and practices align with the Procurement Act 2023.

The Constitution gives a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of councillors, committees, and the statutory officers (Head of Paid Service, Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer). It includes a scheme of delegation of responsibility, financial regulations and contract standing orders; and defines codes of conduct for Councillors and officers, and a protocol for how the two work together.
3. The corporate risk register – reflects the objectives of the Corporate Plan and identifies the implications for the Council's governance arrangements. This was reviewed monthly by Cabinet and at each Audit and Standards Committee meeting.
4. Council – is the ultimate decision-making body for all matters other than those delegated to the Planning, Licensing and Audit and Standards Committees, and operational decision making to specific officers.
5. Cabinet - carries out all the council's functions which are not reserved to Full Council or the responsibility of any other part of the council.
6. Scrutiny committee – has no decision-making powers but can examine and scrutinise matters of community interest, to hold the Cabinet to account, and to represent the interests and views of the public.

Continued - key features of the council's governance framework for 2024/25

7. Audit and Standards Committee - its purpose is to provide an independent and high-level focus on the adequacy of governance, risk and internal control arrangements. Giving confidence to those responsible for corporate governance that those arrangements are effective. The Committee has an independent person as part of its membership. The Committee is also responsible for overseeing standards of Member conduct.
8. Regulatory committees – ensure compliance to regulations: Development Management Committee and Licencing Committee.
9. Other committees – these have met as and when required including the Appointments Panel, Constitution Panel and Shareholder Sub Committee.
10. Statutory officers – the Head of Paid Service as part of the Senior Leadership Team has delegated authority to take operational decisions within policies and budgets set by Council. The Section 151 Officer promotes effective financial management so that public money is safeguarded and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for maintaining and advising on the Constitution. This officer ensures that the Council's decision-making is lawful and fair and supports the promotion of high ethical standards and compliance with the Codes of Conduct.
11. Executive Management Team (EMT) – following the management restructure the Corporate Leadership Team was morphed into EMT, which comprises the Head of Paid Service, Executive and Directors (which include the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer).

Internal and External Audit - both functions support the Council's assurance framework.

Internal Audit – has a risk-based approach to audit planning, emphasising the need for sound control, governance and risk management arrangements. Internal Audit is a shared service with Epping Forest, Broxbourne and St Albans City and District Councils; hosted by Broxbourne Borough Council.

External Audit - The Audit and Standards Committee receives reports from the External Auditors including the annual Audit Results Report and other reports in relation to financial and other aspects of the Council's governance.

At its September 2024 meeting the Committee received a verbal update on the progress of prior year Audits for 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23; noting the backstop dates introduced by central government to address the local audit backlog in England. BDO's (the council's outgoing external auditors) Audit Completion reports for the five outstanding years were noted by the Committee at their December 2024 meeting. At the same time they approved the five Statement of Accounts, which have duly been signed off by the Committee Chair and Section 151 Officer.

Regarding the 2023/24 accounts, at its June 2025 meeting the Committee received the 2023/24 Audit Plan from the council's new external auditors, KPMG. At its February 2025 meeting the Committee received the Statements of Accounts for 2023/24 and the External Audit Year End Update Report. These will come back to the Committee early 2025/26 for approval as additional work is required to complete these.

Reporting concerns

The Council has a [corporate complaints policy](#) details of which can be found on the website.

Complaints made to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) are monitored by EMT. Of the eight complaints dealt with by the LGSCO during 2024/25 the LGSCO closed six after initial enquiry, not upheld one and upheld one (relating to homelessness). Actions to resolve these, as agreed with the LGSCO, have been taken, and any lessons learnt acted upon.

The Audit and Standards Committee considers any complaints made against members of the council relating to breaches of the code of conduct. During 2024/25 no complaints were made to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

The council has a [whistleblowing policy](#) which is available on the council's website. No whistleblowing allegations were received during the year.

Significant Governance Issues

This final part of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) outlines the actions taken, or proposed, to deal with significant governance issues or risks. EMT which monitors and reviews the corporate governance framework, has ensured that issues raised in the previous AGS have been addressed as detailed in Table 1.

Other governance issues have been identified to further strengthen arrangements, as detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 1: Progress on significant governance issues identified in the 2023/24 AGS

Issue / Risk area	Progress during 2024/25
Embedding the new HTS Group Governance Structure	<p>On 24 April 2024 the Shareholder Sub Committee approved the proposed Group Governance Agreement. Work commenced to embed the Trusted Partnership Model. Officers and members of the Executive Management Team are working with HTS colleagues to identify, address and monitor operational issues using the strategy and resolution meeting mechanism and escalation procedures.</p> <p>Strategy Resolution and Operational meetings have been held on a monthly basis with effect from November 2024. All meetings are documented with actions logged and closed down once complete.</p>
LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) action plan The Corporate Peer Challenge follow up review report identified further areas for development. The report stated "the move	<p>A Joint Committee to ensure robust governance of Harlow Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) related decisions and delivery has been set up. The Joint Committee met three times during 2024/25; the</p>

Issue / Risk area	Progress during 2024/25
<p>in the coming months to a Joint Committee for the Garden Town, comprising all five councils and operating by Consensus, is a significant step. This way of working will require the council to be clear on its stance and approach to the project and ensure its representation and involvement in relation to the Committee is absolutely appropriate” and is pertinent to this AGS.</p>	<p>next being 29 July 2025. The Committee is chaired by the Leader of Harlow District Council.</p>
<p>Procurement</p> <p>The Procurement Act 2023, due to go live on 28 October 2024, represents a big change for all public bodies.</p> <p>The Act consolidates the different regimes currently governing procurement into one Act, thereby creating a simpler and more flexible system. The existing overarching principles have been replaced with these new objectives which authorities must consider in all procurement activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value for money • Acting with (and being seen to act with) integrity • Maximising public benefit • Treating suppliers the same (unless otherwise justified) 	<p>The Procurement Act 2023 entered into force on 24 February 2025.</p> <p>The council updated its Contract Standing Orders in March 2025 to ensure compliance with the Procurement Act 2023. This was approved by Full Council on 27 March 2024 and the council’s constitution updated accordingly.</p> <p>A comprehensive commercial, procurement and contract management review and target operating model re-design is underway which will bring further improvements in this space in terms of compliance, operational efficiency and improved value for money in our commercial and contracting function.</p>
<p>Financial Management Code review</p> <p>Carried over from last year’s AGS action plan.</p>	<p>Resourcing constraints has prevented movement on this. However, during 2024/25 an informal high-level review was undertaken by Internal Audit to ensure the Council’s adherence to the key principles of the Code. There were no significant areas of non-compliance, but opportunities to make improvements.</p> <p>A more detailed (and documented) analysis is required. From this an action plan will be created to ensure these are implemented within agreed timescales and shared with EMT and the Audit and Governance Committee.</p>
<p><i>Common themes from the Service Assurance Statements</i></p>	
<p>Operational risk management</p> <p>Further work is required to embed risk management at the service level.</p>	<p>Work on this had been paused whilst the council management restructure took place. Work has now recommenced with the introduction of service plans and for risk management training to be rolled out in 2025/26.</p>

Table 2: Areas for improvement or monitoring during 2025/26

AGS Action Plan delivery

Executive Management Team will oversee this action plan over the coming year and report on progress to the Audit and Standards Committee. Both groups will ensure that governance issues are promoted, addressed and monitored in a co-ordinated manner throughout the financial year.

No.	Issue / Risk area	Action plan for 2025/26
1.	<p>Governance Framework</p> <p>As a result of the recent management structure and to support the council's main corporate policy framework for 2025 to 2026/26 Building Harlow's Future Plan to introduce a new constitution and governance framework.</p>	<p>Work has commenced to modernise the council's approach to decision-making, risk and assurance, streamline processes and embeds the Executive Leader model.</p> <p>This will be led by EMT and draws on the expertise of others including Internal Audit and the risk management function.</p> <p>Achieving this is a clear outcome under the 'transform our council' mission in the Building Harlow's Future Plan</p>
2.	<p>Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)</p> <p>Harlow District Council is mindful of the risks and opportunities that LGR poses for the Council and the District (including residents, businesses and community groups).</p> <p>Officers are consulting with Members and working jointly with all the other Essex local authorities to develop proposals for a new local government structure in Greater Essex. Final proposals have to be presented to Government by 26 September 2025. The joint working includes risk assessment of the various options for the new structure, considering finance, service delivery, local democracy and public support.</p> <p>In the meantime, EMT and Cabinet are taking into account in policy and decision-making, the transition to a new local government structure that will mean the end of the District Council's existence. A robust communications strategy for both residents and staff is in place.</p> <p>Once the Government has chosen the favoured option, the transition will be planned, with a primary focus of</p>	<p>The council needs to be mindful of the risks and opportunities that LGR poses for the council and the district (including its residents, businesses and community groups). And will achieve this in the first instance through its risk management framework, working with central government and the other Essex authorities and having a robust communication strategy.</p> <p>In addition, the council is considering opportunities to improve staff retention and continue to seek value for money in contract negotiations.</p> <p>Building Harlow's Future Plan sets out how the council will champion Harlow's interest in the local government reorganisation.</p>

No.	Issue / Risk area	Action plan for 2025/26
	securing seamless continuity of service delivery. This, however, means the Council's longer-term planning becomes more difficult, including that for HTS and with other partnerships, as decisions with long term delivery may fall to an inheriting authority to implement.	
3.	<p>Social Housing Regulator</p> <p>The September 2024 regulatory judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing found serious failings in how the council was delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards and significant improvement was needed, specifically in relation to outcomes in the Safety and Quality Standard.</p> <p>Building Harlow's Future Plan recognises the need for the council to do better following the Regulator's judgment as detailed in the council's invest in our housing mission.</p>	<p>Following receipt of the Social Housing Regulator judgement, in relation to fire Safety, the council continues to work closely with the Social Housing Regulator to draft and implement an improvement plan to establish clear actions to ensure compliance with the consumer standard. Progress on the work undertaken is reported regularly to the Leader and Housing Portfolio Holder, with monthly reports presented to Cabinet which will continue until all actions identified in the improvement plan have been achieved.</p> <p>Achieving this is a clear outcome under the 'invest in our housing' mission in the Building Harlow's Future Plan.</p>
4	<p>Financial Management Code review</p> <p>Carried over from last year's AGS action plan.</p>	EMT will commit resources to ensure the review takes place in 2025/26.
<i>Common themes emerging from the 2024/25 Service Assurance Statements are:</i>		
5	<p>Risk management</p> <p>Managers would welcome the use of operational risk registers to identify and manage their departmental risks.</p>	<p>Linked to 1 above, the council continues to develop its approach to risk management.</p> <p>For 2025/26 the first step was EMT attending a workshop run by the council's insurers, Zurich, to ensure the council's strategic risk register is aligned to the council's priorities. Directors will then be tasked to develop their operational risk registers using the tools and training that will be provided to them.</p> <p>Cabinet will consider and adopt a new strategic risk register in September 2025.</p>
6	<p>Make better use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)</p> <p>There is an opportunity for the Council to make better use of AI and AI to help improve/streamline Council services.</p> <p>This is underpinned in the council's mission to transform the council, as part of the Building Harlow's Future Plan</p>	<p>The Council has developed an AI policy. Associated guidance is required to provide a framework for staff making use of AI tools whilst being aware of the risks and opportunities associated with the use of AI.</p> <p>There will be a need to train/upskill staff to provide them with the knowledge and confidence to leverage the capabilities of technology to deliver services.</p> <p>Achieving this is a clear outcome under the 'transform our council' mission and the 'delivery' section in the Building Harlow's Future Plan.</p>

No.	Issue / Risk area	Action plan for 2025/26
7	<p>Personal Performance Plans (PPP)</p> <p>The use of these had lapsed during 2024/25 and managers found their use valuable with their staff</p>	<p>Organisational development plans, including an in-house leadership programme, are being discussed to provide staff with tools and support to deliver their services effectively. The use of PPPs will be considered as part of this.</p> <p>Achieving this is a clear outcome under the 'transform our council' mission in the Building Harlow's Future Plan.</p>

We, the undersigned, are satisfied that appropriate governance arrangements are in place. We propose over the coming year to continue to review and where appropriate improve matters to further enhance our governance arrangements.

Signed: 

Date: 26 February 2026

Cllr Dan Swords - Leader of the Council

Signed: 

Date: 26 February 2026

James Gardner - Managing Director and Head of Paid Service

APPENDIX 1: Key elements of the council's governance framework during 2024/25

INTEGRITY	OPENNESS	VISION	OUTCOMES	CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY	RISK AND PERFORMANCE	ACCOUNTABILITY
Behave with integrity, demonstrating a strong commitment to ethical values and respect the rule of law.	Ensure openness in its culture and engage comprehensively with stakeholders, citizens and service users.	Have a clear vision and defined desired outcome in terms of sustainable, social and environmental benefit.	Have in place interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of its intended outcomes.	Develop the council's capacity and capability of its leadership and staff	Manage the council's risk and performance through robust internal control and strong public finance management.	Implement good practice in transparency, reporting and audit to deliver effective accountability.
Annual Governance Statement 2024/25						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust whistleblowing policy and zero tolerance approach to fraud and corruption. • The Constitution sets out codes of conduct for Councillors and Officers. • The Constitution, which is continuously reviewed, sets out the decision making framework, gives clear definitions of roles and responsibilities and a protocol for how Councillors and Officers work together • Equality Policy revised and updated and an Equality Framework & Action Plan developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership encourages open and supportive culture. • Standard committee report format and publicly available modern.gov system for reporting. • Strategy for encouraging stakeholder involvement. • Scrutiny Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Harlow's Future (our main corporate policy framework for 2025 to 2026) with an associated delivery plan • Adopted Local Plan that supports the council's vision • Defined standards of customer service backed by a complaint's procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and transparent reporting of Key Performance Indicators and action plans for indicators that are out of tolerance • Decision making processes that receive objective and rigorous analysis including involvement of the Monitoring and Section 151 Officers • Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A People Resources Plan (to be updated) to ensure that the Council has the staff, the skills, the knowledge, the facilities and the resources to meet legal requirements, and Corporate Plan • The Council has an established induction and training programme for existing and new Councillors. This process includes mentoring and training events as and when identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A corporate Risk Strategy and toolkit. • A performance management framework which includes integrated performance, risk and financial management report. • Medium Term Financial Plan and integrated service planning approach • Internal Audit function to provide assurance on governance, risk management and control. • Audit and Standards Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability for decision making detailed within the Constitution • Reporting regularly on performance and use of resources. • Requirement for managers to produce annual assurance statements which feeds into the Annual Governance Statement • Processes to ensure internal and external audit recommendations are acted upon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During 2024/25 a new Executive Management Team took charge of the Annual Governance Statement. 						